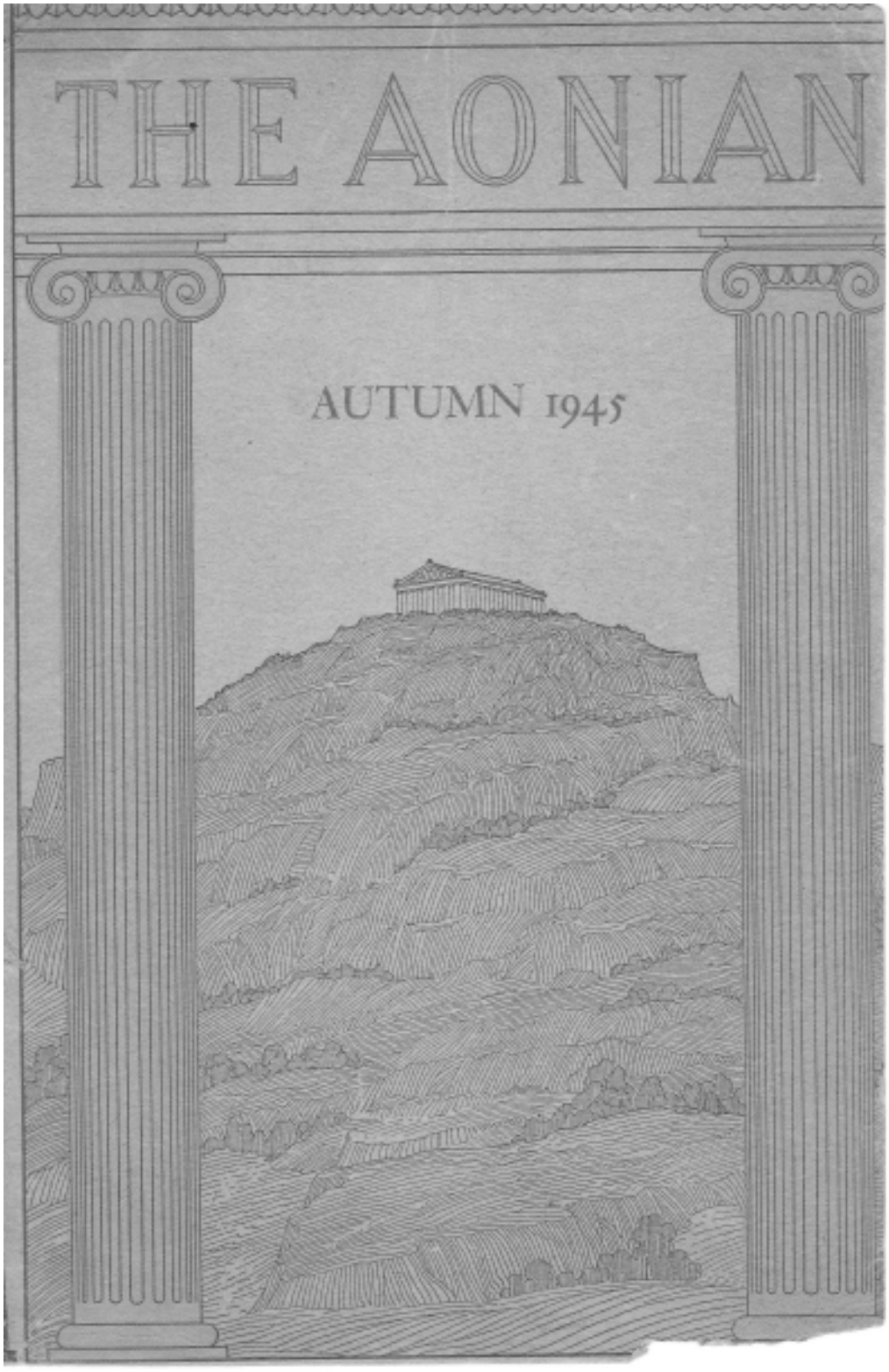
THE AONIAN
AUTUMN 1945

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

MY FRIEND, SAMUEL LOVEMAN, Rheinhart Kleiner. An intimate sketch of one of our poets of the yesteryears, "a wistful Pierrot searching in vain for the phantom which is Beauty and the illusion which is Love," whose appeal is mainly to other poets, rather than to casual readers.

CAFE DELLA MICHAEL, Charles A. A. Parker. When we read this sketch we immediately ear-marked it for preservation here as an example of the best sketch writing that we have had in amateur journalism for many a day.

UNDINE, Michael White. "The atavistic idea seems inherent in the human race; however, I have tried to give it a new setting," explains the author, the while he exercises some poetic license in the matter of his nymph's locale.

TO DIE IN JUNE, William R. Murphy, *The Pagan*. Winner of Honorable Mention in the N.A.P.A. Poetry Laureateship, 1904.

I GO HOME AGAIN, Allen Crandall. Mr. Crandall, now a farmer, is an old-time newspaper man and publisher. This poignant account of his return to his birthplace should awaken memories.

WHITE ROSES, Arthur Henry Goodenough, *The Acorn*. One of three poems for which Mr. Goodenough was awarded the Poetry Laureateship in 1898. He was awarded the Laureateship or Honorable Mention in nine other years.

NOBODY HOME, Edith Miniter. Mrs. Miniter was peculiarly sensitive to the spectacle of humon squalor and was the most accomplished writer in this *genre* that amateur journalism has ever known. Most of her stories are of considerable length, but this shorter piece is fully illustrative of her style.

TO A BOOK, Alfred Victor Peterson, *Stars and Stripes*. This poem received Honorable Mention in the Poetry Laureateship, 1901.

ON THE USES OF ALLUSION, Burton Crane. Here Schoolmaster Crane gives another lesson designed to help amateur writers improve their work, and we are not sure that he does it without tongue-prodded cheek.

BLUE PRINT OF AN ATTITUDE, Ernest A. Edkins. This ironical, yet judical, essay records what has made Mr. Edkins "tick" in amateur journalism, but, despite its obvious logic and commonsense, we fear that it will never be used as a blue print in upbuilding the hobby of amateur juornalism.

The AONIAN

DEVOTED TO LITERATURE, CRITICISM AND
THE PRESERVATION OF AMATEUR LETTERS

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MY FRIEND, SAMUEL LOVEMAN

IN the early 1920's, I was a frequent visitor at the apartment of the Houtains, at 1128 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn. A little room beside the parlor was George Houtain's study, and here, where we sat so often in all seasons, I used to notice a framed photograph on the wall.

My host informed me that this was a picture of Samuel Loveman, the Cleveland bard. I knew of Loveman's poetic fame, having, on my first entry into the National, read some of Maurice W. Moe's references to him. Later on, I had even read one or two of his poems. Lovecraft's letters had frequently contained laudatory comments on his work, combined with speculations as to what might have befallen him. So it was with no ordinary interest that I scanned the features of this individual in a gray suit — this man whose brow gave just a suggestion of thinning hair, and whose forehead and eyes showed the vaguest, most elusive touch, of something other-worldly.

Among the poems I had seen was one on the death of Thomas Dermody, and another may have been a paraphrase of some Chinese verses. I recall that the lines on Dermody — the exact title of which escapes me — had been read at a Blue Pencil meeting, and I was among those who had been much impressed. There was an antique touch to the lines, a classic undertone, as it were, which seemed to speak sadly of verities long neglected.

It was probably about this time that Lovecraft wrote me enthusiastically that Loveman had been found — employed, then, in some commercial house. Loveman, it appeared, was just about to make a connection with one of Cleveland's well-known bookstores. It proved to be this establishment, in fact, which started him on his long and successful career as a bibliophile.

As an illustration of how Loveman's name and fame persisted through the years, I remember a little paragraph in *Invictus*, published by that sterling amateur, Paul J. Campbell. It was to the effect that Samuel P. Lovecraft was returning to activity. This particular item really referred to H. P.

Lovecraft. Not until a few years later did Samuel Loveman really make a brief return.

While on the subject, I might add that Samuel has even been conspicuously confused with his cousin Robert. Alfred Kreymborg, in his history of American poetry called "Our Singing Strength," makes a general statement about "the verse of Van Dyke, George Edward Woodberry, SamuelLoveman,Frank Dempster Sherman," and winds up with this: "Loveman is remembered for the lilting English lyric, 'It isn't raining rain to me, It's raining violets'." Needless to say, our Samuel Loveman is remembered for other and equally notable achievements.

It was sometime in 1925 that Loveman finally came to New York. He had previously become Chairman of the Critical Bureau of the N. A. P. A., and his articles duly appeared in the *National Amateur*.

Under what conditions I met him, I cannot now recall, but the Kalem Club drew us quite closely together in a short time. In appearance, at least, Loveman had not changed much from that pictorial representation of him in Houtain 's room. He was a little older than myself, having contributed mature work to amateur publications while I was still a schoolboy, but, as in the case of many bachelors, he seemed to carry the aura of youth with him, as he does to this day. I have more than overtaken him, in appearance. I found him very shy, very sensitive as to opinions held of him by others, but not at all given to malice, or to the cherishing of grudges. There was an air of frankness and friendliness about him which must have been enough to place everyone worthy of it on his mettle.

Loveman had been a student and booklover for years, and while, so far as I know, he brought no books with him, his little apartment on Brooklyn Heights was soon sufficiently furnished and adorned. Among his newly acquired treasures, I recall a number of Nonesuch Press editions — among them being Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy," Milton's "Paradise Lost," and one or two similar editions of lesser known bards. There were other books, of course, one of them being a large, substantial edition of Boswell's "Johnson," edited either by Croker or Malone. There was a much begrimed painting on the wall, found in some old curio shop, which we regarded with respectful awe but did not examine too closely. It was Loveman's landlady who discovered it to be a nude, and who raised some objections to having it there. Among various Buddhas, of different attitudes and periods, was to be seen a fine clay mask of the features of John Keats. It had been taken right from the face of the subject, and was really more satisfactory than a photograph would have been, had it been possible to take one at that time. On one occasion, some irreverent person in the group placed a cap, at a "tough" angle, on

that classic brow, and tied a colored cloth around the neck. The bard looked most convincingly like a Parisian *Apache* ; but, at this point, Loveman's outraged feelings asserted themselves, and the disguise was swept away.

It was during this time, while browsing around in O'Malley's uptown bookstore, that I found a copy of Edwin Markham's long forgotten anthology "Our Younger American Poets." The very last poem in the book was by Samuel Loveman, "In Pierrot's Garden." This was the poem which had so impressed Ambrose Bierce, to whom Loveman had sent a manuscript copy of it, that he spent months trying to sell it to one of the standard magazines of the day. He was not successful, but thirty-five years ago was a period of peculiar aridity, not to say ossification, in the entire literary scene. Editors of magazines like *Harper's*, *Century*, and *Scribner's*, could hardly have been expected to realize that all they stood for, and all they were earnestly trying to perpetuate, had already been condemned and was on the way to oblivion.

The letters of Bierce to Loveman, on the subject of "In Pierrot's Garden," and the general state of poetry at that time, were published by George Kirk in Cleveland very shortly before he, too, came to New York. And to satisfy any reasonable curiosity that may be felt by the reader as to the actual poem, here is the first section of "In Pierrot's Garden":

This is the way the moon comes up
From under the glimmering fallow fields;
First but the rim of a silver cup,
Where the farthest twilight primrose yields
Its earthly beauty up ;
And now where the deep light winks abrim
You can see it flutter and fail for breath,
And a single star falls rapt and dim —
I call it Death.

The second section consists of two stanzas, and the third of three. Amateur journalists may be interested to know that the above lines have been copied from the July 1919 issue of W. Paul Cook's *National Amateur*, which contains practically all the laureate and honorably mentioned poetry of the N. A. P. A., from 1877 to 1917. It is nothing less than a treasure-house to the student or historian seeking information about this particular phase of amateur activity. It is the list of laureates, with dates and names of poems, in this same issue, which tells me that Samuel Loveman won the honorable mention in 1907 with "Arcady," while Richard Braunstein came in first with a poem called "November." Knowing what I do about Braunstein's later exposure as a plagiarist by A. M. Adams, I have just spent a little time trying to find his poem — with, possibly, some more famous name attached as author ! — in one of my anthologies. No luck, however. In 1908 Loveman won the title with "In

Pierrot's Garden," and Brainerd Prescott Emery achieved honorable mention with "Love's Triumph."

I may be pardoned for mentioning Loveman's acquaintance with Hart Crane, who lived nearby on the Heights, and who had won considerable recognition as a poet in professional circles. They had become acquainted in Cleveland, but Crane's social exploits in New York were of a sort to repel and alarm Loveman. He came to see Loveman one night while I was there ; and, a few evenings later, Loveman took me with him on a return visit to Crane. He lived on the same side of the Heights, with back windows overlooking the East River, which lay some distance below. We found him working on his poem, "The Bridge," and through the window behind him, could discern many of the details of that spectacular view, with the very bridge, itself, duly in evidence at the extreme right. Only a few years later, Hart Crane committed suicide by leaping from the deck of a steamer at sea, and I recall that a reporter from the *Evening Post* called on Loveman for some personal details regarding the dead poet. I have no doubt that he was all compassion and sorrow, for, as George Kirk once remarked, "If a poet is young, and commits suicide, he is Sam's man !" Loveman had more than one occasion to feel sorry during the time I knew him — but George Sterling of California, who also died by his own hand, is the only one who occurs to me now.

In recent years, as opportunity has arisen, I have called at Loveman's office in lower Fifth Avenue, New York. In two rooms, on one of the upper floors of an office building, he conducts a mail-order book business called "The Bodley Book Shop." He issues catalogues at frequent intervals, and has built up an excellent business. The last time I saw him, he had just received proofs of "The Sphinx" from W. Paul Cook, and sat contemplating them with something like amazement. It was Cook's redemption of an old promise to H. P. Lovecraft, that he would one day publish this work of Samuel Loveman's.

— Rheinhart Kleiner

CAFÉ DELLA MICHAEL

SOMEWHERE in his travels Michael Horrigan (and Horrigan had traveled far in his time) came upon this wording:

CAFÉ DELLA MICHAEL.

Michael — if ever he knew, and I doubt very much that he did — wasn't overmuch concerned with its meaning; Michael was so easy-going, at times. "It listens good," he admitted to Clancy once upon a time, "and it makes a brave show in gold letters on the plate glass. Besides," he added reluctantly, "Maggie says it discourages the boys from calling me 'Mike'."

So — after losing his leg in France — with the help of his pension and the little lady who insisted that "Yes" didn't mean "No," he decided that he might as well settle down before he lost what he valued most.

The Café, and Horrigan, were in the good graces of the police and the City Fathers as well. Michael would stand for no rough stuff, he once told Clancy, after having pitched The Wop out of the Café on his ear and into a February snowdrift to the unutterable joy of said Clancy, then making his round. From this one might fancy that The Wop was no especial pet of the "Sargint."

It was just about this time that Clancy had that trouble with his eyes — his hearing, and memory too, were affected.

The Wop knew he had it coming to him, grinned, brushed off the snow, and let it pass, as well he might for Horrigan's fists, as some of the boys will tell you, weren't marshmallows. Now, don't get me wrong. The Wop was an all-right guy and he did enjoy getting Michael's "Irish," as did many of the boys. No harm, you know, just in fun, for all had an abiding respect for and an admiration of Michael's "marshmallows."

There now, like Michael, I've wandered far a-field; so let me take up with the affair of the afternoon of April 13th.

. . . . . .

THE thick, curling tobacco smoke wisping out of the Café Della Michael merged and was lost in the mist of a dusky, late April afternoon. From the rear of the Café came the sharp, dry click of colliding billiard balls, accompanied by occasional dull thumps of cue ends as they hit the floor, emphatic of the players' superstition. From the front of the Café came the incessant, tireless, tick-tock, tick-tock, tick-tock of a walled Seth Thomas that was old when Anastasia wailed her first lament and no one cares to remember when (if ever one did); and intermittent energetic slaps of playing cards on a table away to the other side of the room and not too close to the lunch counter.

The Café was famous for its food and Mrs. Horrigan (Gramma to all the boys) knew best how to tempt

their palates. You could always get a "rise" out of Michael with but a whisper in unfavorable comment of the food, and then would come a burst of hearty laughter from the kitchen, — how Michael and the boys enjoyed hearing that laugh and the, "Go aun now, don't be afther teasing my Michael."

Everything was open in the Café Della Michael, even to the 'phone booth, for Michael would not have it otherwise. There was no gambling other than the playing for the price of the eats, or for the soft drinks, or for the small change for the use of the tables. Mind you, Michael was no saint. The last time Michael was in church was when he was baptized, and he isn't sure he was there then. But he drew the line at the hard stuff. Wouldn't allow any of it brought in. Would not sell it although he could get a license almost any time, his reputation was that good.

. . . . . .

The mist, a sluggish grey mist, twined ominously around, enveloping everything with that haze and blur so peculiar to the Mystic Valley in April. Minutes slipped by on the velvet heels of Time. Quiet, conversationally, for the most part until the round had been run out and the players rose from their chairs to stretch, then, tumbling forth, came a cascade of pent-up comments and questions.

"What brings that guy Curley back after what has happened? Isn't he satisfied with beating the rap?"

On a stool at the far end of the lunch counter sat a heavy, thick-set blond of a man, eating. Quietly he moved closer to overhear.

"It's a good thing for Curley that her brother . . . "

The blond stirred the spoon in his empty cup.

"The poor kid . . . "

"Yah, it was the rottenest . . ."

"And the kid not yet sixteen . ."

The blond called for more coffee and a slab of pie.

Outside, the clop-clop of a horse's hoofs on the concrete beat louder and louder. Impatiently stamped was the bell of a trolley car as, caught in the rails, the iron tires of a junkey's cart screached and grated as they broke away allowing the cart to rattle off on its way across the square.

When car and cart had passed and quiet was resumed —

"And when the poor kid realized . . . "

"Yeah. One night she was missing, and the next morning she was found on Hangman's Beach . . ."

"With a rope around her neck . "

"But she wasn't drowned . . !"

"Aw, come on you guys, come on and play. There's nothing we can do about it — worse luck."

"That's true, and, — but some one's going to do something about it, mark my words . . ."

"Yah, and the sooner the quicker, I say."

The blond continued eating.

". . . since the law couldn't pin it on Curley, and everyone knows

how hard Clancy worked to break his alibi. The Wop was sure he'd seen Curley . . ."

"The Wop was sure all right, but Curley's lawyer had his testimony thrown out just because The Wop had been pinched a couple of times."

"Yah, Clancy is sure one square flat foot."

"Sure, you bet. I read in a book once where a guy had a lot of what he called moral proof but none of it was jury proof and so the guy lost out."

"Just like Clancy."

. . . . . .

A PERSON appeared in the doorway.

A momentary silence of surprise.

"Well, of all the nerve, if there aint Curley!"

"Will Michael serve him, I wonder?"

"He will indeed. It's the law, and Michael isn't giving that rat, Curley, (and I apologize to all rats) half a chance to make anything out of it,—that's why he came in, so he could give his orders to Michael."

Curley, after a sharp, quick look around, entered. Michael's ham-on, pie and coffee were exchanged for the two-bits silver that Curley sent coursing down the mahogany. Michael made no comment, but from his face the gang could tell it went hard and that Michael would have enjoyed serving Curley a double dose of jollop, or, a generous portion of his "marshmallows"—all on the house. . . .

A YOUNG WOMAN peeked in at the window.

The blond moved and as he did so his elbow knocked both cup and saucer to the floor, the black coffee spreading and mixing in with yellow of the sawdust underfoot. The crash of the crockery attending Curley's entrance, one of the boys said some time later, was like a dull echo of a blast from Black Ann's Corner.

Eyes pierced the haze of smoke in his direction. The blond turned, as if curious, to watch Curley.

Curley sat unmoved, intent on the appearance of a young woman in black standing in the doorway.

Curley sat unmoved, tense.

The young woman in black leaned against the wall of the doorway and stared fixedly. A black cat rubbed stiffly against her stocking. She gave it a kick that sent it, claws out, tail arched, flying in Curley's direction.

Curley bolted to his feet.

The young woman was quicker.

As was the blond man.

. . . . . .

CLANCY arrived—took a quick look-see—blew several sharp, staccato blasts from his whistle, and called upon everyone to remain just where they were. Police came to hold the crowd in check: a crowd that had quickly assembled, as crowds have a way of doing—seemingly out of nothing. Headquarters and the hospital were notified, the latter to send an ambulance.

Clancy turned the body face up.

"Curley!"

All present were questioned at length and their names and addresses taken.

Horrigan said his back was turned. He was emptying the tray under the coffee urn and saw nothing. "There was," he said, "a dark, skinny, black haired fellow at the counter eating and he must've been pretty well scared for he knocked his cup and saucer to the floor and ran,—and for all I know he may still be running." No, he couldn't have done it as he (Horrigan) just happened to glance in the mirror as the guy reached for the coffee.

And the boys . . . ?

O the boys were playing whist and saw nothing.

Now, how could they, Sargint? It was a tight game, Clancy, no trumps, and Fred . . .

Sure, we heard it. Yah, we thought it was a back-fire of some puddle-jumping Bertie, why worry?

Yes, there was. Jimmy thought Michael had fallen.

No, they'd seen nothing.

No, they saw no one.

One thought he saw a woman peeking in at the window.

No. Young or old? Couldn't say. Don't remember.

No, he didn't know her.

Yah, there's always some one looking in.

And what about the guy eating at the counter?

O,—him. A-r-r, he was just a skinny guy with awful black hair. He just came in for a bite.

Yes, he somewhat resembled The Wop, but he wasn't The Wop.

Certainly, we know The Wop and of that you are well aware.

"All right, all right. So,—nonna you guys saw nothin'; heard nothin', and know nothin' of what happened. So—very—convenient." And Clancy smiled in rather an odd way.

Yah, just like what we said, Clancy, we don't know nothin'.

An' we aint saw nothin' either.

. . . . . .

The fog and mist piled in from over the marshland.

The police had left along with Clancy.

The crowd scattered.

The boys departed, some to their homes, others to night jobs.

The woman and man might have been known to Horrigan and the players, and Clancy had his doubts. The kid's brother,—well, he had an excellent alibi, as had the sister. Curley had hooked up with with a sordid gang, so Clancy learned, and the Sargint was content to believe the solution lay with them.

Michael turned on all the lights, swept up the red and black blotch, spread several shovels of golden sawdust, nice and clean, on the floor before the lunch counter, wiped off the mahogany with a steaming cloth, and made ready for the supper trade and the coming of Mrs. Horrigan, wondering the while . . .

—Charles A. A. Parker

UNDINE

Ages past in a star long dead
You and I one twilight met.
In a fleeting glance you said:
"Down the ages — don't forget."

Over stars beyond the stars,
Where uncharted comets race;
Where the sunset's azure bars
Latticed o'er a trysting place;

Where the breath of twilight balms
Brooded over Arcady;
Where rock-rooted glistening palms
Bent their fragrance down to me:

These I've searched in vain for you,
Sea child of my primal quest, —
Still in heart and spirit true
In my longing and unrest.

Long I looked through fading light
For that form that seemed a part
Of the moonbeams and the night —
Of the brain and of the heart.

Maidens of the sea-girt isles,
Light of tread and bright of eye,
Saw my questing foot with smiles
And unheeded passed me by.

Where the Milky Way o'erflows,
Trailing gold dust in its train;
Where the Dog Star like the rose
Trembles to a crimson rain;

Where the Pleiades, unbound,
Ranged the azure depths of air, —
There I thought you might be found
With the star-nymphs gathered there.

There at last at midnight hour
Did I glimpse of you once more,
In a green Elysian bower
With sea blossoms shadowed o'er.

But again through time and space,
Through the pathways of the skies,
Through each mist-enshrouded place,
All my homing instinct lies.

— Michael White

TO DIE IN JUNE

To die in June, in the young o' the year —
Ah God it seems so hard to die
When the flush of dawn is on field and wood,
And the tide of life is at the flood.
O the pang of pain brings a poignant cry
At the thought that the tide must ebb for me,
At the time of burgeoning and minstrelsy.
The wild regret brings a passionate Why,
Since Youth is sweet and Life is fair,
And the snatch of song, and the prospect rare,
Are piercing sweet as never before
To the dulling ear and the dimming eye.

— William R. Murphy

I GO HOME AGAIN

ALL DAY we had driven over the Colorado landscape, and now we were in the rolling hills and wind-swept prairie wastes of Cheyenne County, Kansas.

"Lea," I said, "let us rest the car here. Over there somewhere, I think, is the old homestead." "All right," she said, "you go, but I'll stay here and hold our sleeping son." So I set out on foot down what once had been the road from the old sod house to the outside world. Thirty years had passed since the battered and noisy lumber wagon had jolted over it for the last time.

In my ears was still ringing the advice Lea had given all day as we drove along: "Remember, Allen, you must be prepared for a shock. The imagination and the memory of a boy are unreliable, and you will find many things smaller than you recall them." But my wife had been a poor prophet, for I found the hills steeper, the chasms deeper and wider, the distances greater than when I was a boy.

I did not go far in the old road, for the rains of thirty years had washed the ruts ten to fifteen feet deep in places; and down at the bottom of the hill, on the other side of which the sod house had stood, there was a yawning canyon right across the road. What seething torrents of water must have washed this soil away to the Hackberry!

I skirted the canyon and plodded up the hill in the blistering heat of a July afternoon. At the top I stopped to let my eyes wander over familiar scenes; to be drowned in a flood of memories. Yes! Over there, almost half a mile away, must be the spot where the sod house had stood! I could make it out in spite of the miniature forest of sunflowers and ironweeds. I walked toward it through the tangled weeds and clumps of tall prairie grass, but there were gophers, lizards and snakes everywhere, and I discovered that the intervening years had taught me caution and fear.

Arriving at the mound where the house had stood, I could not control my emotions. This little mound, I said to the gophers, the lizards and the snakes, is all that is left of the house where I lived as a boy, the house that was home. That slight depression over there to the southwest is where the cellar was. I once played with recurrent batches of kittens there, and with puff-adders that spread their mouths wide and blew at me to frighten me. I had but to touch them with a stick and they would roll over on their backs and become limp, as if dead. But if I took my eyes off them for a moment to play with the kittens, they would instantly come to life and rush off to some hidden cranny in the cellar. Just the same, may I not meet one now! . . . Ah! the remains of a small shoe. My sister Zina must have worn that once. . . And here is a piece of the china

rabbit I left on the windowsill so long ago!

You should be here today with me, my sister, and we'd build together again in the sheltered recesses of our minds this two-roomed sod house, with a door to the rising and a door to the setting sun. We'd frolic again on its dirt floors and laugh at the bullsnakes that crawled through its walls into our mother's clothes and at the torrential rains that came through its dirt roof on occasion.

Not a tree, you remember, grew within miles of this sod house, and such vegetation as appeared was frequently parched by a scorching sun and blown away by whistling winds. Thus, regardless of the season, the Russian thistle grew everywhere abundantly and luxuriantly, sometimes to as large as ten feet in diameter on maturity, when the heat of the long summer had dried and parched them and when the autumn winds blew over the rolling prairie wastes, hills and dales and tablelands were a solid mass of tumbling thistles.

And our paternal grandmother, do you remember her, Zina? She was born in Illinois in 1829, had had a husband and eight brothers in the Civil War, and now she was blind and spent most of her time sitting in a corner of this sod house smoking her corncob pipe. She told us endless stories about the war between the States, and most of them were very far from being calculated to reveal the goodness and greatness of men. Often I would come upon her, sitting silently in the corner smoking the corncob pipe and living with her memories, and I would say, "Grandma, what are you thinking of?" "I was thinking of when I was a little girl and of my mother's big black dog, Old Sail, which went with me everywhere. I was thinking of the time they brought Old Abe home to Springfield, and even the big-mouthed men were silent. I was thinking of when your grandfather came to see me the first time . . . and the last time I saw him. I was thinking . . . "

At other times, finding her alone in her corner, the eternal corncob sending up rings of blue smoke, I'd say, "Grandma, don't you want to go for a walk?" "Sure! sure! Allen, come and take hold of my hand." And I would take hold of her hand, as she rose with the aid of her cane, and lead her out into the sun and the wind and the wide outdoors. Walking among the wild flowers that grew in profusion on the prairie, she would name them by their scent and describe their colors vividly, sometimes mumbling to herself the while, "if only these dead eyes had *seen* while they still could see!"

Pulling myself up, I walked down to where the well had been, but the silt and debris of the long years had filled it to the top. Beyond it, the barn and corral had vanished, leaving no trace. Rats and mice and men alike had disappeared. Only the green prairie seemed the same, and

the ant hills stood in tall mounds in the buffalo grass as they had when life and we were young.

Do you remember, Zina, how you and I, barefoot and bareheaded, herded our father's cattle over these sun-scorched, rattlesnake-infested plains? But you remember, too, that there was enough pure air to fill our lungs and plenty of room to spread our elbows. You remember the smell and feel of the rich brown soil, the mornings with the dew on the prairie grass; the evenings with their sunsets of rose and gold and green; the long moonlit autumn nights? And there were the lazy days of Indian Summer when the distance was a purple haze, heat waves danced on the horizon, and prairie dogs in occasional towns stood beside their holes, barked and vanished into the earth, and jack-rabbits ran like the wind over hills and plains and hollows. In the holes of these prairie dog towns, dogs, owls and rattlesnakes lived together; but how they got along puzzled us then and puzzles me still.

I climbed another slope and looked across the Hackberry. The dugout schoolhouse was now only a grass-covered hole in the ground. I sat down on the prairie and reflected on the changes Time had wrought. Where are Jake and Fritz and August? Where are you Lizzie and Emma and Mattie? Do you remember how you spoke Russian on the school grounds, and only my sister and I and the teacher spoke English? Even our games were played to the intricate magic of Russian words. Let's see, how did Ring-Around-the-Rosy go?

Ringa, ringa rya
Kin Schleg a tya,
Unda busch, wusch, wusch.

At least that's the way it comes back to this faulty memory today.

And there was the schoolmaster, Jim Crandall. You remember that all of you and everyone called him Jim, for he was such a gentle scholar, such a vagrant dreamer and a very absent-minded man. It took more years than we had then to realize that he lived for the magic of a phrase, the turn of a furrow, the beauty of a sunset, the happy laughter of children . . . O Time, what have you done with these!

I returned to the mound that once was home and sat down amidst the purple spikes of ironweeds and the tall sunflowers. Gophers sat up on their haunches, listened and scurried away; lizards raced through the tangled weeds. I lay down on the warm earth and a feeling of soft drowsiness flooded me. For the space of a few seconds I may have fallen asleep in the sullen sultriness of that July afternoon. . . . "What was that you said, grandmother?" "Fill my pipe, Allen, and light it. Just listen to those crickets chirr! I like that, don't you? It brings a satisfied feeling inside of me, and memories of long ago come crowding back. Shall I sing you a song, Allen? What would you like to hear?" But a booming voice breaks

in. It is the voice of Jim. "You need a new coat, did you say, son? Sure, sure, we'll get one. Maybe when God sends good crops to us and bad luck to monopolies we'll be in clover. Ha! This is Thanksgiving morning. We'll have a stuffed Kansas blizzard for dinner!" The voice trails off into another sound. A sound . . . What is it? A rattlesnake! I leapt to my feet in one great bound, but it was only a locust singing in a tall sunflower above me.

Forgive me, grandmother! Forgive me, Jim! For one wild moment I thought that you and I and the old sod house had escaped the ruin and desolation of Time. I had forgotten, grandmother, that you had grown tired at last after more than eighty years of life and are sleeping under Texas skies, under skies always filled with pitiless sunlight; that the cypress trees rustle their leaves above you and the air is heavy with the scent of magnolia blossoms. And I had forgotten, Jim, that the many summers and the long moon-drenched twilights you spent on these Kansas plains are no longer even a memory; that the raindrops patter among the grass roots above you in spring and a warm blanket of snow wraps you round during the long Idaho winter.

. . . . . .

It had been hours since I left the car. Its occupants would be waiting for a tired pilgrim.

— Allen Crandall

WHITE ROSES

I love white roses, for I know
That when my mother sank to rest,
They plucked them, stainless as the snow,
To lay upon her stainless breast.

And that is why I do not weep
When bleakly blows the wintry blast,
And on the graves of them that sleep
The silent flakes are falling fast.

For when upon the frozen plain
I see the drifts of winter pressed,
I know the Lord of Life has lain
Another rose upon her breast.

— Arthur Henry Goodenough

NOBODY HOME

THE whole kit and b'iling had gone to the cattle show. Sol Russell, halting his little chunk in front of rising ground, decided that, taking it by and large, there was probably nobody to home for all of five mile 'round. Then he cl'kd, thankful that he would get there, in spite of a late start, before early candle lighting.

The delay has been to "deacon" a calf.

Cutting a swathe that made pastured creatures pause in the business of life, which was masticating, and view him excitedly over the post and rider, Solomon turned up the pentway by Gill Nelson's. The wood colored house slept in the September sun, and probably Gill slept also — for the Harvest Moon time would mean late sittings with Gill.

The misshapen hoofs of the little chunk made such small noise on the lamb's-quarter and plantain carpeted road, that Sol could not help hearing the one sound that cut the noontime peace. A most uncomfortable groan, unmistakable, not to be ignored.

Naturally vaulting to the capsheaf of tragedy, Solomon fixed his mind on the cow. Turned into the orchard untimely, and suffering from too much apple juice, as like as not. Twisting the reins about the whipstock he clambered out of the buggy and put for the barn, when a view of bossy contentedly lowing in the yard showed him that guess had been not so bunkum. Then it must be the hens. Pip, probably, or the whites gone looney and so picking the blacks to death. Everything went slantindicular with Gill, and the girl herself was n't more 'n half-saved.

Even as he stooped to examine samples of the half-feathered fowls that were all over the place, a second groan proved that — of all things — the trouble was in the house itself! In the front room, where a flapping screen gave ingress to flies and egress this moment to a sidling and wild-eyed cat.

Summer sunshine warmed the tiny, picketed home-lot, on which the towering Balm o' Gilead tree cast small shade, but for a moment Solomon shivered, and the lot seemed like one in a graveyard, where grass grew in great lush clumps, under the protection of arborvitae.

"Gill!" he called, licking his dry lips, and trying not to tremble in his throat, "Gill! where be ye, I say, where be ye?"

There was no answer but another groan, yet even that proved of trifling reassurance. Coming closer to the window Solomon peered into the twilight behind the ragged muslin curtain and inquired, "Do n't you feel as well as usual today, Gill?"

The query, which was almost tender (from Sol Russell) brought

no definite reply. But Solomon Russell was not a fool, he put together tags of conversation overheard the last few months on church steps when meeting was letting out and surmised that even if one was an old bachelor one could understand a woman was needed, here, back o' the mountain, in a devil of a hurry.

And the whole kit and b'iling gone to the cattle show !

At Slocumb's there was only the old yellow cat on the stoop, at Juliette Pinkney's a likely two-year-old had got out and was foundering itself with sweet corn, and the Perkins' house presented a most inhospitable face, with a bull dog to give it tongue.

So it had to be Mercy Bruill, though she was stone deaf in one ear and could n't hear with t' other. Anyway, she was reputed to take it out in seeing and to see it all from her neat cottage tucked into the "V" of land so properly termed the Gore. Solomon snatched her from a good meal of victuals which included hot boiled dish, of which he would not have objected to partaking, though without vinegar, so exhausting had been the experience. Mercy did not want to go anywhere and leave her table in the floor, but he threw sunbonnet and shawl her way and tossed her into the buggy like a bag of cider apples. The horse hypered so eagerly back the pentway that, though gone an hour, the groan he met dovetailed perfectly to the one he had left.

Dumping Mercy in the wheel-track and giving her a shove toward the door, he was off in a hurry around the mountain, well aware there would be hardly enough cattle show to pay for going. Mercy would certainly know what to do, he calculated. An old married widow woman she was, and all of her own in the graveyard, too.

Public opinion was right. Mercy did take it out in seeing. She had n't been up here back o' the mountain for a month of Sundays, since long before the abandoned house had been squatted in by Gill, who managed to come around the caretaker, and get it for a little less than nothing. Gill was a cute one, yet after all 'twas n't so much she diddled Hank Waterman out of. Place had been given over to Chuck Will's widow ever since the big drought summer. Advancing warily Mercy observed that since she had last been up there the sixteen double panes of the kitchen window had been reduced to ten above and seven below. The spaces were filled with old hats. She wondered where Gill had found so many old hats. Well, a likely number of young fellows had probably gone home hatless mornings about sun-up.

Mercy Bruill was pernickitiness personified. She had never entered such a looking kitchen in her life. In her wildest dreams — those she had after succotash and strawberry shortcake — she had never imagaged one. And there was a smell; a very bad smell. The wood colored

house rejoiced in running water, but in no way of stopping it. Something had bunged up the drain, the sink had overflowed, there was a pond in its vicinity, which dwindled off into puddles near the door, where the boards booped up into islands.

Mercy at once put down the disorder as due to this cause, and conceived the idea that she had been fetched to repair it. She could think of no cataclysm worse than a stopped spout, and would never have credited the fact that this had been thus for all of three weeks since Gill had enjoyed a merry Sunday and emptied all the grease from a feast of pork chops where it would be most harmful.

Casting her white apron to the four winds Mercy shooed the chickens out and attacked the drain with vigor. Grabbing a kettle from the stove she bailed the mess into it with a rusty can, and then bethought herself of the supply and shut that off with a plug hastily constructed from a garment that depended from a chair back. As for the broom it was pretty far gone anyway, being indeed the one with which the abandoning owners had cleaned themselves out that year all the wells went dry. Mercy broke the handle short off and rammed it down the spout as far as the bend, wishing she had a bit of umbrella wire to complete the cure.

All the while the moans of Gill were, to the self-constituted plumber, as silence.

"Will, Will," called the voice from the front room, in the shrill, expressionless tone of the pain-racked, "go get somebody to come. Go ask old Hank Waterman 'f you do n't want to. He was always kind o' good to me. And the broom. Some woman 'll say I do ' know how to keep house. Will, help me to get hold o' the broom."

And then plucking at the ragged sheet which was her only coverlet, Gill fell a-wondering why she had not given the house at least a lick and a promise. Because she had been so languid after long days in the blueberry bush. More likely because she had been sleepy after long evenings dancing at trolley parks.

Trying to rise, her breath went for a space, and then she fell to longing for that garment hanging from a chair back in the kitchen.

"Right there," she babbled, as if the broken rocking chair was listening. "Course I can get to it. So often I've walked the five mile from the Depot and carried a crate o' chicks or a sack o' flour. Only three steps — mebbe four. I washed it good and there 's lace on it. Only three-four steps."

Sometimes she stopped to moan, uninterrupted, and then resumed speech. The garment, she thought, had been brought, and she was putting it on. It was smothering her, she could not breathe through its folds, and she beat the air with her fists and gasped a half-hour before the moment's semblance passed. And then the drawing of it down. God — would it never draw down ?

She was tired — she was never so tired before, not even after the two big days at the hop picking a year ago, when Will Glover first picked beside her, and the two had gone to a dance, with never a bit of sleep between.

Once more her cry went up for help. It seemed to Gill that there were sounds in the kitchen beyond the entry, though with the ringing in her ears she could not be sure. But on chance she called and again called — and every call was the equal of silence to Mercy Bruill.

The sun westered and the day drew on to chore time. Mercy, in the malodorous back yard, attacked the spout from the outside. The ground quaked beneath her feet with the results of forty years' soaking in soapsuds, but Mrs. Bruill was not one to shrink from a task simply because it offered a few disagreeable features. It was all very well for Hank Waterman to give Gill Nelson this house, and perhaps keep her off the town, but she should certainly not be permitted to establish a plague spot and poison the whole mountain.

Mercy wearied herself in the clichy mud, and Gill wearied herself screaming for help and trying to get away from the irritating black curls of hair that were all over the pillow. She plucked them out by handfuls, she was doing this as Mercy Bruill started home-along. 'T was just getting dark under the table. Mercy left the plumbing in a state of absolute perfection, and entertained no slightest inkling of the real reason for her abrupt introduction to Gill Nelson's kitchen, where she had enjoyed so extensive a vortex of the housecleaning long foreign to her own over-scrubbed cottage.

It occurred to some returning merrymakers that the pentway was a short cut and it was getting full time to be home and feed the creatures. Gill was heard by more than one, and in due time a doctor entered the frowy front room. He was a handsome man, who took two baths daily and was very particular about hygiene in the home. With him came Miss Twiss, one of those delightful district nurses who appear to have emerged from a laundry as Aphrodite from sea foam.

They entered at what proved to have been well-nigh the last moment of need.

"Convulsions," said the doctor, "I 'm afraid we 're too late."

The nurse, true to her instincts even in a crisis, stood at the window manicuring her nails and hoping he 'd operate. It would be instructive — and he did look noble in white.

"But where 's the old woman?" he muttered, peering about. "Never knew anything to happen on this mountain without an old woman. And they 're clever as the very devil, too. Usually give me cards and spades and beat me to it. Quick, Miss Twiss, the aromatic spirits of ammonia. She 's going !"

But she lingered until the sun ap-

peared next day, bold and brazen as Gill herself used to appear in the village after a night of riot in freight yard or livery stable. Lingered in agony — even Miss Twiss being thereby a trifle wrinkled in face and cap. Many households were disturbed, lights twinkled up and down the pentway, women escorted by their solemn-faced men folks hastened with offerings of blackberry cordial and tea made from yarrow and stories of the only method that saved a sister's life and now she 's an old woman.

Only Mercy Bruill was in no way disturbed. She supplemented cold boiled dish with strong tea, then went to bed gloating, to wake at intervals and chuckle over the feats she had performed. So Solomon Russell found her, breakfasting on red flannel hash. Radiating geniality she stopped her meal, put her teeth in and began to talk.

"Done one good job of work up there back o' the bushes. Real likaly job of work."

And so she had. That was the blunder of others being brought down the mountain now, in the undertaker's wagon.

— Edith Miniter

TO A BOOK

Friend of all friends when each friend hath betrayed and departed;
True to the end, in the sense that no voice in thee dwells;
Ever at hand with a sympathy dumb but impressive,
Bringing sweet peace to the heart over-wrought and oppressed.

Friend of all friends when each friend hath betrayed and departed;
Heaping no words in dull flattery, false and dissembling;
Thine is a friendship that lifts up a soul from its hell
Into God's light and the peace of the paradise, After.

Friend of all friends in a friendship that is everlasting,
Where shall I lay thee when to my last rest I repair?
Where shall I place thee that not the unfeeling may spurn there?
Here at my side, then together as now, thou and I.

— Alfred Victor Peterson

ON THE USES OF ALLUSION

IN AN early-1944 issue of *Masaka* (the one which appeared to have been printed in lampblack on a cider-press) this petulant pedagogue gave a few technical hints for the improvement of the poetry appearing in amateur magazines. Prominent among them was a tip on the use of "borrowed" adjectives, those commonly associated with some other field of thought, so that the images of the poeticule might add a dash of color to their pallid pans.

That was a back-door entry to the broad subject of Allusion. The present article attempts a more thorough exploration, for allusiveness is sadly lacking in our writing. Good writing — painstaking writing of the kind to be found properly in the magazines of those who ruin white paper for the love of it — should be writing enriched with every precious stone of thought, ground, buffed and polished. The precious stones of literature are most commonly allusions.

If you still feel the need of a definition — you should read more slowly and carefully, you know — here it is : Allusion is the literary device of using the experience of the reader to lend richness to your own writings. Webster calls it "an indirect reference by passing mention or quotation to something generally familiar."

Just because I — notoriously a fusty old foop with his nose caught in a lexicon — am discussing the subject, do n't get the idea that allusion is merely an instrument of the Stuffed Shirt School of Self-Conscious Poetry. Often it is the tool of humor. A pun is an allusion ; in fact, the literary *bon mot* or play on words is nothing more than a pun with a monocle. When Forrest J. Ackerman remarks that an artist who falls down on a cover assignment has placed his publisher "behind the procrastinate ball and has ain'ts in his paints," he is no more guilty of the lowest form of wit than Maxwell Anderson in calling a play, "Both Your Houses." Edna Hyde McDonald's "Punctuality is the thief of time" is equally an allusion and equally to be cherished.

Hyperbole — do n't bother to look it up ; it means "exaggeration for emphasis" — is also based on allusion, on a stated or unstated comparison with something familiar. If I tell you that an ant army in Brazil was estimated at 37,452,000,000, you nod docilely because you have no basis for comparison. But if I tell you that James Joseph O'Shaughnessy, after a convivial evening, climbed all 723 steps to his bedroom on the second floor, dropping his shoes on each of them, you get the hidden point unless you are more than usually inattentive.

Never be it said that I condemned straightforward prose, used as economically as possible. I favor allusion because it saves words.

You don't have to talk around the subject for sentence after sentence if you can create a well-lighted picture with an allusive phrase. Consider Dorothy Parker's murderous appraisal of Katharine Hepburn's performance in "The Lake" : "She ran the gamut of emotions from A to B." Or Mrs. McDonald's : "Helm whipped up a buffet supper apparently by rubbing two stickfuls of type together." The whole picture is there, not merely the charcoal outline.

The weakest of all tools for the creation of an image is the usual adjective. If you write of "the bright star's remote and radiant beam" you merely embroider the obvious. There is no allusion to contributory images. But consider : "Wizard of a thousand *strange-hued* dreams," "That bright *symmetric* thought," "Cold *incurious* stare of stars," "Strong vows grow weak in the *niggardly* night." These paint pictures or evoke supporting thoughts.

In ordinary usage, a simile is a cambric tea figure of speech. In strong hands, such as those of Browning, it can be powerful. "There 's a woman *like* a dewdrop. . . . And her eyes are dark and humid, *like* the depth on depth of luster hid i' the harebell. . . ." Unless you know that your simile is a vital one, better try to translate it into metaphor. Which is the stronger? "The rain fell *like* slanting silver arrows" or "The slanting silver arrows of the rain" ? (Millay wrote it.)

The following, torn from contexts, are from recent amateur papers :

"Windows of oblivion crystalled with immortality. . . ."

"O Slumber, weave thy dream-web of surprise. . . ."

"Frosty night will soon enwrap the town. . . ."

"When past loves follow them into their dreams. . . ."

"The sagging midriff of our national morality. . . ."

"The intellectual soup dished up by radio. . . ."

Don't forget what Webster says about allusion. It must be a "reference . . . to something generally familiar." James Joyce may be a great writer, but he constantly violates this rule. One character in Ulysses sings out : "The sea ! The sea ! The scrotum-tightening sea !" To get the full force of that allusion, the reader must be:

a. A man.

b. A sea-bather.

c. A classical student, acquainted with :

(1) Homer's double-barreled epithets, his "wine-dark sea."

(2) Xenophon's "Anabasis" and the cry of the 10,000 Greeks : "Thalatta ! Thalatta !"

When an allusion is to something not generally familiar to your run-of-the-mine reader, it is worse than useless, for it brings obscurity rather than clarity.

Make your allusions striking but above all make them clear.

— Burton Crane

BLUE PRINT OF AN ATTITUDE

AS I typed the above title, the mocking lines of Bunthorne's song in "Patience" came back to me,

> "I am not fond of uttering platitudes
> In stained glass attitudes,"

and it is quite likely that some malicious wit will pertinently inquire, "If you don't like to do it, why *do* you ?" The answer is that I hope to avoid both the practise and the posture, while attempting to clarify some of my earlier ambiguities.

In attempting, at this late hour, to crystallize the ideas that have determined my course in amateur journalism, I have no delusion that they are of any great consequence, nor would I dignify them with such a high-sounding term as "principles," because, in point of fact, they are really debatable theories, though I am not aware that they have ever been refuted. Such as they are, however, and foreign as they may be to contemporary trends, they were responsible for my return to activity some ten years ago, and before I depart I would like to restate them as simply as possible, partly for the benefit of recent arrivals, and also to keep alive the discussion of our general purposes as an institution. On several occasions they have been misunderstood, a circumstance due in some measure to confusion arising from lack of agreement as to definitions, even with regard to such an elementary matter as the title of our national association.

First let us consider the definition of "amateur journalism," for it must be assumed that none of us wishes to sail under false colors. The word "amateur," of remote Latin and direct French derivation, carries in English the original meaning of "lover," — one who loves, is attached to and *cultivates* a particular pursuit, study or science, from taste (that is predilection) without practising it professionally. Specifically, as in sports, a player or athlete who is not rated as a professional; in tennis, one who plays the game without present intention of entering professional tournaments, but who *plays the game* according to its well-defined rules. If his only interest is to knock the ball into the street or over the fence, he cannot be classed as an amateur tennis player, or indeed as a tennis player of any description. There can be no reasonable dispute over these labels. "Journalism," of course, hardly needs definition, though amateur journalism as generally practised has but a remote resemblance to its professional counterpart. Our naïve founders might have come closer to reality if they had adopted as a title, "The National Association Of Play Boys And Printers."

An amateur journalist, then, is one who (by definition) cultivates the art of writing or of printing, or

both, because he desires to express his attachment to those arts. Now, you can love an art without practising it, though intelligently to love *any* art you must acquire some knowledge of its technique. If you are diligent you may eventually become a connoisseur. But if you essay to *practise* the art without study and without the slightest regard for its fundamentals, you are not in any sense of the term an amateur; you are merely a pretentious humbug. One of the simplest of all games is marbles, played usually in a ring drawn on hard ground and involving marksmanship, with one or two simple rules governing procedure and the method of scoring. Youngsters play it at the proper season with an ardor that amounts almost to passion, and woe betide the rule-breaker. If some lout were to barge in, kick the marbles out of the ring and suggest to the players, "to hell with the rules, let 's just throw the marbles at each other," the chances are that he would be mobbed. It amounts to this, that the true amateur in any art, any game, is he who strives to be a better artist, a better player. You can be an admiring non-participant, a studious observer or a connoisseur, without incurring any question as to your status ; but if you elect to burlesque the game, or attempt to prove that it is n't a game but merely a carnival of clowns, zanies and masqueraders, you deserve to be thrown out. No one criticises beginners for their lack of skill; the vital question, the test of worthiness, is, are they intent on improvement ? That is the question that scrubs on the Freshman team must face. If they are working hard to make good, they stand a fair chance to win their Letter ; if they are just horsing around, the Coach soon eliminates them.

Amateur journalism, though somewhat comparable to other sports and diversions, is lacking in their closer organization and more clearly defined objectives. Still, as reasonable human beings, we should endeavor to debunk our sloppy terminology and to label things with their correct names. Hence, I have maintained that the play boy who pretends to practise the art of writing or of printing, while at the same time disavowing any desire to improve his skill in those arts, is not in fact an amateur journalist, whatever else he may be. One of the desirable changes in our constitution would be a re-definition of membership-qualifications, a raising of minimum requirements and a separation of the sheep from the goats into definite classifications.

For many years I have steadfastly supported the theory that amateur journalism should be a dilettante pursuit whose primary object is to cultivate proficiency in the allied arts of writing and printing. To a limited extent that is and always has been its ostensible object, but I am not so foolish as to disregard the realities. While it is true that we stand definitely com-

mitted by the very name of our organization to cultural objectives, the fact is that we have never taken the obligation veryseriously. Hence, our institution is largely made up of members who are not interested in artistic or intellectual development; most of them make no pretense of seeking to improve their skill in writing or in printing. I cheerfully grant that they are in the majority, and that majorities should rule. My point is, however, that we need a new set of labels, or a new name for our association, or something — because many of these members cannot correctly be classed as amateur journalists. If you think that this is merely a technical quibble, bear with me for a moment longer. What is the effect, on an intelligent outsider, of scanning one of our typical "Bundles"? The impact must surely leave him bemused. Here, he discovers, are a number of tiny leaflets, a few larger pamphlets, a strange jargon, some lamentable examples of grade school composition, but nothing that appears to justify the name of "journalism," and certainly little to warrant the use of such a choice term as "amateur." In short, the printing is frankly childish, and the writing is even worse. If, however, you explained to the intelligent outsider, "these oddities of printing are produced for the fun of it by people of all ages who belong to the National Order Of Lazy Letter Writers, and who use this Round Robin method of communicating with each other," he would immediately get the idea, and probably think it quite clever. It is perhaps unfortunate that our higher grade examples of writing and printing do not get into the monthly "Bundles," but for various cogent reasons they have to be mailed separately.

My attitude in amateur journalism, then, is one of recusancy. I deprecate the popular concept and the popular practise of our hobby. It is my belief that our membership should be seventy-five per cent true dilettantes and twenty-five per cent play boys, instead of the reverse. I also deplore the prevalent and stupid notion that criticism is unnecessary to our progress and actually discouraging to young writers. My third major premise regarding the matter of adequate association finances has recently been taken care of in our new constitution, so we shall no longer be under the humiliating necessity of passing the hat in order to pay our printing bills for the *National Amateur*. The need for criticism, of course, will justify itself in the long run, and as for boosting the I.Q. of our membership, that may never get beyond the stage of wishful thinking. I wish with all my heart that we were truly "amateur journalists" instead of the gang of pretenders that we are. I wish that we were preponderantly an association devoted to good printing and good writing, instead of one that exists principally for political and social purposes. But I must admit that neither my wishes

nor my arguments have made the slightest impression on contemporary trends, so I must have been wasting my time.

The fact that there are a few members who share my views, does not wholly console me. We produce a certain amount of fine printing and respectable literature every year, but it is only a drop in the bucket, and the lack of stimulating, informative criticism is still keenly felt. By and large, there are no more charming people in this country than our amateur journalists, and it desolates me that I am unable to meet with them every year at our conventions. The social life of amateur journalism has always given me a tremendous lift, and if that could only be balanced by an equal development in publishing and literary work, I would feel that we amply lived up to our pretensions. It would be idle for me to deny a certain bias. Amongst writers who are really devoted to their art, there is an intimate comaraderie that I find very endearing; they are drawn together by their love of books, of particular authors, of cults and schools, of the fascinating technicalities and subtleties of the writing craft, and when a few of these devotees assemble, you may be sure they will make a night of it, just as their pals the printers do, whenever a meeting can be arranged. So, in my small way, I have tried to uphold the literary ideal and to secure for it a wider, more intelligent recognition. In the end, I have been defeated, not because the ideals I presented were chimerical, but mainly, I suppose, because Time and Change have worked against me. The pure flame of dilettantism burns but dimly in this gross age, wherein Youth is taught to despise accomplishments that cannot be coined into dollars.

Toward the end of the past century there was an atmosphere of literary romanticism in our institution — sophomoric, of course, a trifle ingenuous and sometimes faintly absurd, but cultivated with ardor by the so-called *Literati*. Today there is nothing of that sort, and perhaps it is just as well, but I regret the passing of a mood and a mode that neither our small world nor the larger domain of professional letters will ever recapture. It was something fine and frail, a momentary apotheosis of the Ideal, a form of artistic faith, a creed. Such as it was and whatever it was, it produced some praiseworthy examples of writing and printing; it also helped to shape my convictions, now so hopelessly demoded as to be almost pathetic. It strikes me as being exquisitely ironical that with all my efforts to avoid fuddy-duddyism, to keep my mind alert and open to new things, to remain spiritually young in spite of the burden of years, I seem to have failed miserably to keep pace with the changing conditions of modern literature; it is beyond my ability to understand "Finnegan's Wake," to appreciate Gertrude Stein, to enjoy Thomas

Mann or to find entertainment in vers libre. So, too, I have been unable to adjust myself to the popular conception of amateur journalism as primarily a juvenile diversion. But as to the logical and justifiable objectives of this institution, I refuse to recant a word or erase a line. At this writing I can hardly expect to continue my active participation in amateur affairs much longer; but if, ten years hence, I am still permitted to pound this ancient Corona or a possible successor, I shall undoubtedly still be whooping it up for ideas that — in contemporary opinion — are encrusted with the patina of the Mauve Decade.

— Ernest A. Edkins

— AND IN CONCLUSION

Beginning of the End

The Aonian will cease publication with the next (Winter) issue. This will complete three years of what was originally estimated as a five-year program. When completed, the magazine will comprise twelve issues and more than 300 pages.

These factors, among others, have caused this decision to be reached:

1. The retirement — due to ill health — of Ernest A. Edkins as Literary Editor and active Associate Publisher.

2. The practical exhaustion of suitable reprint material, due to: (a) already published in Spencer's "Cyclopedia"; (b) of too great a length to be utilized; (c) source inaccessible to us.

3. Increasing outside interests of the publisher which will curtail his hobby activities.

If the venture, when concluded, falls short of its promoters' hopes and its friends' expectations, no apology is offered. It will represent a considerable outlay of time and money, with its chief reward that of personal satisfaction in serving a cause that for most of a lifetime has been close to the hearts of the publishers.

Those who have received The Aonian will probably wish to preserve it. A few binders are still available from the publishers at $1.50 each. Twenty sets of copies, bound in book style (without covers) and with index and notes on contributors, will be available early next year at $10.00 each to those who may want them. Back issues, except No. 1 of Vol. I (out of print), will be supplied at 25c each to those who may wish to complete their sets. The index and notes on contributors section will be included with the final issue for those who wish to have their copies bound or who have the Aonian binder.

As this announcement means that we shall, at the end of this year, bow out of amateur journalism — save, perhaps, for desultory activity when time or inclination may serve — ; and as the final issue of THE AONIAN probably will not contain any editorial matter, we wish to take this occasion to thank all of those amateurs who have contributed in any way to whatever success we may have made of this enterprise. They have our deep gratitude for their forbearance with our faults and their heartening encouragement of our virtues.

To those who feel, perhaps, that we have ivory-towered our efforts, our regret that we could not achieve the impossible — to please all.

We Crow for the Cockerel

ANY ISSUE of *The Scarlet Cockerel* is an event, but No. 23 seems to us to be a special one, both from the uniform excellence of its contents and the distinction of its format and printing; the first attributable to publisher Captain Babcock and the second to the pinch-hitting printer, Helm Spink.

Ralph's "Editorial Copy" is the sort of free and easy comment on papers, personalities and affairs in which he has long excelled and which some other amateur editors might do well to study for style, coverage and aptness of observation.

How, under his handicaps of distance and frequent change of base, the Cockerel manages to accumulate so much distinctive and unusual material from contributors is his editorial secret and our confoundedness. In this issue he gives us, via Dora Hepner Moitoret, two delightful little essays from Jennie Kendall Plaisier (long absent from our press); a well-done humorous sketch by William F. Haywood; an unusual piece entitled "Awakening" by Betty Bird; a choice bit on Eugene Field by Rheinhart Kleiner; a really definite impression of Ireland through an observing soldier's eyes by Harold Segal, and, finally, one of those clever and amusing recitals of her camp-follower experiences by Ruth Babcock. Then — a happy touch — we are introduced to the "Pink Chick" while the rejoicing Cockerel crows.

The Scarlet Cockerel is one of the papers that is displayed when showing off amateur journalism, but it is our prediction that you haven't seen anything yet from Ralph compared to what you will see when he can call his time his own again, get his private press reorganized and really get down to carrying out some of the ambitious plans he has in mind. Ralph's goal, we surmise, is to issue ultimately the nonpareil magazine in amateur journalism, and with the publishing determination and dexterity he has shown during this war period, you can count on this ideal being realized some day. Meanwhile, if a couple of other guys and a gal we have in mind who are also "dreaming dreams" along similar lines are ever able to make them realities, there will be competition.

Edkins Is Featherdusted

Dr. King's *Feather Duster* for September is a fifty per cent E. A. E. issue, with nine of its twenty-four pages devoted to an article by Mr. Edkins on "Young Blood" and three to a discussion, by Walter S. Goff, of "Leave Taking" and one of the poems in it. The remainder of the issue is devoted to Michael White laying a soul bare (the very idea!), some reminiscences over old letters from amateurs, by Dora Hepner Moitoret, and the "Cogitations" (always welcome) of the editor-printer.

The *Feather Duster* improves, like good Stilton (ye gods, what an unfortunate simile, if the good doctor doesn't like Stilton as we do, but to heck with the wine comparison!), with age, and is fast taking high place among those amateur papers which represent the cream of the crop and are laid away for preservation.

In Good Hands

The first issue of *The National Amateur* under Editor Haywood proves that the official organ is again in capable hands. Never an easy publishing task, "Bill" seems to find it a "natural" for his editorial talents and proceeds to give us a number that measures right up to the high standard which has prevailed in recent years. We may well continue to "point with pride" at our official organ and "anticipate with assurance" an outstanding volume during this administration. A big bow, too, to Russell L. Paxton for the excellent printing job that he did, and to Helm Spink for his cover and halftone contributions. If Mr. Haywood gives us three more issues as good as this initial one, and stays within the budget allowed him by the association,—as he states that he expects to,—he will set a needed example in our official organ management.

Ho! Competition, Typos.

The July issue of *The Vigilantes*, "A Journal of Protest" published by H. Dean Aubry of Chicago, is, by declaration, a United publication gone National,—and all to our advantage, for it is a snappy, live-wire paper with progressive ideas.

Mr. Aubry is an adept in his use of the stencil medium, and we have seldom seen better mimeograph work than that of the sixty pages of his 6 1-2 by 8 1-2 paper. His lettering and drawings illustrate what can be done with a stylus in skilled hands and are really professional work. We are delighted to see his paper made available to the members of the National, if only to show our mimeographers what can be accomplished when a medium is really studied and mastered. Mr. Aubry, in his "Merry-Go-Rounders Guild," is out to raise the standard of mimeograph work in amateur publishing, and it is evident that he is well fitted to lead the Children of Mimeocraft to a Promised Land of Real Craftsmanship. At last the mimeographers in the

association have a leader, about the work of whom they may justly brag — in its field. Let us hope that they will profit from the example he sets them in his magazine.

Wit, Wisdom and Wibaldry From China

The September *Masaka* does unusual credit to Burton Crane, considering the difficulties in doing the editorial job in China and having the printing done in Virginia. It is an all-Crane job on the text, with the typical Crane versatility — clever writing, apt observation and a touch of the sort of thing that is called "realistic" elsewhere but "injurious to morals" by that publishers'-delight, the Boston "Watch and Ward Society." Of course teenagers don't need to read "chris zusi," for example, — but what do you think?

In one item in his "Mail Call Aftermath, the devilment-brewer and monkey-wrench-thrower tries to convince us that he has become a proficient calciminer. To correct his Newtonville-influence impression, however, we refer B. C. to E. A. E.'s comments on page 85 of The Aonian, Winter, 1943. "Well, well, well!" And weller! Maybe *that's* where we got our ideas — plus a look at history. But we realize, of course, that we're being "kidded" by an expert — no less!

After the "fun" Burton mentions having in printing a 7 x 10 paper (*The National Amateur*) two pages up on a 10 x 15 press, he should take on a round with a 6 x 9, two-on, on an 8 x 12 (The Aonian) with antique book stock, and really enjoy himself.

Several editorial comments in *Masaka* deserve reasoned discussion, and we hope — but don't expect — they'll get it. For instance: comments on the United; five dollar dues for the National, and recruiting activities.

To pay Burton a high compliment — almost every page of this Sept. issue of his magazine invites comment. A corking issue by our champion (despite recent attempts to usurp his title) stirrer-upper.

Amenophra

Through the kindness of Robert G. Barr, Christchurch, New Zealand, our library of amateur books and papers has been enriched by a copy of "Amenophra, And Other Poems," that collection of the early poetical work of Earnest A. Edkins which was printed by Edwin B. Hill at Detroit in 1889. The 42-page book contains twenty-nine poems, written in the author's early twenties, and they prove that even then his verse had that "musical quality" or "singing charm" so characteristic of it today.

We are indeed grateful to Mr. Barr for this and previous "assists" in helping us gather in certain items which were needed to complete our files of memorabilia.