

TRACE

LIVING LITERATURE

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JAMES FRANKLIN LEWIS

Orlovitz, Lowenfels, Thomas

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F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

R. E. Bachelor

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FROM THE JUNGLE FLOOR

M. G. Lund on J. F. L.'s Novel

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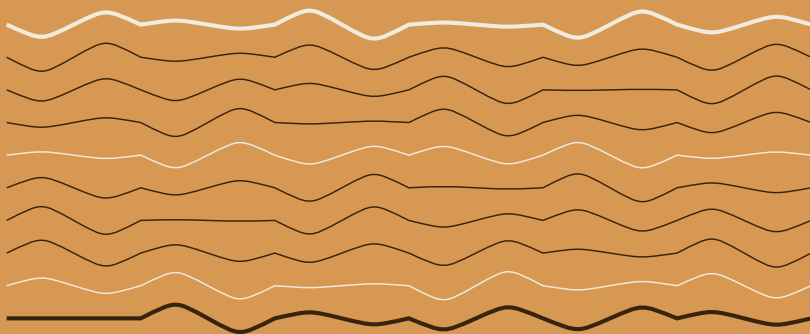
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Essays & Articles · Poetry · Reviews

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A READING EDITION

ABOUT THIS EDITION

This reading edition preserves the issue's poetry, fiction, essays, correspondence, reviews, and other literary writing in their printed order. Advertising, subscription matter, mastheads, the magazine's own contents pages, annual indexes, address lists, and the running trade directory are omitted as reference apparatus.

The text was checked against newly rendered source pages. Poetry lineation, stanza spacing, shaped indents, and hanging continuations for long lines are retained; prose continuations are joined without false paragraph indents. Conjectural readings are enclosed in square brackets, while original spelling and punctuation are otherwise kept.

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CARILLON

IF THE EDITORS can ring each coming quarter's bell, tone-true, this may confirm that the fiery 'four' of discernment does control better fortune and mercurial meaning than fecundities of 'five.' But, speaking practically — and not of symbols — we've decided a better job can be done with an enlarged quarterly. Three-month intervals will relieve time-pressures, allowing more considered attention to content; the proofs can be read in the U.S.A. where TRACE is edited (heretofore, read in London, often without opportunity to detect misinterpretations and errors in typescripts); and there will be ample time for publication of significant reactions, one issue to the next.

The important innovation, a new section of original creative writings, will in no wise alter the predominating 'personality' of TRACE, which will continue to report on the 'scene' and to print unusual articles pointing up trends, as well as delving into antecedent literature that bears upon these. As before, some of what follows the older TRACE 'line' may be creative too, though not placed in the literary section. Such features will deal with commentary, protest, or critical appraisal — if perhaps by innuendo, as in jocular satire.

Herewith featured in the first literary selection, is an excerpt from an unpublished booklength poetical work by James Franklin Lewis (1903-1945), over whose large accumulation of manuscripts, Mary Graham Lund long has been laboring. Lewis was by no means unpublished in his lifetime; in fact, his things appeared in leading periodicals, both large and small, and he achieved limited book publication in the Thirties. However, and as he had complained in letters to friends shortly before his death, almost nothing of what he'd regarded as major work, and literally nothing of what was off the beaten paths of his time,

found print.

The status of Lewis has remained, to date, distinctly minor; and could not well have ascended, considering what has to now been available. Yet, and almost entirely on the basis of published work, it had long been this Editor's opinion that Lewis had valuable ideas and a masterly, individuated expression. Now, thanks to Mrs. Lund, having read some of the unpublished works, both poetry and prose (TRACE No. 41 will carry an exciting article about his young novel, *STRANGE SPECIES*), the Editor declares Lewis deserving of comprehensive reassessment and recognition as a major voice of this Century. In his poetry and prose, he anticipated today's problems and employed methods applauded in those who came after him.

THE WEFT OF EXPERIENCE IN F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

by R. E. Bachelor

OFTEN IN the evaluation of literary works comes the comment: 'His work is just a reflection of himself. It's not real fiction—just a lonely neurotic, telling us his troubles.' Invariably attached to this kind of criticism is the tag of the impostor who is not a true artist, not a master of his craft; the work itself is then deprived of any literary merit and harshly dropped on its ear amidst low-class neighbors, the 'true confessions.'

The writings of Scott Fitzgerald were treated much in this fashion. After the fireworks of popularity riding the tails of initial publications, the flares dropped earthward; and, for Fitzgerald, the brief lights of success went out. Only lately, renewed interest, based on literary merit has shaken off the dust, and his work reappeared in literary circles.

If we pick up this bone of contention—just how the writer can make use of highly personalized emotional experience—we can, perhaps, chew off a few morsels of food for thought. In the first place, just what is fiction? Not so long ago, I heard a university teacher of creative writing, a novelist in his own right, discuss this question. His audience was a class of beginning writers, persons who often become enmeshed in the problems of writing about themselves. The professor eased their self-consciousness about indulging in personal accounts, by saying that fiction departs from autobiography as soon as the writer omits but one incident (when he does not mention that Aunt Emma was at that tea party, or tells us that his cousin is an attractive miss of twenty, when in reality she is a plain-looking career-woman of thirty-five). In other words, a fiction writer is a craftsman

in selecting one incident among many and fitting it into a total scheme, a scheme the value of which depends upon the quality of his own creative genius.

Undoubtedly, Scott Fitzgerald wrote about himself. *THIS SIDE OF PARADISE* is a projection of his college days at Princeton; his many gay stories about frolicsome adventures in the jazz age are recapitulations of his reckless, wild adventures here and abroad, when his own twenties matched those of the Twentieth Century; his novel, *THE LAST TYCOON*, is about real people in the Hollywood movie colony, people he knew when, as the forgotten author, he tried to earn a living writing for the screen—and the woman in this book is his own loved one, Sheila Graham. However, Fitzgerald did this with intent critical observation, an ability that is the mark of a good writer, to make real experience a reflection of many people in society — really in the genre of Balzac, remote though this comparison may seem in many respects.

In the introduction to *AFTERNOON OF AN AUTHOR* (a selection of Fitzgerald's uncollected short stories and essays) Arthur Mizener comments that Fitzgerald was "always conscientious about realizing the emotion as action, and seems to have had a healthy distrust of the impulse to make fiction out of confession." It was this refusal to make the pages of his novels echo the confessional box of his private torture that safely carried him over the stumbling-block that often trips up authors utilizing their personal experiences.

One of the most remarkable things about Fitzgerald is the double-faced nature of his self-knowledge, the adeptness with which he combined the subjectivity of complete emotional involvement with a scientist's precision and coolness of preparation. The result is that although he wrote poignantly about deeply-felt subjectivities, it was with the idea that the important use of this material is to illustrate general values. In the following from *THIS SIDE OF PARADISE*,

we readily see how Fitzgerald is using his own experience as a mirror which reflects other young men of his generation:

‘Why shouldn’t you be bored,’ yawned Tom. ‘Isn’t that the convenient frame of mind for the young man of your age and position?’

‘Yes,’ said Amory speculatively, ‘but I’m more than bored; I am restless.’

‘Love and war did that for you.’

‘Well,’ Amory considered, ‘I’m not sure that the war itself had any great effect on either you or me — but it certainly ruined the old backgrounds, sort of killed individualism out of our generation.’

Tom looked up in surprise.

‘Yes, it did,’ insisted Amory. ‘I’m not sure it didn’t kill it out of the whole world. Oh, Lord, what a pleasure it used to be to dream I might be a really great dictator or writer or religious or political leader . . .

Life is too huge and complex. The world is so overgrown that it can’t lift its own fingers, and I was planning to be such an important finger —’

In *THIS SIDE OF PARADISE*, and even more so in *THE GREAT GATSBY*, Fitzgerald has given us an evaluation of his age which, in its worth, in its striking presentation, in its authenticity, ranks higher perhaps than those contributed by such earlier winners of critical status as Sinclair Lewis or Theodore Dreiser. His, too, is the age of the rediscovery of values by artistic people who caustically remark on the ever-growing materialism of Twentieth Century America.

Fitzgerald writes from a knot of tension composed of what are normally considered opposing forces. The cool, detached observer in him pulls at the knot from one side while the completely involved sufferer within him pulls equally hard from the other side. The result is an unbelievable harmony, a tension quiet in tone and casual, off-the-cuff, in its ironies.

From BELOVED INFIDEL, autobiography and love story, in which Sheila Graham presents a major chapter in his life, comes an example of Fitzgerald as the detached observer, preparing events of his own experience for transmission to the novel medium.

... Listening to Scott, I had had no idea how much all of this had meant to him — that some day he would make use of it in his own book. Scott wanted to know everything about me. He probed like a reporter after a story. Instinctively I knew he would scorn the shoddy. I was prepared to suffer any ordeal rather than reveal the truth about myself. I thought, he has chosen me, I want him to be proud of the woman he has chosen. He must never feel that his girl is in reality a grubby little waif who has gotten to him by a series of deceptions. I wanted him to have the best. So I related my well-rehearsed story.

And not only did reporter Fitzgerald get the fabricated story of Sheila Graham's life but, soon after, he managed to ferret out the truth about her.

In the middle of a prolonged nervous breakdown, the author turned out three pieces commonly referred to as his 'Crack-up' articles. Writing beautifully, he compared himself to an old plate that had cracked — one that could 'never again be warmed in the stove or shuffled with the other plates in the dishpan; it will not be brought out for company but it will do to hold crackers late at night or go into the ice-box under leftovers.' He spoke of 'the real dark night of the soul where it is always three o'clock in the morning, day after day'; of a 'call on physical resources that I did not command, like a man overdrawing at his bank.'

Two years after the 'Crack-up' articles were written, Sheila Graham, upon reading them, remarked to Fitzgerald:

I don't know why you would want me to read these, Scott. What really is wrong with them? You're a writer. You've told me a writer must write the truth. This is how you felt then.

But this is not you now . . .

I don't see this as an admission of defeat but as a stage through which you passed — and one you're not in now.

According to Sheila Graham's account in *BELoved INFIDEL*, both Ernest Hemingway, a personal friend, and Scribner's, his publisher, had been furious with him over these articles. Both thought he had revealed too much about himself.

It is the writer's place, however, to be observant; and if he is observant of himself as well as of others, this too is valuable if he can objectively draw a line from his own experiences to those of all humans. Admittedly, at times Fitzgerald's involvement in a gay social life, in depressing periods of alcoholism, in subjectively writing about these things, was so overwhelming that he was not always to give us writing which represented top-level performances. However, his in no way means that what he has given us, even there, is not J.S. literature of distinction.

There is something decidedly American in writing which combines the distant observation of a craftsman with his own acutely remembered, intimate emotional life. Fitzgerald is then a writer who bridges the great gap each of us has between his public self and his personal self. It is in this way that his works, by contrast, illustrate American society, the society that also gave us Reisman's *LONELY CROWD*, an original concept for which (and in fiction analytically distorted, rather than actually mirroring society) we are indebted to Nathanael West, another tardily-recognized novelist. Reisman brings to the fore the myriads of people whose only concern is that they be able to conform to the moral standards carelessly set by their society, Fitzgerald shifts the emphasis to this same society's men of lonely conscience, men whose moral imperatives surge upward from the depths of a private, intensely felt, experience of life. These are the *trethurs* and Morris Geddes, the *Gatsbys* and *Stahrs*, and Fitzgerald himself.

TOWARDS PRINT

by Curtis Zahn

(ANTI-SOCIAL PROTEST LITERATURE)

NOBODY CAN quite stamp out the charge that, if an author is willing to die anonymously, he can choose no better conveyance than lifelong publication in the Little Magazines.

True, he may be eulogized posthumously by another 'Disenchanted' generation following World Wars III or IV; he might become the Melville of the new mutations, a Hemingway for yet another set of children betrayed by their parents. But, whether or not his clientele will still be able to read, I can't say. Nor has anyone devised a means to render Little Magazines capable of resisting 9,048 degrees, Fahrenheit. Immortality can no longer be guaranteed . . . And — while persistence in writing for such outlets, for any reasons whatever, from any viewpoint whatever, may mean protest — the largely-unrealized values more often than not are basically anti-social. Of which, more later.

Then, they ask, why the hell do we do it — write for the Little Magazines. The obvious answer for some of us is that we don't. We write. Period. (or in some cases sans periods). We say what we wish, and how we wish — a pair of violations not about to be easily forgiven by editors of the general magazines — the Slix. And even among the 'quality' magazines (and presses) — if you'll let the word through without a fight — there are certain requirements. For instance, it has been pointed out that the best way for an author to get published by Mr. James Laughlin's NEW DIRECTIONS is to have died anonymously — preferably a hundred years ago, and in a foreign country. Some of the quarterlies want their writers to be way-out, or way-in; there are editors afraid to say Damn, and editors afraid not to. Call

these things standards, requirements, taboos, fashions, or other profanities — they spell out c-e-n-s-o-r-s-h-i-p, a word much longer than anybody cares to guess. Instead of the author telling the reader, the editor is telling the author. This is dogma amongst the Slix, the Pulp, the Bigger Little Magazines. It should answer the question. You write for yourself. And certain Little Magazines permit you to do this, awarding publication. There never were so many living authors (living anonymously, albeit) knowing precisely upon what level they wish to self-express, and insisting upon practicing their prognoses, and who therefore could be insured by Lloyd's against ever appearing in *ESQUIRE* or *THE NEW YORKER*.

Their (and I may as well say our) only hope is to join the individualistic, independent, multi-styled, unbudgeted, unscheduled, and largely unread journals where it's almost like mailing a letter to yourself to protect a patent. At best, the author's work will be read by a few thousand pairs of eyes (at worst these could belong mostly to relatives and friends). His competitors will scan his opening and closing paragraphs and jot down the name of the publication as a likely outlet. Perhaps one or two agents will embark on a literary romance — doomed to end where it began — and an editor from one of the more conscientious Slix will toss on his bed all night before awakening with a foolproof rationalization for dismissal. The other hundred-and-seventy million American readers? They'll have to be left unaccounted for.

Question next in order is, or should be, what makes the author so certain he has something to say, and in such a special way.

Ego. Next question.

Then, why hasn't his ego demanded that he learn how to write for the Majority publications instead of the Minority publications? The former would provide the required prestige

and esteem.

Since I seem to be interviewing myself, anyway, I answer that many writers have tried this; they have toiled up the lonely trails, squeezing ast taboos, never looking to right or left, and rendered due satisfaction to editors, readers, advertisers. Then, having won their bread-and-butter — stomachs filled — they pondered the ramifications of the compromise. To wit: it was a rough climb. The view — if you are to look backward — is disturbing. In order to travel light, you left behind almost everything you believed in — especially the original reasons for wanting to write. Yes, a tough climb. And ditch-digging pays better for 99% of the five million Americans who give their profession as ‘writer.’ Plumbing, by comparison, is sheer tycoonery. Then, what was gained? Nothing. Was the ego pacified? No. But, here I should point out that there is a difference between wanting-to-be-a-writer and a virile compulsion-to-write. For the person wishing to identify himself as a writer, monetary solvency among the Slix is sufficient; his ego lies in being called a writer (with, of course, photo-attached checks to prove the point). But, for the person of creative persuasion — the individualistic artist, overloaded with iconoclastic originality, the life of a chained dog is not a happy one. Better he should carpenter for his food and write precisely as he must.

Logically, then, if subservience to the Slix is not, today, the simplest way to get money — and if it doesn’t satisfy the ego — the literary artist turns to those publications which permit him creative asylum. Many do. It has been wryly commented that little magazines have 1.3 more authors than readers. Even the Hacksters ‘do an occasional honest, soul-purging thinkpiece’ and mail it, with return postage, to such unknown journals as LONELY GARRET REVIEW or VIND & HILLS CALLING. But here, again, the literary escutcheon breaks off into splinter groups. We find that there are,

basically, two kinds of a-commercial writers: those who have something to say; and those who have a special way of saying nothing. The latter takes some doing; but I've been accused of accomplishing the trick myself.

At this point, I see hands coming up; the classic question, 'can the artist separate himself from his environment' — i.e.: should you sell your art for a mess of pottage (or, as somebody accused Upton Sinclair, 'sell your art for a pot of message'). There are, of course, fortunate combinations of both. But generally, American literature falls on one side or the other. We have on one hand the Pollyana piece, the detective story or western-with-social significance (sic) or we have the almost-obvious, over-simplified, and damn-tired ashcan school — a retread of the Twenties and Thirties. I contend that there is no escape from environment; that directly or indirectly — consciously or unconsciously — one's surroundings dictate one's creative stimuli. The psyche is the summation of everything experienced as applied to the individual's brain. Whether you escape into murder for SATURDAY EVENING POST or romance for REDBOOK or make it man-vs.-bear for ARGOSY, your environmental persuasion is there Bottled up or diverted — yes. And the reasons, I leave to you . . .

Then, to some extent, we are found guilty of dodging, perverting holding back; of being conditioned, or rationalizing? Yes; one could be exonerated by dwelling in a controlled experiment where one's life would be spent, isolated beyond the reach of newspapers, books, tv people, etc. One's only current knowledge would be, say, a copy of Webster's dictionary. With this and a typewriter, one could, conceivably, write a story or a poem that would be (relatively) free of social protest. But even here, there would be certain environmental factors indirectly influenced by society, and the words, themselves, would connote sociology. To a degree, however, this author would be free of the charge of

emulating, imitating. His Ivory Tower would be authentic — not a retreat from reality.

Since the writer cannot free himself of politics, sociology, psychology, to what extent should these leak through? We know that it is possible to pervert or transcend stimuli. For instance, if a motorist runs into your car, you get angry. But you cannot attack the motorist. Therefore, you divert the energy. You make it come out in attacks on Capitalism, Communism, Beats, Squares . . . This is protest-writing but it is not 'honest' protest. And there's a terrible over-production of it today. Perhaps never before in America were so many citizens able to get off so many frustrations and failures so honorably and neatly. Psychology supplied us the words, the techniques — and along with them, the rationale that it is perfectly normal to take out one's hostilities on anything except one's self.

Unfortunately, we have acceptable and non-acceptable targets. One can come out flatly and bravely against hit-and-run drivers or child molesters. To the degree that the writer wishes to identify with the Norm, he protests against those things which adherents to the Norm protest. Or, again, he may take refuge within a smaller group when it is fashionable to attack sandals-&-beards or Cadillacs or tract houses. The battle flourishing between the Beats and Squares border upon the innocuous; neither side is coming to grips with the really plaguing things. Perhaps it is little more than an incestuous quarrel — the two factions are so identically bourgeois (if you'll excuse yet another label) that each has been forced to wear a uniform to be distinguishable from the other. Basic differences do exist; but a conscientious gleaning of all facts requires more effort than a majority of persons will grant. In the vacuum between half-truths and half-lies most protest writers lack the discipline and energy to dig out these differences. Regretfully, it must be declared that almost the majority of

these 'new' writers (as the jacket blurbs go) have failed to research the present. Instead, they have retreated into Jazz, alleys, pads, and what they hope a busy world will let pass as 'subjective' or psychological self-analyses. The 'scene' was never so poorly covered as today. The gravy-train requires less effort—sex, shock, violence, sensationalism. They are not writing about life—merely highlyspecialized segments or facets of life. How many of them are reading technical or sociological treatises, to build informed premises for their alvos? Why aren't they exploring factories, experimental plants, distribution agencies, instead of slaving away at the social scene in wine-cellar? Instead of borrowing from the spent ammunition of the Thirties, they could be reading up a bit, learning the facts and figures —and then inventing their own cliches. Isolation in an ivory tower (or cellar or garret) provides neither insight nor perspective. And because of this, much of the so-called new protest writing does little more than tiredly sock away at familiar old pillory-wretches; and it reads tired—to any but incurable Squares.

If we've forgotten how to protest directly and realistically, this could be the result of the vindictive censorships of the past two decades. We've fallen into the habitual ruse of shuffling accepted truisms, rather than trying out our own individual truths. Many writers have felt pacified by getting off a line, a word, hidden inside a story where they've hoped the right readers might catch it, but the House unAmerican Committee wouldn't. Again, they have dodged what I suspect was their personal obligation, by writing stories which took place in the past (historical novels) or which they've cast in the future (science-fiction)—as the only financially-feasible ways of coping with the present. In between, and amongst these, we have other protesters—from Sokolsky or Lawrence (David), who attack leftism and unpatriotism, to Rexroth, charging rather ponderously that some man in a suit killed Dylan Thomas before he had a chance to drink himself to

death. Sokolsky and Lawrence also are ponderous, biased—and they are not above trafficking in the baldest over-simplification.

All this leaves the general reader—confused, naïve, and too busy polishing his family-sedan—square in the middle where he's first violently rocked by waves of generalization countered by opposing waves of generalization, and then left adrift on a sea of glib, nonfactual assertions. Whether he chooses to side up with heroic bums or with Horatio Alger,—well, there's his prerogative. So long as the voting-choice is limited to the alternative of the lesser lie, instead of the greater truth, no great things may be expected. Protest writing continues to fail in its social rôle; and 90 percent of what's in the independent Little Magazines reports strictly-subjective cultural illness.

THE CHRONICLE

New projects and changes—supplemental to 1960 TRACE series and INTERNATIONAL GUIDE, 1961—latest books, events . .

OF TOP INTEREST to concerned writers: a coming World Congress for Cultivating Human Spirit, in Tokyo, Kyoto, and Fukuoka, Japan. ANANAI-KYO, whose publications and conferences long have centered on international understanding, cooperates with scores of organizations, under auspices of International Foundation for Cultural Harmony. Yonosuke Nakano, Founder, extends hospitality to all—20th May to 5th June, 1961. Details from: Box 43, Numazu City, Japan.

For review in No. 41 is WALT WHITMAN'S CIVIL WAR, planned 100 years ago, just published by ALFRED KNOPF, as edited by Walter Lowenfels (\$5). Comprises hitherto scattered writings, unpublished intimate battlefield notes, war poetry—illustr. by Winslow Homer drawings . . . ALPHABET's proper address: 17 Craig St., London, Ont., Can (see ITEMS) . . . Several tardy reports again received in re ACCENT . . . The banned pacifist monthly ALTERNATIVE, has not resumed, but selected reprints may be had from 79 Douglass, Brooklyn 31, N.Y. (\$1).

ARHAT Press launches ARHAT Review: 323 E. 8th St., New York City—and has issued Stephen Levine's A RESONANCE OF HOPE . . . ANTHROPOS' suspension confirmed . . . An Italian new-art mag is APPIA (part-English), edited by Emilio Villa—\$3, via Wittenborn's, in USA. . . AUDIT (U. of Buffalo) offers Nos. 5 to 12, June '61, for \$2. Current No. has unusual analyses of trends . . . On heels of BEATITUDE Anthology (see CITY LIGHTS), came No. 17 of this mag, from: 261 Columbus Ave., San Francisco 11, Cal.—aimed at making censors miserable . . . BIRTHDAY (see ITEMS) asks

'death themes' for No. 4 (222 E. 21st St., New York City 10).

Recent BROOKSIDE Press books: PIPPINS & CHEESE, the late Herman Fetzer's Jake Falstaff columns in Ohio dailies, including BULLS OF SPRING (in USA, \$2.25, from: The Peninsula Library, Peninsula, Ohio); POEMS and Prose Poems, by E. Hobbs, Together with some poems by Walton Hobbs (unpriced); and a deluxe-Ltd. hardb. edition of Enid Jones' recent DAUGHTERS OF ZEUS is due (address: 322 Daisy Ave. (No. 6), Long Beach 12, Cal.) . . The first CHARIOTEER Poetry Award has just gone to Neil Weiss for ORIGIN OF DESIGN (CHARIOTEER Press, 601 19th St., N.W., Washington 6, D.C.). . . Richard Brautigan's THE OCTOPUS FRONTIER (\$1), just published by CARP Press, 575 Pennsylvania St., San Francisco 7 . . . Kimon Friar edits THE CHARIOTEER, a quarterly of modern Greek culture—PARNASSOS, Box 2928, Grand Central Stat., New York City 17 . . . CHICAGO CHOICE (Box 1359, Zone 90) requests mag-exchanges for mutually beneficial feature-col.—to: Marvin Bell, 5140 Kenwood, Chicago 15 . . . The other CHOICE, now is at: 536 W. Johnson St., Madison, Wis.

New CITY LIGHTS BOOKS: above Anthology, \$1.50; RIMBAUD, by Jack Kerouac, 35c; DOES THE SECRET MIND WHISPER, Bob Kaufman, 50c; HIPARAMA of the CLASSICS, Lord Buckley, \$1. Buckley's death had brought an official N.Y. investigation, at this writing . . . CONTACT No. 6 (Box 755, Sausalito, Calif.) holds specific social interest (with examples of prison art). Other news here: the magazine's ANGEL ISLAND Publ. is starting a unique avant literary agency, THE WORLD OF ENGLISH BOOK CLUB, and a cooperative literary-quarterly advertising project via INGROUP, Inc. . . . DALHOUSIE Review states preference for Canadian writers.

John W. Aldridge's next book returns to criticism, a 1962 survey of the Fifties, announced by DAVID McKAY Co. . . . DEAD LANGUAGE is again at: La Picaudiere, St Jean la Foret, Canton De Nocé, Orne, France. . . . DELTA (Can.), now 50c. . .

. D. H. LAWRENCE News & Notes, in series, 7/- or \$1 (Box 164, Madison College, Harrisonburg, Va., USA). . . . ELIZABETH is a new mag edited by James L. Weil (verse in Eliz. tradition, but modern manner) from: 103 Van Etten Blvd., New Rochelle, N.Y. . . . ESTE ES Press, Taos, New Mexico, has issued Judson Crews' INVADE TO BRINEY GARTH (\$1.25). . . . Temporary 'breather' again taken by EXODUS (to resume later) . . . FAT ABBOT (see ITEMS) is at: Box 2011, Yale Stat., New Haven, Conn., USA (\$1). . . . FOLDER EDITIONS is releasing a paperb. of A NEW FOLDER (\$1.75). . . . Priced 7/6 or \$1, FIRST PERSON remains: Drumlin Rd., Rockport, Mass.

New from GOLDEN GUIL: A GIANT OF MY WORLD, Harold Grutzmacher (\$2.75); ALL OUR YESTERDAYS, Marian Gleason (\$2.50). . . . GOOSE TREE Chronicle (J. Singer, 4913 78th Ave., Hyattsville, Md., USA) will be a poetry monthly (\$6 per yr., ltd. to 50 subscr.). Queries on mss. asked. . . . Unhappy state of US 'higher' education is reflected by the suspension, for lack of support, of the fine GRADUATE STUDENT OF ENGLISH (Minn.) . . . Off-campus mss. not being used by GRECOURT Review.

A British project similar to the CONTACT-Ingroupp plan, is THE GUILD of Independent Magazines, 25 Howland St., London, W.1, described 'united for commercial advantage only,' incl.: CRITICAL Quarterly, ENCORE, NEW LEFT Review, PERSPECTIVE, UMBRELLA, VIEWPOINT, and WALES. . . . HAWKS WELL Press offers WHITE SUN BLACK SUN, by Jerome R. Rothenberg (75c), No. 1 of 'new'-avant booklets. . . . Mail is returned from HERE & NOW (N.Z.). . . . Another book for No. 41 TRACE review: Herbert Read's THE FORMS OF THINGS UNKNOWN (HORIZON Press, 156 5th Ave., New York City 10—\$6). . . . HORNSPOON (25c), Assoc. Students, Long Beach St. Coll., 6101 E. 7th St., Long Beach 15, Cal., limited to undergrads, is of better quality than most non-limited reviews. . . . See IMPETUS letter on new project in E.W. (address: Box 1302, Stetson U., Deland, Fla., USA). . . .

Greatly enlarged IN/SERT, due from: 418 Central Park West (Apt 7), New York City 25. . . . JAPANESE POETRY in English (unpr.), here from: 37-7 Kumegawa-danti/Higasimurayama-mati/Kitatama-gun, Tokyo.

. . . A tardy review-copy of Charles Edward Eaton's WRITE ME FROM RIO (\$3.95), just in from JOHN F. BLAIR, Publ., 404 1st Nat'l Bank Bldg., Winston-Salem, N.C., USA. . . . Last issue of JUVENTIS (France) seems to be final.

KLANAK Press (now: 374 St. James Crescent, W. Vancouver, Brit. Col., Can.) offers ROCKY MOUNTAIN POEMS, by Ralph Gustafson (\$1.75). . . . Transl. of English poetry into French is feature of LIBERTE, 1130 Legachetière, E. Montreal, Quebec, Can. . . . New, is LINDEN PRESS (unrelated to British firm), 901 Lake Drive, Baltimore 17, Md., USA — Robert K. Rosenburg, editor—first year's paperbacks: OUTSIDE THE FOUR WALLS OF EVERYTHING, David Cornel deJong, POPULATION OF THE HEART, Walter H. Kerr; a yet-untitled book by Hans Juergenson; another, by Editor Rosenberg. . . . LOGOS, Queen's Coll., Charlotte, N.C., not yet here. . . . A uniform series (75c ea., \$8 per yr.) is coming from MARTIN GROSS, Box 3021, Grand Central Stat., New York 17 — Almanac Press Poetry. . . . The British MARVELL Press has issued a deluxe repr., fully illustrated, of Ezra Pound's GAUDIER-BRZESKA (30s), last printed in 1916—USA edition, NEW DIRECTIONS (\$8.25).

MIGRANT (magazine) is replaced by MICA, 216 Northridge Rd., Santa Barbara, Cal.—Editors, Helmut Bonheim and Raymond Federman seeking emphasis on 'the human element . . . and problems of our time.' (Free duplic.).

MIDWEST is a new quarterly edited by R. R. Cusaden (ex-MAINSTREAM,-VIGIL,-ODDYSSEY): 2207 W. Lunt Ave., Chicago 45, Ill. (\$35 & \$1 per yr.). Not to be confused with MIDWEST Quarterly, Dudley T. Cornish, Ed., at Kansas State Coll., Pittsburg, Kans., or MIDWEST Review, Nebr. State

Teachers, Wayne, Nebr.

MIGRANT Books offers: *THE DANCERS INHERIT THE PARTY*, by Ian Hamilton Finlay (2 woodcuts by Zeljko Kujundzic) unpr. (2 Camp Hill Rd., Worcester, Engl., or 1199 Church St., Ventura, Cal.).

Canadian MOMENT has removed—new address not received.

MUTED VOICES Anthology is to consist of translations of Russian Jewish refugee poets. Material is sought by Editor Aaron Schmuller, 459 Rockaway Pkwy., Brooklyn 12, N.Y.

A new recorded series is The NATIONAL LIBRARY of Spoken Literature, Hun School, Princeton, N.J., USA, under supervision of George Abbe and Thomas Edward Francis—both discs and tapes of poetry readings and discussions (records, \$3.95 — tapes for free loan to colleges and libraries).

Though there's no operational link between projects, Dr. Francis also is preparing *POETRY IN THE ROUND*, a text 'to enliven students to the spirit, manner and function of poetry' for the NATIONAL POETRY Ass'n., 3210 Selby Ave., Los Angeles 34, Cal.

NEW DIRECTIONS books, too late for review here: *HER*, by Lawrence Ferlinghetti (paperb., \$1.25); *DANGEROUS ACQUAINTANCES*, Choderlos de Laclos, transl. by Richard Aldington (paperb. reissue, \$1.55, hardb., \$3.75); *SOME VERSIONS OF PASTORAL*, William Empson (paperb., \$1.35).

NEW SCHOOL Press, 618 Ursulines St., New Orleans 16, La., announces dupl. 'new school poets'—first issue: 'Kaja' (15c).

New NEWSPAPER address: Box 114, New York City 12.

Dedicated to 'intellectual reexamination of society,' is NEW UNIVERSITY THOUGHT, 909 E. 55 St., Chicago 37, Ill. (50c).

OAK LEAVES (Seneca, N.Y.) has gone bi-monthly.

Late ODYSSEY address: 2044 1/2 W. Touhy Ave., Chicago 45, Ill.

Narrating 'payola' demanded by distributors and shops, OFFBEAT has suspended. This report tallies with many others. TRACE has been withdrawn from 'sale-or-return' channels, to avoid ruinous deficits; for, as Lenore Greenfield of OFFBEAT states, only subscriber support can maintain ventures in this field.

OHIO POETRY Review has ceased.

OLIVER & BOYD, Tweedale Ct., 14 High St., Edinburgh 1, Scotl. has inaugurated a paperb. series on writers and critics. The editor is A. Norman Jeffares, aided by David Daiches and C. P. Snow (3/6 ea.—in groups of 4). First Group: WALLACE STEVENS, EZRA POUND, HENRY JAMES, ROBERT GRAVES.

One Institute Quarterly (Homophile Studies) now asks \$1.50, and \$5 per yr. (232 St. Hill Sq., Los Angeles 12, Cal.).

Revival of Cid Cormans' ORIGIN is unconfirmed.

Poetry as 'an ordered outcry against materialistic and prosaic society' is invited by OUTCRY, Box 633, Tech. Stat., Ruston, La., USA (\$1).

OUTPOSTS (London) now priced 2/- or 50c, is cooperating in Dulwich Group readings at Crown and Greyhound, Du'w. Village, S.E.21.

The biggest mag of the last two years (physically) is THE OUTSIDER, 638 Royal St., New Orleans, La., USA (\$1)—the prospectus indicating omission of virtually no current trends.

Continuation of PALINURUS, noted before subm. . . . New address: STRUCTURE, (Joost Baljeu), Amaliagaat de 24, Bussum, Neth. . . . SWING is another (children's writings) BIRTH birth (see). . . . TARGETS, now: APC1, 2220 Central Ave., E., Albuquerque, N.M., USA. . . . Devoted to local stage: THEATRE 60, 100 Broderick Rd., Johnsonville, Wellington, N.Z.—edited by John Dunmore.

TOMORROW (see ITEMS) now 2/6 (Keble Coll., Oxford, Engl.). . . . Ray E. Stang's TRACINGS is a quarterly of general

interest articles stressing content, rather than style (810 W. Howry Ave., Deland, Fla., USA). Unseen: TROBAR, 1195 President St., Brooklyn 25, N.Y.—Editors: George Economou, Joan Kelly, Robert Kelly. . . . Probable ‘third coming’ of Harry Hooton’s 21st CENTURY, announced from Box 3015, GPO, Sydney, NSW, Austral. . . . No. 5 Two CITIES, to be a Tagore centennial issue (75c); USA address now: 325 E. 57th St., New York City 22. . . . THE VILLAGER is reported returning ‘accepted’ mss. . . . Late VILLIERS Publications book: CHILDREN OF THE SEA, B. E. Burt (distr. by SCORPION, 7/6). . . . VIEWS Associates offer a beautifully-encased edition of William McLeod Rivera’s poems, illustr. by Jose Luis Cuevas, Mexican artist: THE END OF LEGEND’S STRING (\$3). . . . WAGE WAR ON SILENCE, Vassar Miller, and ON THE WAY TO THE ISLAND, David Ferry (\$3 ea. cloth, \$1.65, paperb.) are new from WESLEYAN U. Press, Box 360, Middletown, Conn., USA. . . . WHEEL is reported tardy in returning mss. . . . WHITE DOVE Press now: c/o R. Padgett, Rm. 207-A, New Hall, Columbia U., New York City 27. Has issued a second booklet: SEVEN TULSA POETS (all under 25), \$1. . . . WINGS definitely suspended publication several months ago. . . . WRITER’S VOICE now: 5 Beekman St., New York City 38. . . . YEAH is still another BIRTH (‘unstill’—A Satirical Excursion (\$2 for 4). . . . Two duplic. items: YOUNG POETS TENTACLE 1 & 2 (c/o Anselm Hollo, 77 Regents Park Ter., London, N.W.1), I DREAMT I SHOT ARROWS IN MY AMAZON BRA, Piero Heliczzer; Mr. Hollo’s (apparently) fr. various Brit. and USA mags. A No. 3 is to be work of David Ball (unpr.).

EDITORS (AND OTHERS) WRITE

A distinctive personal statement once more has taken the shape of a communication in reaction to TRACE policies and, coincidentally, replies in principle to another letter and sustains editorial and other views in this issue. An unusual—even startling—fact is that this correspondent, Albert L. Tuttle, Lt. Col., U.S.A. Rtd., had a successful regular-army career.

THE QUESTIONS of freedom and free will have never been settled; but as an operational concept, it is perhaps useful to pretend that, in some sense, choices are possible. If denied in ‘thought,’ what happens to ‘responsibility?’ If one decides to ‘accept life’ and tries to make something out of it, what other basis is at hand?

Human life has been short-changed and belittled by naïve assumptions that Art is a gingerbread decoration with respect to the world of practical affairs, that it may be taken or left out of account, at will, with no vital effect either way — to say nothing of its being viewed with suspicion . . . a wile of the devil, no less.

I suggest, as a useful notion, that the building of a life may be considered as affording opportunity to exercise the most profound and important ‘Art’ of all. One’s life should be a creative enterprise, to the end; every form into which one shapes his actions should be thought of as embodying aesthetic principles toward economy of motion, painless absorption of shocks, ease of communication, a sense of well-being, a feeling for the depth-dimension in common experiences and mental attitudes that eliminate frustration and futility. The spirits of good will, humility, constructive inquiry should be invoked, for a calm, dispassionate attitude concerning whatever happens or is contemplated may happen.

Searching of the soul and the intricate patterns of the intuitive mental operations which are the essence of being for any creative artist, should be recognized as necessary and proper conditions out of which every human being may attempt to construct his life — just as an artist constructs a work of art.

An explicit intent to discover something of one's own authentic self should be present; and one should steer clear of frozen concepts and stereotyped thought-habits. Infantile indoctrinations must be resolutely shaken off; while nothing is accepted as final or 'settled,' the fires of legitimate enthusiasm should be kept gently burning, ready to tinge good conversation with a slight glow, — and all matters of putative 'knowledge' held in aesthetic restraint with a not-too-urbane urbanity.

The significant unit in society is the creative individual whose independent spirit cannot be intimidated into any kind of conformity by mass pressures. Every such a one, consciously committed to the development of disciplined judgment and taste, a critical evaluation of ideas and a refined sense of meaning and form in the arts, becomes a strong unit justifying his existence by exemplifying a dynamic conception of human worth and dignity. He is 'inside history,' not merely swept along willy-nilly, by the inanities, the imbecilities (not to say the vulgarities) of our so-called civilization.

GUY OWEN (IMPETUS): 'William Taylor and I are now editing No. 2 in our chapbook series, a paperbound anthology of young Southern poets. SOUTHERN POETRY TODAY . . . seeking submissions (original and unpublished, only) from poets who now live in the South or who were born and educated there. The deadline is Mar. 1, 1961 (to Stetson U., Deland, Florida). Our special interest is the talent developed since the war. We have no strong editorial bias, except that we refuse to read antebellum claptrap. No moonlight-andmagnolias,

please. That this anthology will include diverse poets is evidenced by the variety amongst those already known will be represented.

‘I suppose the only excuse for still more verse anthology is that there hasn’t been one like this in perhaps a generation. Of course we realize there is no such thing as Southern poetry; there are only good and bad poems. Furthermore, we don’t expect to establish community of singing bards in Dixie, or to incite a revival of neo-something-or-other. The South has recently produced more than its share of novelists and short-story writers; we are curious to find out who is writing poetry in the South today, and what their work is like. We hope others will be curious, too.’

HAROLD WITT (whose new book of poems was scheduled by MacMILLANS, as this was received): ‘I must thank Lawrence Barth for his remark (TRACE No. 38) concerning my story, ODE TO MISS LOWDERMILK; but I would be pleased if you’d let him and readers know that his assumption is wrong that the author never mentioned its previous appearance to the editor of HEARSE. When E. V. Griffith wrote me he wanted to reprint the story, I gave permission and told him he should also ask Lee Lukes (editor of DECADE); and he assured me he would do so. He may have done this, but failed to credit DECADE. Since I never received a contributor’s copy, I assumed HEARSE had reached the cemetery and my story had been buried with it,—which may have been the fault of my then-frequent change of address.

‘I’m laughing at Jane Esty’s war (same No. 38) with her would-be contributors. I wasn’t guilty of any of her listed “deadly sins,” but I did receive, when I unwittingly submitted something to the magazine a letter carefully explaining the nature of poetry. Her answer to my answer descended to the kind of “character attack” from contributors which seems to amaze her (she addressed me as “Child Harold”).’

MEL WEISBURD (COASTLINES): ‘Many will be interested in our failure to obtain tax-classification as a non-profit corporation. My letter to the California Franchise Tax Board supplies our side of the picture:

“In view of both Federal and California denials of our applications, and of the actual non-profit nature of our activity, we have found it impossible to pay the minimum franchise tax for the income year ending Dec. 31, 1959, and therefore unfeasible to continue as corporation. Consequently, there is no other alternative open to us but to forfeit our franchise.’ “This decision is made with the deepest regret, since we feel that a purely literary venture, such as ours, operating as a labor of love, and satisfying a need in our culture not served by the large, commercial mass-communication media (for whom corporation laws are designed) is not entitled to non-profit corporate status. We regret also that the Franchise Tax Board and the Internal Revenue Service are entirely unaware of the history and financial condition of the little poetry magazines in America. No honest effort has been made to date to officially evaluate the plight of magazines so devoted, and to encourage their continued existence.

“In our case, we neither possess the staff, nor the funds to take care of anything, but the cost of publication (and scarcely can do that), as a review of our previous tax records will indicate.”

R. R. CUSCADEN (MIDWEST — ex-VIGIL): ‘Just a note regarding the comment in TRACE No. 35, which wondered if censorship were not involved in VIGIL’s demise. It is, I suppose, in these unenlightened years, only natural that the question arose, since VIGIL . . . was rather free-wheeling. However, I’d like to state as strongly as I can, that Roosevelt University had nothing whatsoever to do with the cessation. VIGIL’s folding was due solely to the fact that a replacement editor could not be found after I left school. In all candor, I

can't say the University was exactly overjoyed with the last issue; but the school's history of liberalism is undeniable, and indeed, unique — as the two issues of *VIGIL* prove. Incidentally, copies of both . . . are still available, and I should be happy to forward them to anyone for 25c mailing-costs (2207 W. Lunt, Chicago 45, Ill.).'

FELIX SINGER (author of *THESE* 17), to an editor who rationalizes no-pay: 'I have your letter explaining at length why you don't pay poets . . . Whitman called for a poem that convinces as a mother and child convince; I'd be glad for an editorial rationale that convinces as a dollar bill convinces.

"You imply that you have no use for this money-society and would be 'perfectly willing to give away my poetry . . . or magazines, or food.' Noble. Next year, I'll be broke. Past experience indicates I'll find it next to impossible to find employment. Even assuming the highly unlikely, that I could bring myself to ask you, I rather doubt that you'd be willing or able to feed me for the many months it would take me to get hired. For 13-plus years of hard work, I have striven for just one goal — minimum self-subsistence as a writer: around \$1,000 a year would have sufficed. Little Magazine editors who have used my material could have contributed toward this goal; but—no—most of them needed their money for vodka and expensive two-color stationery and Dylan Thomas records. Also, they had to plaster their magazine with arty abstractions by painters already widely exhibited. It is because, after nearly fourteen years, the time and energy and nerve-drive are gone—because it is no longer possible for me to function as an artist and feed my face at the same time—that I'll have to quit at the end of this year. This is not unusual. What's unusual is that I have rejected the usual whorish compromises in advertising, journalism, and the universities.

The writer spends far more than most people realize on myriad incidentals. He has a living to make, and wants to

make it as a writer. The question is not what his writing is worth. What is it worth when a doctor saves your life? The fact that no financial evaluation is possible will not keep the doctor from sending you a bill nor excuse you from paying it. There is hardly an editor—and this most certainly does include you—who could not economize on printing or other expenses and use the savings to send the writer a buck or two; a minimum, a contributor's copy and a dozen postage stamps.

The writer is giving value—the editor acknowledges that it is value by accepting the piece. But, if the writer is at all mature, he does not swoon when he sees his work in print. Being in print might be (all else being equal) better than not being in print; but a lot does depend on the publication's format, proofreading, distribution. To be printed is not payment enough. The editor who "cannot afford" to pay his writers cannot afford to put out a magazine; he uses the works of others to create his own pattern, willingly pays for paper and printing and postage, but for the raw material itself—not a penny. Parasite is the word.

"I am providing a vehicle, not a profitable means," you wrote. "I am rendering a service, not a product." It is past time, surely, that this particular conceit of Little Magazine editors be laid to rest. When the editor withdraws his name from the masthead and substitutes the legend: "Edited by an anonymous servant of Literature," then I'll take this pose a bit more seriously. Until then, I will assume that the editor functions as editor for the same reasons that a writer writes—self-expression, self-realization, ego-satisfaction, etc. There are, to be sure, those editors who act in other strictly editorial capacities to help writers and writing. Those editors understand the problems; consequently nearly all of them pay and advocate payment.

NORMAN MOSER (TRANSFER): 'Clarence Major's recent TRACE plea for all poets to edit magazines of their own,

provoke thoughts in one 29-year-old editor-reviewer-writer who often finds himself disgusted at certain aspects of avant-garde publishing. 'I fail to see how the deliberate perpetuation of editorial-bias-only is an aid to anybody, whether in the worlds of book-publishing, slick mags, or little mags. And it obviously does exist in great prevalence in all three realms. A one-minute history of modern publishing on all levels here could not fairly ignore the fact that publishers have most conspicuously stayed away from displaying new and often widespread trends in poetry. Which of course opened the way for more and more avant-garde publishing.

The most disadvantageous effect of the above has been implicitly to encourage the single-minded (protect-our-little-area) approach to editing. What is needed is not more, and deliberate, subjectivity in editing, but a profound, genuine attempt at reinstating the classic concept of editing as the practice of openminded perusal of whatever is submitted; and this entails not defining poetry in advance — especially, not in terms of type. It is only making things worse, to hide behind the shield of “universal subjectivity.” The only way to make the concept of “objectivity” in editing come alive again is the creative tough use of it! It will then cease to be only a word.

TRACE itself must to some extent be included here, since it seems to thrive spiritually on the situation that exists: the very “littleness” of so much publishing today. The magazine has certainly performed many valuable services. Not every issue nor even every article,— but certain passages in TRACE more and more read like a father who is no better off than the litter, who is soothing everyone’s EGOcentric aches and pains. And the fact that many established quarterlies are and always have been reluctant to publish any but the safest verse does not uphold Mr. Major and so many like him in stating an editorial preference — in print — anti “traditional” verse. Not even honesty justifies that simple sign to future

contributors.

But, some very good things are done in avant-garde publishing. One must admire individualistic, free-swinging editors who have not entirely-deformed and one-sided views of “quality” poetry. As poet, some early poems have appeared, gratefully, in periodicals that by no imaginative stretch are anything but little mags.

‘An as-yet comparatively unknown critic nationally, I recall some very disconcerting experiences. Editors’ and publications’ names are withheld . . . for uncluttered comparisons and clear treatment of the issues, rather than politicking. Here are cases: two international periodicals on theater did not even bother to answer queries from this writer, while the managing editor of one of the half-dozen slicks that publishes half-way decent fiction and articles answered with a detailed personal letter. A West Coast “liberal” publication that no doubt prides itself on its utter honesty, returned the first of a series on Bay Area theater for three months in a row, saying merely: “update it,” finally confessed the article had not from the outset been what they’d had in mind, even if they had promised to run the series. Local film festival authorities received another story entirely, as to why a summary piece requested of me by a British magazine was pulled at the last minute, whereas a Bay Area film periodical went out of the way to clear suggested changes in a review. The editor of a San Francisco periodical in a similar medium, on the other hand, cut nearly one-fifth of an essay without permission, in addition to publishing an editorial note to the effect that he could not back up a good deal of what the author was saying, and quoting from correspondence of mine which was clearly not meant for public consumption. A New York film magazine returned a reappraisal of a famous German propagandist’s work with the suggestion that I revise to allow much more space to audience-motivations for viewing it (I countered that

this was obviously not within my intention, but necessitated a new piece). A weekly paper, after having published a play-review sent me a most distracting two-page critique of it; and a specialized cultural publication in financial straits, on accepting an initial freelance theater review, listed me along with a dance reviewer in similar circumstances — and without consulting either of us, as an “Associate Editor.” A magazine for which I was contributing editor for three years, totally revised, without my knowledge, a longish feature piece on the film festival. The by-line was removed; but, with my name on the masthead as film critic, readers must have surmised I wrote a bad article that was as much a surprise to me as to anyone. I simply cannot recall the number of times local mags and papers have “lost” controversial pieces of mine.

What in hell can be the matter with these people anyway? Individualists and the survival-instinct notwithstanding, these things simply should not have happened. I have always stuck up for individualism but it seems to me a little more personal “professionalism” (which includes tacit standards) and plain concern for other human beings — writers, editors, and reviewers included — might be good for all of us.

Meanwhile, Lawrence Barth continues to make thoughtful, responsible comments. His suggestion of a conference of little-magazine editors seemed a good one. It might help alleviate such petty familial squabbles as D. V. Smith’s wanting writers to give loot to OLIVAN[?] when some can barely afford stamps. Smith, then, had a valid point against editors of THE SIXTIES, one of whom, in turn, gave him examples of the kind of imagery they could use. Such absurdities are quite terrifying.

Observe the astute de Tocqueville, in 1935: “. . . the numbe of periodical and semi-periodical publications (in U.S.) seems incredibly large. The most enlightened Americans attribute the little influence of the press to this

excessive dissemination of its power.” Setting aside the “power” book, slick-mag, and newspaper outfits, multiply that several times for one view of the current state of things.’

ALDEN A. NOWLAN (CANADIAN WRITER): 'I OFTEN THINK THAT TOO MANY LITTLE MAGAZINES ARE CONCERNED EXCLUSIVELY WITH ART — PRIMARILY WITH WRITING. THIS IS TRUE NOT ONLY OF OUTRIGHTLY-CRITICAL REVIEWS, BUT OF MANY CREATIVE MAGAZINES AS WELL. OFTEN, OBVIOUSLY, THESE MAGAZINES ARE PRODUCTS OF, BY, AND FOR WRITERS — WOULD-BE OR OTHER. NOW, I AM A WRITER PASSIONATELY INVOLVED IN WRITING. BUT I DON'T PARTICULARLY WANT TO WRITE FOR WRITERS. I'D LIKE TO SEE MORE MAGAZINES CONCERNED WITH THE WORLD AND WHAT HAPPENS IN IT. MAGAZINES LIKE THE DEFUNCT MISCELLANEOUS MAN. I KNOW SUCH MAGAZINES EXIST; BUT I DON'T THINK THERE ARE ENOUGH OF THEM. CRITICAL AND TECHNICAL MAGAZINES ARE NECESSARY. BUT CREATIVE MAGAZINES SHOULD BE JUST THAT — CREATIVE, RATHER THAN FILLED WITH POEMS AND

**STORIES WRITTEN TO DEMONSTRATE
CERTAIN CRITICAL THEORIES OR,
WORSE, TO PLEASE CERTAIN FELLOW
WRITERS OR CRITICS.**

The trouble with writing today is that most beginners have nothing to say. In the biographical notes in *NEW AMERICAN POETS, 1945-60* (EVERGREEN) one of the poets laments that “projective verse” doesn’t come naturally to him, implying that his psyche is twisted into all sorts of grotesques shapes because of his difficulties in this type of writing. Many such poets are so preoccupied with their own voices that they forget the reason the human race learned to talk — not to demonstrate some theory, but because of something humanity desperately needed to say.’

COULD WE HAVE ANOTHER INFERNO, PLEASE?

asks the Australian philosopher-poet Harry Hooton

JOHN CIARDI (TRACE No. 38) says we shouldn't write poetry if we 'have something terribly important to say.' What penetrating insight into the true nature of poetry! We all know how Dante's poetry was marred for all time by the terror, horrific intensity, heartfelt cries of longing, anger and anguish in his work. Ciardi knows — he has just finished translating the *INFERNO*, which is quite charming and sweet really, in its way, and shows an amazing facility and felicity in its choice and arrangement of words, apart from the messages of course. And Dante himself was, for some obscure reason, deluded by the belief that he had something 'terribly important' to say . . .

Well, Ciardi knows nothing of Dante, the poet, nor of any other poet—no matter how many books he may translate from another language—to make such an inept, inane, and imbecilic statement. Would Ciardi have told Dante that he was mistaken—in writing poetry out of a mood of such emotional intensity—in supposing his view of hell to have been so terribly important? Dante would have laughed; only there would have been no mirth in his laughter—only the cold despair of genius confronted with educated stupidity.

But Ciardi is not merely attacking Dante's message (which may seem dated now, after six hundred years of other people's critical struggles), since the above quotation is from advice for the younger poets; he is attacking us. Dante, the man, is dead; he cannot refute his detractors by pointing to the burning message of his words. But some of Dante's poetic fire leaps in us; we can refute Ciardi, for we know that the real poet means everything he says, with every quiver,

breath, blood- and brain-cell. Every great poet has a message for his age in terms of life and death, of heaven or hell. And hell!—our feelings about it are important, no matter how diffidently the lifeless, bloodless ones may slur over this momentous matter as irrelevant.

If it was good enough for Dante to write the hell out of him, it is good enough for us. Only our hell is not this fire in which a loving father could propose to burn his children alive; it is not a hell we prescribe, but proscribe—one we intend to quench with a later, not greater, poetic truth. We are confronted by the hell a debased humanity raised in Hiroshima, a Twentieth Century hell. How dare these people calling themselves poets say that we may write about an old lady playing a clavier, or a layabout in the lake isle of Innesfree, or an old man with the bottoms of his trousers rolled, but that we can't make a poem out of this! They can say it's only because they have set about doing their full share in debasing humanity by depreciating its noblest impulse in poetry.

O course, we know that the import of our message is nothing without words, without poetic form. There is nothing more important than a phone directory, if we urgently need a doctor; but a phone directory is hardly poetry. It is not enough for the poet to be excited—his poem must be exciting. However, these people aren't submitting the finished poems to aesthetic analysis; they are telling us beforehand how we are to write them, what we are to write about (or rather, what not to write about). Well, we will write about anything, if we can discipline emotion aroused in us into appropriate poetic form.

We do not mean then that every poem must be written in white-hot anger. Love, peace, compassion, innumerable emotions, can occasion a poem; but there must be a strong emotion of some kind. How dare these people say we may have one sort of emotional attachment, or devitalized

detachment, and not another? If Wilfred Owen could say 'the poetry is in the pity,' why can't we say it's in the power, or the passion—or the pacifist program or social revolution? Either it will be, or will not be, poetry—no matter what it's about. But these people will not read the poem; they are preoccupied with subject matter. It is idle to attempt to rebut their charges on the more principled level of aesthetics—we are forced to defend our work on the factual level of message. They are not only resisting the magic, which may be irresponsible fantasy or fanciful lies—they are fighting the living truth.

They are especially fighting new ideas. They don't like intellectual content in poems (which they would restrict to images). The connection between images and imagination—the intellect which arranges them—is of course overlooked. But, if we can have a beautiful image, why can't we have a beautiful idea? Or, a formula, system, sum, whatever we like to call it? A poem can be about anything—men, maids, mountains, machines, new worlds or new ways of life; but it cannot be about nothing. Yet, it is precisely this surgery, this evisceration, this extraction of any life, which modern criticism seeks when it attacks poetry-with-a-message. Everywhere, there is a concerted and sustained attack on the content of poetry, as opposed to its form, . . .

if Ciardi may say, as he does, quite reasonably, that he is not legislating, but simply casting his vote. Well, his vote coincides with those of Yeats, Eliot, Stevens, a thousand others who have had nothing unequivocal to say.

Yeats sneers: if you have something important to say, buy space in a newspaper—but if you want to become a poet, hang around and overhear words whispering to one another. He might as well have said that every piece of music must be a lullaby or every painting a cameo or a miniature. Well, we'll make works of art, whether they are murals, morals,

mosaics, martials—anything under or over the sun.

For, under all this deft, subtle, diffident detachment, lies a malicious and envious dread—that somewhere in the eternal youth of poetry there may be emerging another Dante. They must forestall this new voice. How pathetic and contemptible their own feeble efforts would look in comparison to work anywhere near as exalted as the great poetry of the past. They must discredit a message to keep poetry down to their own level, to maintain their own position. This is not an especial attack on Ciardi, whose praise of Frost and other comments indicate some worth in other directions; it is an attack on the sixty-year-old decline in poetic values which has conditioned him—and to some extent all of us. But Ciardi is not really looking for great poetry, or for great potentials. We can agree with him, go much further in fact, that the aches, pains and howls of the West Coast Beats add up to stench. But what does he say about Leslie Woolf Hedley? Like the others—nothing. How could he recognize the existence of a poet with something so important to say? Hedley is too vital and real to mention. But perhaps he has never heard of him. Perhaps he has never heard of the magazine *INFERNO*, which Hedley published for most of the last decade. That might be too close to the real Dante for Ciardi to acknowledge.

The people who attack poetry-with-a-message are attacking poetry. It is as simple as that. There is no poetry without a vital, overruling and supremely important message. The schoolteachers want the poetry dead, in books, to be translated 600 years afterwards, when the life and urgency of the message fails to present a challenge. Well, I am issuing this challenge, making this charge—on my own behalf and for whatever men may be left who believe that poetry pulses with the same deathless power through Twentieth Century life as it did through medieval Europe. With few exceptions, what is commonly currently acclaimed

poetry is puerile impotence; possibly excepting Sandburg, no poet approaches the stature of Dante. If our notable contemporaries have their way, there never will be.

Poetry is a mystery . . . it can come from as many sources as there are living human beings. When almost every literary critic sneers at what we feel we must express, we must protest. . . . The published and publicised are all writing trivial, vapid rubbish. We need poetry to raise Hell.

HENRY MILLER

(AN INDIVIDUALIST AS SOCIAL THINKER)

by James Boyer May

‘ONE OF (MY discoveries) was that one cannot hide his identity under cover of the third person, nor could one establish his identity solely through the use of the first person singularly. . . . To be born an eagle one must get accustomed to high places; to be both a writer one must learn to like privation, suffering, humiliation. . . . Nor should one slave to make words explode like firecrackers, in co

formance to the ballistic regulations of inebriated semanticists.... Only to one who has not found his way is it permitted to ask all the wrong questions, to tread all the wrong paths, to hope and pray for the destruction of all existent modes and forms.’

These excerpts from the unpublished NEXUS help to clarify some of Henry Miller’s misconstrued meanings. They were purposely selected from an EVERGREEN Review, because this magazine also features writers who confuse the public about avant literary trends and social philosophies. These have been using scratchy nibs shoved (inductively and deductively) into Millieran pen-holders; so that Miller, finally achieving status, is misclassified with literary mal-practitioners and adolescents (aged 18 to 42) noisily parroting his phrases in irrelevant contexts. While some of them really may have misunderstood him, they’ve been rendering his purgative franknesses into shockingly-ugly stereotypes to suggest perverse ideas—or none.

This article, conceived on reading TO PAINT IS TO LOVE AGAIN (CAMBRIA BOOKS via HORIZON PRESS) and after another

look at THE HENRY MILLER READER (NEW DIRECTIONS), did not please an editor who had asked for something about Norman Mailer. Mailer's recent work has seemed less interesting than THE NAKED AND THE DEAD, which had bored this Editor. Miller has contrastingly worn well, along with a few others, including Lawrence Durrell, who edited THE READER, Kenneth Patchen, Paul Goodman.... Such writers are as remote from Mailer and the 'howlers' of anti-humanistic beatness (rather than 'beatitude,' as a San Francisco magazine and anthology of that name would have it) as they are from slick and not-so-slick 'square' adapters of formulae. These dedicated authors are not spouting mere opportunistic lip-service to dubious social consciousness and self-serving 'social conscience.'

Not wasting attention on those who have attracted more publicity than they merit, and because—Miller not being a poet—some may demur that poetry is 'different,' let's look first at Patchen, to demonstrate distinctions between genuine and pseudo-protest. The famous bitterness of Patchen will be found inseparable from compassion, an element entirely missing in these others. His recent BECAUSE IT IS contains neither ideological tracts nor maudlin ego-frustrations. And its most blunt satirical lines convey understanding humor. For example, passages from BECAUSE sometimes the handwriting eats away the wall:

Oh, the trash disposal unit shlupps happily
Through a stack of Mozart—as arranged for
Hi-futility Disneyphone; and the yawning deep freeze
Settles ever further into the Bloodywood bed.

*For the star-spangled bull has swallowed the
tiddleywink,
And the chrome-plated devil stirs in the kitchen
sink.*

* * *

Yeah! the Loonies! the Loonies are really loose!

*And it's much, much later and lousier than
anybody thinks!*

. . . reflecting disturbance in a talented man of conscience, not in a hysterical exhibitionist.

And Patchen's grim humor should be underlined (Miller's is more Rabelaisian); the neurotic, questionable jests of these others are force statements of the macabre, descending to the category of the 'sick jokes lately popular in nightclubs. They fit well, too, with emergence of grisly ribaldries from certain academists who nevertheless hold aloof from such miscalled experimentalists. A collection of this 'upper level' stuff was in last summer's CARLETON MISCELLANY appropriately introduced by Nineteenth Century masocho-sadistic bit from Forneret, Cros, and Alfred Jarry, the revival of whose 'Pata physics' was attempted by EVERGREEN.

Patchen (as does Miller) incorporates in his Philippias something seldom convincingly evoked nowadays: love. John Simon has analyze (last October's AUDIT), the common iterations of the mere word 'love.' 'Indeed, all this dragging in of love as a deus ex vagina is only a sorry testimonial to the essential lovelessness of these poets . . .' Were a 'Beatituder' to describe his painting, in the genre of Miller's work, a likely title might be: TO PAINT IS TO BE RECRUCIFIED.

Patchen-parallels with Miller also illustrate how honest writers find distinctive voices. Most late-hailed 'innovators' are tuned to just on pitch-and-key — that of professional avant protest. Curiously, the contemporaneity of this with the trampoline obsession, is reminiscent of those years when the Marxian fad suitably coincided with the popularity of yo-yo. These pseudo-rebellious effusions emanate no more literary originality than murmurings of traditionalists; verifications may be sampled in THE BEAT SCENE (CORINTH) which together with Jack Kerouac's THE SCRIPTURE OF THE

GOLDEN ETERNITY (TOTEM & CORINTH) well indicate 'difference achieved, not through personal expression, but through 'Pataphysics and other inversions of esoteric philosophies.

Honestly independent attitudes would prove terrifying to Miller imitators; they'd be pushed beyond rationalizing the physical and sensational worlds, compelled to relax embracements of modern De (so to speak), and driven to climb precipices of their own lone choices. Current quarterlies are filled with spurious nihilisms to defer individual responsibilities (many in fact toeing the Communist line— as, note Alvah Bessie's bald denial of responsibility for his child in CONTACT No. 6), and condoning surrenders to social turmoil. Series of screaming profanities distract and excite those readers who make no critical examinations of noisy 'resignations' from society.

A special relevance of Miller's book is contextual—the very opposite basic attitude from which it rose being demonstrated by absence of would-be profound special pleadings. This, with reference to the opportunistic arty-protesters making much of something known throughout ages: that genuine contributions cannot result from deliberate intellectual exercise, and that aesthetic significance cannot be constructed out of selected modifications of already-accomplished innovations. Fred Attneave put this in a dozen words in STOCHASTIC COMPOSITION PROCESSES (THE JOURNAL OF AESTHETICS, June 1959): 'Most people are quite unable to do anything in a random way...' The point is just that obvious authentic individuated departures are drawn from the irrational unconscious levels; any premeditated rearrangements already must have existed in preceding patterns. To be sure, nothing comes from nothing, and each innovation springs from memoried images, sensations, and reactivates modes; but uniqueness is 'dream jumbled.' Put another way: intellectual controls are withdrawn at a true creative instant.

Semi-popular avant exhibitionists dote upon these negative factors in art. Their descriptions of their own involuted posturings betray their selfconscious avoidance of essential solitary disciplines. Their doodlings reveal they have not climbed to any 'high places,'—that they have indulged indolent speculations; finally, that they have sought to establish identities 'solely through the use of the first person singular.'

Miller's text also provides connotative evidence of valid understanding of Attneave's assertion. Laughing (some of his best humor is here) wisdom enlivens these pages, with many references to '... all the worlds which go to make up our world....' Again, he writes directly of 'metaphysical essence,' of consciousness in all being, as in describing stones gathered on the beach as 'grateful' and taking on 'new expression.' He shows appreciation that highly-developed self conscious skill may be a 'danger' to those who should remain fundamentally free, though they must have undergone disciplined preparation for art,—balancing his oblique statements of theory, acknowledging necessity of both inspiration and painstaking labors.

Many a modern betrays a notion that mere spontaneities merit high recognition. Such silliness should not call for comment, except that it has been confused by social considerations. Only limited portions of the writings of entire centuries have retained both social and cultural significance — and these ensued deep assimilation of experience and study, such as Miller describes (theoretically) in *To PAiNt . . .*, and in contemporary notes on the earlier *READER* excerpts.

Another way to distinguish the genuine from the fraudulent is to discover which comes from pseudo-pessimists and which from real pessimists. The latter are makers and doers — and prophets. In his prophetic role, Miller — like Patchen — joyously, as well as tragically, appears as no by-product of diseased society; false prophets

reflect only alternating phases of their own depression and mania over beings ‘misunderstood,’ revealing themselves as results of ubiquitous social illness. This isn’t without value; but their obscene sentimental lament usually are irrelevant to letters.

Few fragments of self-pity are in Miller, who repeatedly conceded that positive solutions to his personal problems must come through enhanced self-knowledge. When he cries out against the world he affirms it to be his world. He does not try to ‘save’ his subjectivity from figmentary ‘reality’ where shared guilt conveniently might be nailed to some non-existent crucifix of outer causes.

The implications of Miller’s declarations of a-political intention — his rejection of organization, his refusal to be called a social writer — have eluded many. His representative statements show that his major meanings rest upon inner responsibility; he has been saying that group protests and labeled fealties are just ways of sidestepping personal decisions. An extreme ideal: each man, his own savior. And one that has earned Miller the enmity of a large percentage of the prominent ‘liberals’ (besides, power-seeking ‘radicals’), in addition to the hatred of orthodox conservatives. And yet, if enough people could be persuaded to go along with him in granting the possibilities of private solutions, there would be no social problems.

THE READER contains many relevant passages. ‘It is a dilemma of the first magnitude, a dilemma fraught with the highest significance.’ One has to establish the ultimate difference of his own peculiar being and doing to discover his kinship with all humanity, even the very lowest. Acceptance is the key word. But acceptance is precisely the great stumbling block. It has to be total acceptance and not conformity.’ (from THE TIME OF THE ASSASSINS). . . . ‘A new world is in the making, a new type of man is in the bud. The masses, destined now to suffer more cruelly than ever before,

are paralyzed with dread . . . ' (from *THE WORLD OF SEX*). And here's sharp delineation of the psychological perils in forceful, organized reform (from *SEXUS*): 'The power which we long to possess, in order to establish the good — the true and the beautiful, would prove to be, if we could have it, but the means of destroying one another.' Then, his own answer (from *PLEXUS*): . . . we will have reached a point of such profound despair that we will be willing at long last to assume the full responsibilities of manhood. That means to live for one another. . . .

Again referring to not-new 'revelations' of those who do not justify their dredgings of the 'stream'—Miller has long utilized identical really-unesoteric complexities. He has practiced the Jungian rites; *THE READER* notes indicate these experiences have been fundamental in developing personality for each level of creative struggle. Thus, his feeling that words had been 'given;' each stage had seemed readied in advance. Like observations are in his recent Foreword to Omarr's *HENRY MILLER*: his world of *Urania*.

Whatever his limitations in different periods, Miller was aware from the beginning what he wished to say. He has repeatedly indicated cognitions of apposite qualities in his crudest compositions—for others—while candor has caused him to express doubts about achieving communication. His almost-casual confessions of personality-deficiencies form extreme contrasts to the pitiful droolings of those with whom he has been confused. Miller has reveled in words—bad language, if you will—but he has not masochistically employed them to extend a private purgatory. When pondering intimate experiences which were physio-sensationally identical to those of the maunderers, he has refrained from bleating self-exhibitions. He has used them to level ground for social statements, not to rig childish excuses for dissipation, neither as bravado nor in selfconscious sensational purposes. These examinations of

personal life are tied with problems of 'all men;' and strayed verbal meanderings have been left in several texts, to provide targets for later and wiser self-contradictions. The 'strayed' portions of course are the most imitated by those who never were lost (in the sense of the philosopher commencing from a no-knowledge premise) and who never have written through such phases to achieve better meanings.

The sickest pornographic crudities (yes, there is healthy pornography) continue to be called 'writing like Miller.' The tag is attached to the most unimaginative, repetitious, boring stuff—with about as much justification as to contend that some third-rate novelist who referred to dogs farting under a banquet table, therefore was 'writing-like-Shakespeare.' These bad imitators might be described as four-letter-word orators campaigning for funds to raise phallic statuary in commemoration of their adolescent erections . . . remaining way back there, treading 'all the wrong paths.' No point in quoting from any of these. As Miller stated, reviewing his own indictments of Western (American) culture in *THE AIR-CONDITIONED NIGHTMARE*: 'All the bad things I said about America are only too true. One has only to open the daily paper to find corroboration. And the end is not in sight.' Just thumbing current periodicals verifies the foregoing.

Most of the pretentiously-intelligent social concern found in avant-garde magazines is unconventional conventionality steaming hindside-over-the-spout for a strained-tea audience of half-brewed thinkers, offering no panaceas — at least, none radical enough to disturb latter-day fascists. In the mass-media, miseducated, semi-educated, and downright uneducated journalists are bubbling the sense out of language and adding to the unprecedented befuddlement of 'social responsibility.' Few seem to notice that such vague, overblown labels as 'Man' and 'Society' are becoming semantical replacements for shattered gilt images of a 'lost'

God. Just as that God indeed was lost, through easy substitutions of unforbidden idols whose worship saved struggle, today's allegedly-realistic humanism asks worship of glib terminologies used to form a liberal orthodoxy as sedulous as any to be traced in ancient ceremonies evolved from symbolic myth.

To work for the 'social good' generally means to support an indistinguishable status quo by donating time and money to this or that unquestioned group-'welfare.' And for that matter, all who simply cling to their ordinary and necessary livelihoods — and thereupon support social (dis)order in dutiful expenditures at the beck of the biggest advertiser — are credited. Meanwhile, the obvious fact that perhaps 90 per cent of 'social' legislation is limited, if not altogether exclusive, goes largely unobserved. Few independent individuals note that Man (guiltily employing this tortured abstraction) is not the object of aid but certain men, set apart by locale, common belief, economic ties, fictitious nationalities . . . and that most this legislation is anti-social in the broad view. Based upon fealties, these pseudo-reforms make me the enemies of other men outside their own community, political group, race. . . . Rarest of all are those individuals who, on their very own and unbolstered by affiliations (including disaffiliate affiliations), doubt majority's (and most minority's) social evocations.

Miller is one of these rarest social critics; and for his hardihood repeatedly — if not always in so many words — declared anti-social. He has dealt bluntly, coarsely with the sorry scene, preaching salvation through sordidness, extolling 'virtues' of poverty and of vice too . . . horrifying the orthodox and striking fear into conservatives. Since fear brings dogs to bite, the editors of *Philistia* have labeled him part of a Beat Generation, many of whom could be his great-grandchildren. His denials of 'affiliation' haven't helped, because he also rejects 'respectable' movements.

Damages goes beyond injuries to the reputations of Miller and other serious writers; every expression of dissent from approved groups is called subversion. Simply speaking against war, makes one a 'dangerous' radical.

To their embarrassment, the very writers injured by publicity from copy-hungry minions of a Square press which types them as Beats, must—on principle—support freedom of expression for these conformists-to-nonconformity. Quotations usually omit their critical exceptions to the literary garbage of pseudo-Anarchists, perverters of ancient wisdoms (see Zen-Buddhism), and self-heralded Messiahs. No wonder that the general public, unaware that shared dissent may not mean shared purposes, is badly confused. Miller has not been well-publicized for his comments that many dubious rejections of social lies are self-rejections as well . . . that many of these 'travelers' aren't trying to find any 'road,' but are stumbling 'out' to nowhere.

However, the genuinely-individualistic social critics gradually are becoming identified; the law of diminishing returns is catching up with the shaggy proponents of ultimate frustration. Many of the latter are boredly compromising with squaredom, betraying the insincerity of their 'poverty.' In a few tragic instances (as in the case of Norman Mailer), their confused mental states have been violently revealed. Valid perspectives are being rediscovered.

SONS OF ADAM

by Clae Waltham

L IKE BEN FRANKLIN'S cats, which all looked gray in the dark, all fiction writers follow the same process in the beginning. During the preliminary mulling, while thoughts are vaulting and ingredients being collected, the procedure of one writer of tales is much like that of any other. But when the writer picks up his pencil, he moves into the community of artisans or out on the lonely plateau of the artist. The decision isn't determined so much by what he writes as by what he declines to write; the distinguishing agent is not the collecting, but the rejecting. The inexhaustible abundance of the artist comes from a scant handful of thoughts, a bare two or three ideas, and tantalizingly-fleeting glimpses of truth. It is the artisan with his brimming buckets who is haunted by the spectre of the well going dry. In her memorial in THE NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE, Germain Bree quoted Camus: We live with a few familiar ideas . . . a man's work is nothing but the long journey to recover, through the detours of art, the two or three simple and great images which first gained access to his heart . . . every artist, no doubt, is in quest of his truth.

And Nathalie Sarraute — quoted in REALITIES:

When a writer sees a certain thing clearly . . . that is enough to open domains he can explore all his life.

In reading through writers who have left large bodies of work, we recognize certain ideas cropping up again and again, each time in different light. In time, we think of these concepts as something like rooms in the mind of the writer; eventually we become familiar with the furniture, and in the end — if we have learned to read creatively — we inhabit these rooms with the writer. The same roof covers us and the

circuit is closed; communication takes place.

The writer's faith must be transcendent; for, brother to it, is the awful knowledge that the supreme distinction between man and low animals rises from his ability to delude himself. From the moment he rejects part of his material solely because he can no longer answer affirmatively the question Is this part of life as I know it? he is committed being. He has become an artist. He accepts his own mind and body as the anvil; and, uncertain whether Cain or Abel tends to forge, all that which his instinct cannot affirm must be beaten and sheared away on the body-anvil.

The writer who is an artist blends all the arts into common communication, using but one tool: words. And the words are meaningless until reduced to twenty-six elements and threaded back through experience of the writer in a sequence ordained by a silent voice implacable exactitude. The words are unchanging. They incorporate the magic of a kaleidoscope that never duplicates, yet adds nothing. In time, the patterns in the kaleidoscope become the body of the writer's work, through which we follow his quest for truth, his detours, his few simple and great images; we know his domain is the heart with him we explore the heart common to all of us.

If the words lead the artist to the great well, his hunger can be only physical, and his poverty can never be of the spirit. And though he works on the lonely plateau where the winds of the universe howl cruel and shrill, he feels no cold. With Doctor Johnson, he has become inured to censure and praise, and can await the world's judgment with frigid tranquillity.

His materials are only figments and fictions and fancies and fragments; yet the artist knows that he works on a garment which is seamless, that he sutures the torn flesh of the human mind in search of its own significance. The small white light which illuminates his work may flicker, but he

knows it will never go out. The artist neither wants nor needs more.

But you may come upon the artist in the marketplace, threading his way through the throng or asking directions from the artisan. Then you may be sure that his wife has told him that the cupboard is bare again. He has come from his plateau to fetch a loaf of bread and a dozen eggs.

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JAMES FRANKLIN LEWIS

FROM PLEDGE OF SYMPHONY

TRANSITION TO OPUS ONE

You, too, who grant necessity in things
But yet look out beyond their brilliant growth,
As charted, watched, and cheered by men half-free
And growing freer, listen to us now;
Listen to the shadow of prophecy,
Not by accident thought in symphonies
Against our all-too-seeing betters' wits;
Listen to what we are saying in pain and personal
anguish.

We have a thousand hearts all beating at once,
And each a poetic rhythm. Childish roles
And rigmaroles are dancing ornaments
Upon the underwork of quarried stone,
In which, deeply, our mechanical chisel is streeted,
Until the childish roles and rigmaroles
Are read no longer as prophetic totem-signs
To picturize taboos of savage races
Flying airplanes to tote incendiary bombs;
No more the tokens of a latter-day Achilles
Who is honored yet because of bullying force;
No more curriculum of chaos,
The glittering junket of a drunken-house,
The blistering acne of a sickened world
That makes Achilles-heroes of its boys,
All heel,
Who find, in ostentatious keepsakes, death.

JAMES FRANKLIN LEWIS

Europe is an insect gone to legs,
Whose peninsular appendages
Struggle prostrate with pyrethrum,
Limply poisoned at articulations,
Simulating life in death . . .
Strike off across the meadow-larks
And jittery killdeers noisily retreating;
Kick a soft nest free of its field-mice
And the limp little no-eyed things, pink at the nose and
bare;
The zigzag bat-like grasshopper flights,
Crazy bombing-planes spitting tobacco-juice —
Brush them from your neck and go on
To the sick bee yellow with sterile dust;
Watch her peninsular legs through a glass
Tenaciously holding a puddle of dew.
And in the laboratory, bustle.
Sick arthropod,
Cut her up on a microtome,
Slice her sub-paperthin
To admit light through the sections
To diagnose her raging disease . . .
Ha, now, see there — call the class —
Are geopolitical junctures
In nature's garbled architecture,
The old cellular coin in obverse, reverse,
Each cell nucleated by a face
With a clinical smile.
There in the capital-vacuole
See flickering the seat of disease.
Too many granules darken
Gravelly in the cytoplasm,
Send in the living wheels, now dead.
Agitate for doctors, let there be doctors . . .

JAMES FRANKLIN LEWIS

SEISMOGRAPHIC TREMORS ROCK THE CRADLES
WHILE ETHER-BREATH ON SHINING WAGONS
WHEELS HALF-LETHAL HOPE OF MISSING PAIN.
SEE, CHILDREN, HOW THE DOCTORS GATHER
PRESCRIPTIVE OF THE THERAPEUTIC HOLOCAUST .
. . STERILIZE YOUR HANDS IN THE RAIN, GOOD
DOCTORS, FALLING GENIALLY IN THE
AMPHITHEATRE HERE AMONG THE INVENTORIES
OF SICKNESS . . . MONOLITHIC STAND THE
DOCTORS LIMESTONE-WHITE, THEIR PENCILS
KNIVES, SUTURES, RAZORBLADES, GLEAMING . . .
ALL THE WORLD IS DOCTORS COSSACKED FOR
MASS SEVERALLY SAID OVER A SICK BEE. BUT
NOT ONE DARES APPROACH, THE AISLES ARE
CLEAR. AMERICA GROANS. HAS THE HONEY-BEE
LOST HER STING? COME CLEAN OF YOUR TIRED
COSMOGONIES, LAP AT THE EARTH WITH YOUR
FEET, RATTLE THE CLOUDS AT YOUR TOES,
SETTING RUSTY KILLDEER SCREAMING; OH, THE
MUSIC OF ATTENUATION, YOU COMPOSERS, MAKE
MORE MASSIVE, WHAT OF THE STARS, THE
ETHER, SPACE, WHEN THE WORKER-BEE WITH
FUNNY LEGS LIES PROSTRATE WITH PYRETHRUM?
OH SYMPHONIZE NO MORE ON SPACE,
PREDICATED ON A GOD-FILLED VOID, BUT TALK
SEMANTICS TO THE WORKER RAINED INTO DEW
IN A MEADOW OF BEDS. AND PROPHECY NO
MORE, YOU PROPHETS, POETIZE ALONE NO MORE,
AND DOCTOR LESS ALONE, YOU DOCTORS, WHERE
THE RAIN FALLS WARM ON THE AGONY BEDS . .

.

JAMES FRANKLIN LEWIS

PLEDGE OF SYMPHONY

Walter Lowenfels

Sweep, sweep, sweep,
Gather leaves to fill a pillow,
Fill a pipe.
Gather sticks to light a fire,
Light a flame.
And poetize no more
Of friendship,
Say no more in pain and personal anguish.
Achilles had his sorrows,
That murderer-hero praised of men,
Whose savage spear has pierced our literature
In and out with a needle of woe,
Rigor of mind he had not,
An ethic of mind he had not,
But a strong-armed spear and a selfish heart
Petulant over a girl in his tent,
Doctors, lyrists, men of steel,
Fastidious let us be in our beds,
Despairing not of the worker-bee
In her puddle of dew.
(Lines 1-138 of Part IV, PLEDGE OF SYMPHONY)

Permission to publish granted by Mrs. James Franklin Lewis

LAST CONVERSATION WITH FRAENKEL

(1895 — 1957)

PRELUDE

Walter Lowenfels

I refuse — absolutely refuse to be sad about Fraenkel's death. He never was — why should I be?

How ludicrous it becomes — this endless harping on the end! We have a crazy upside down notion about death. It's about as sad as an oyster.

If you can bring yourself to think about an oyster, concentrate on its bivalvishness, its shining interior, its horny shell — you will realize that nobody but an oyster could possibly dream up such a fantastic shape. Does an oyster know it's crazy? Neither do the dead — that's natural. But we, the living, who pride ourselves on being so smart — we, too, deny the oysterishness of our exit.

What can I say, then, of Fraenkel — my old friend Fraenkel — but that he died like an oyster? He just closed up. The little flesh he had wavered from 100 to 110 pounds, depending on whether he weighed in before or after his daily meal. Now, it has gone down below the deadline.

And yet — his face peers up at me — 'Lowenfels —' (we always called each other by our last names —) 'not a word, Lowenfels, not a tiny word for such an old friend?'

So — as in the old days in Paris when we were writing and publishing together thirty years ago, we have a conversation — only, this time, it's one-sided . . .

LAST CONVERSATION

You knew how to sell — add that to the three-inch obituary I just read in the New York Times, Dateline London . . . ‘Michael Fraenk el, writer, critic, aged 62, author of (etc. . . .)’ Not a word there about selling — all sorts of things, ideas, houses — in the first place door-to-door books . . . ‘smile, agree, meet the objection . . .’

How you hated this craft you never wrote about — learned as a child-apprentice on the East Side — peddling candy to sweatshop workers! Later you perfected it — became the country’s top book salesman, driven on by horror of being poor and old some day, unable to sell penny candy and get that one good meal a day you needed to live . . .

The story of Fraenkel’s money! It’s not in your poems or your obituary . . . How you got worried once about the dollar exchange — bought a gold bar, lugged it around with you for a year or two; or —

WALTER LOWENFELS

‘Immigrant boy, makes \$100,000 clear, selling books,’ the New York Times reported when you retired, aged 30, to write about ‘the inner equivalent of World War I’s fifteen million casualties.’

Ah, Fraenkel — you were always a great one for ‘inner reality.’

What is it I asked you once —

as we munched sandwiches on the canal banks in Bruges — where are the old days you talk about when people had guts and were strong enough inside to kill themselves — now show me, Fraenkel, where is this inner reality?

Lowenfels, you kept telling me, don’t be a wise-cracker — drop the false face — it’s no good — people will see through you in the end. You are a stutterer — a poet, nothing else.

Who knows what poems you gave away for nothing, Fraenkel, as premiums in your book business when you quit the ghetto at 20 to become a super salesman, with fifty women working under you in a gilt office on Fifth Avenue?

WALTER LOWENFELS

I'm looking through your books now — titles I haven't glanced at for years — BASTARD DEATH — DEATH IN A ROOM — two tomes with Henry Miller, letters about death, called HAMLET.

Henry went on to make a life career out of our death themes . . . 'nothing can be written anymore because we are all dead . . .' Henry agreed — wrote his BLACK SPRING and the TROPICS, where we are all meat on hooks and Henry is the only hook alive . . .

Now, beautiful women in many ports — Hong Kong, New York, Tampico, Marseilles — stirring at night in their sleepy dreams, remember you sometimes — a tiny loving man not for his philosophy but for his ability to outlast many Hercules.

So I wonder, Fraenkel, before they came and took your 110 pounds, what happened to the dream you told me about on the Rue Denfert Rochereau?

'I don't want to be a world-shatterer' (you said) 'just that some day someone looking through the catalogue in the library will see a card for a book "by Michael Fraenkel," maybe a footnote to somebody else's? The important thing isn't what I am doing but what I am being.'

WALTER LOWENFELS

You had the world boxed in a casket when we were young — nailed down ready for shipment to Kingdom Come — until daybreak broke up our night-long talk fests. But that didn't end it.

We were men of action — not passive intellectuals! In the morning we went out into the beautiful Paris sunshine and with our youth revived the corpse we had laid out the night

before — with a poem — or — with a new movement —
'ANONYMITY IN THE ARTS.'

We sold it later for a hundred guineas — five hundred dollars cash. The London millionaire who bought it — (along with the two anonymous books we actually published) probably still has it in his hope chest.

After the crash — when your little income disappeared — you did it again — went to the Philippines . . . Nine months later we met in Amarillo, Texas in the midst of a dust storm — You were almost blown away. We dug into a hotel room — you pulled out of your vest pockets a fistful of checks on Yokahoma Specie Bank, First National, Hong Kong . . .

Fifty thousand bucks you had made quick-selling boatloads of books, remainders in the United States, unloaded on the natives . . . ('super profits from colonial countries . . .')

WALTER LOWENFELS

Later we slipped from each other. I never had a chance to tell you your quick Philippines money taught me something about Imperialism . . .

The last I saw of you — in Philadelphia — after Hiroshima, at the end of World War II — Fraenkel, I asked, is this the death you were waiting for that will make people whole again — not half-dead inside?

'Not enough,' you said, 'not enough. I expected it would be on a greater scale . . .'

Indestructible, I used to call you. Yet, after all your talk about death you finally made it. But of course this is not at all the Black Death we used to talk about that makes salesmen out of poets or suicides they can't commit.

Yours happened I think, a long time back in a Hester Street you never found — full of push carts and hungry babies and people jostling, pushing, contriving —

Turning streets into life — the roots of it edging through
the pavement — bartering, changing, exhorting — in
sweat shops three star lengths away — dreaming,
debating, aspiring for the moment that discloses
what it is that moves out of the Ghettos out of the
gutters out of the rooftops' endless crochet.

WALTER LOWENFELS

I wonder, Fraenk el, before we say good-bye — did you ever
find that little doll house you were always looking for — in
Spain, in France, in Mexico, in London, in Indiana, where
you could dig in — keep your manuscripts and books all in
one place, for good?

Even now, we often pass a small house on the road and
say — There! Ah, there's the house for Fraenkel!

And this goes on, I suppose — between Amarillo,
Barcelona, Manila, and points East and West — only one less
pair of feet walks the streets tonight — not winged like a
messenger but shoe-hungry like a Jew looking for a home.

FRAENKEL SPEAKS

Michael Fraenkel

And now — a miracle — Fraenkel can answer back! In my files, I find a draft of a letter we thought of sending to funeral directors to help sell his book *BASTARD DEATH*. With this letter, Fraenkel can exit with the last word — on his favorite subject — and remain, as I said at the beginning, a salesman to the end . . .

WALTER LOWENFELS

Mr. John O'Casey, Long Point Funeral Chapel, Long Point, Long Island.

Dear Sir:

As you well know, it is not enough to die. Death is half the story. As you surmise, there is the other half — disposal and burial.

Supposing a man died, and there were no one in the entire land to lay him to rest — what then? A supposition, of course, but one which shows at once the other side of the same truth propounded above.

The fact of the matter is, as it seems to us, the mortician from time immemorial has proved so faithful to his great trust by promptly and efficiently disposing of the dead, humanity has almost forgotten what means to die. No death because no trace of death.

The mortician leaves a clean slate. Judging indeed by the indifferent way in which most of humanity behaves towards death, we all might just as well be walking cadavers for the difference it really makes. We have grown death-proof — thanks to the morticians who so conscientiously and thoroughly removes for us every vestige of death.

Hence the importance of what we are about to announce. There has just been published by us a work which may

revolutionize our whole outlook on death and the mortuary art. It is called BASTARD DEATH.

Supposing we all found ourselves in its hero's plight? Supposing we all died and were not buried? Would we then give no thought to death?

BASTARD DEATH is printed on heavy Kingsway paper, in sober Garamond type, with quiet wax wrappers, as befits the character of this work. The regular price is \$3.50, but owing to the widespread interest the book cannot fail to arouse among the mortuary profession the cost to morticians and sextons is \$3.00. Apart from its intrinsic value to students of sepulchral science, the volume should grace the private collection of any mortuary chapel or library.

Judging by the comment it has already aroused, the book promises to make the American public death-conscious. Which means, of course, mortuary-minded. The American people will finally comprehend that it is the mortician who stands between humanity and death.

Let me send you a copy of this death-stirring book.

Yours very truly, Michael Fraenkel

GIL ORLOVITZ

ELEGY

thundercone
the spring lightning lick a thaw
and fly a flick of maw
shutterhone
underboy
turning deaf ear to the mute
overmans the sky alone
greedy angle undershoot
for summertoy
so come lain
the tonguetied child and the head
rolling of flawed preparadise
to lick the earth of eyes
flickering at the deadened
sound of rain

GIL ORLOVITZ

LYRIC

I touch the wine in the wood, aye,
and the ghetto-bird ghosting down the wind;
the time aslant, I touch my woman's spine
high on the inside she tells me mind,
mind; aye, I will crouch for my supper,
pass myself to touch what kith of kin;
touch the wood in the wine; my child
tall as my tongue; touch the shadow
that lengthens for alms; and all of the upper
chimes lighting on willow and wire;
aye, and touch my fingers' low meadow
hushing the swallow's measure of flights
beyond all bearing tearing me
to fingertips; aye, as the snow flies,
as the frosted dusk, as the summertime
so do I touch the touching-glen,
wine and wood, the draft at the eye
of the lids lifted of the blind.

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GIL ORLOVITZ

ART OF THE SONNET:

Cx I

The neck, broken in idolatry, spikes the horse
and gives him his head to worship animals as
he disguises. The hooves thud upon the balances; he
rears
in fearful fraction: we will not be cast in our mediums.
Bones which cannot kindle flesh are racked
beyond comparison; stomping his unseen likeness,
the horse champd at the lashed arches of his vault;
so, thrown, he bites at a twist and spits up
his severed thrust, for the lower gods shall never
see to manger him in some intermediate pitying,
to give him ape for toy in godlike echoing.
Hairless, the horse blinds the aura of his mane.
Soundless, the horse throws a fit of throat.
Last Supperless, he lifts to betrayers to give him life.

Cx II

Such old mercy, as between the task
of error and the point of bone, requests
we take honor and give it what we have flown,
out of that last love we broke in the sweet,
in the tremor owing as much to the fixed as to the
move,
for we shall grant, grow and entail
nothing of this earth, and nothing in the array,
nothing in vile certainty and stumbling catch
no more than we have tolled the lip and heart
to fail short of shame and beyond the fall,
that this be our sordid resplendency,
this be our cowl upon our separate Almighties
come commonwealth of niggards or break of hoveldom,
here do we say, Halt, humblers, and take your faces.

ISSUE P. 48 · SCAN P. 50

JOHN THOMAS

THE POEM IS A TRUE & ROOTED CACTUS

after all the
mirages incident to
desert, these apparent
lakes with such
apparent water birds &
whispering reeds
after all these
images
that seduce in the
far air
& dry the tongue to black &
kill
after these / but in the
geographic foreground
this true & rooted cactus
most real & tough
with thorns
rooted in the genuine dry
having sucked deep
& with its toughness held
held
its thorns make bloody
hands & lips
but cut into that
leather fruit
& the water is truly there
tasting green

CHARLES B. TINKHAM: THE POET AS CRUSADER

THE PROBLEM IS how to interest the 'lay public' in poetry written to-day — now. Which means: how to interest them in little magazines.

Two contrary phenomena are observable, at least in my experience. I will present a poem to such a person (that is if there is any such thing as a 'lay public') and ask for his opinion. Sometimes the response is negative, of course; but sometimes it is quite enthusiastic. The person will say: 'I don't like modern poetry, but I really like this.' And even sometimes: 'Could I make a copy of this.' Such a response was made to Nicholas Biel's poem ADAM, from a recent *BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL*. At least fifteen friends of mine, all 'non-poetry' people by their own admission, responded well, and at least eight or nine wanted copies. A similar response, in my experience, has occurred with other poems in other little magazines. In other words, I make a practice of showing to others the poems that I especially like (and sometimes poems I especially dislike).

But when I suggest subscribing to a poetry magazine or simply buying a single copy, enthusiasm wanes. Objections crop up like weeds: 'I don't know which magazine is best.' — 'I don't have time to read.' — 'There's no place in town that sells them, is there?' — 'I'm not a poet. Only poets read those things.' Etc.

I think the real explanation lies in the kind of response given in the second paragraph above. To put it another way: 'I may like this one poem, but I don't like modern poetry. And buying or subscribing to a poetry magazine evidently represents for these people some kind of approval of 'modern poetry.' It is curious that one poem, one poet, etc. may be okay, but that the abstraction is condemned.

Of course, it is no news that a deep prejudice exists against poetry today. What can be done to overcome this? It simply isn't true that all poetry being written now is obscure (so goes one of the stereotypes), when response to particular poems is so articulate. The solution is for poets to show more poems to their 'lay' friends; especially, to read poems aloud, to be talked about afterwards. Some people who do not 'go in for' poetry make excellent critics. Any poet can find this out for himself.

I am concerned, then, about the low circulations of literary magazines, as revealed in the INTERNATIONAL GUIDE. It is up to the poets themselves, it seems to me, to introduce contents of these periodicals to a wider audience. The editors, most of them, do very conscientious jobs, on meager funds and praise, to put out very presentable and sometimes even superlative magazines, in which the author is proud to appear. But then comes the rub: circulation — 400.

The poet himself must take the magazine to the public — not let it catch dust on a shelf. He must interfere with the television-watching of his friends just a little more. And he must be objective: to show his friends his own poetry is a waste, — he must encourage them to read the work of other writers.

The results can be surprising. Not only have I shown around such poems as ADAM and, more recently, BUDAPEST, by Paris Leary (APPROACH, Summer, 1960), but last semester at Purdue University, I conducted a non-credit poetry course for adults. The procedure was to discuss particular poems, minus the authors' names, and then try to reach conclusions. Some poems discussed were by Anne Sexton, William Carlos Williams, Robert Frost, Felix Stefanie, David McCord, E. E. Cummings, Stephen Spender, and Theodore Roethke. Sometimes, response was negative (big names as well as 'little' were axed); sometimes it was only lukewarm; sometimes it was very positive: 'How do you spell this man's

name? Where can I get more of his work?' More often than not, the poem in question had been taken from a current little magazine.

It is up to the people interested in poetry to take this poetry to the public . . . by encouraging the reading of particular poems, not by saying in an offhanded superior way: 'You ought to subscribe to a literary magazine.' By this means, some of the prejudice against that bugbear 'modern poetry' may be broken down. And the circulation of the 'littles' may begin to climb.

SOME ITEMS RECEIVED

by the Editor

THE EMERGENCE of a new trend of serious optimism is apparent in many recent writings. Several recommended titles for winter reading have been passed to others, for their praise or dispraise; but the Editor held aside a mixed parcel of pamphlets, books, and periodicals which especially confirm, through diverse approaches and in sundry manners, a change in creative direction.

These sound notes of faith-in-reality, in harmony with other Leibnitzian theories appropriate to a period of accelerating scientific research. Idealistic tones are heard even in the dirges; assuming that appeals to reason aren't altogether futile, writers are addressing themselves to personal positivism. Even expressions of despair nevertheless often adjure movement toward change. After long hiatus, belatedly, perhaps the Twentieth Century revolution of Personalism hailed by Emmanuel Mounier, editor of the old *ESPRIT* (Paris) is coming to pass?

Tendential postulates contrast with the last decade's glut of static, emotional revulsions against pseudo-culture, social injustice, preparations for war, and encouragement of mental illness. The last — integral to all negations — had symptomized, in fact, the neurotic and sometimes psychotic pessimisms in many authors, rendering uncertain which had been results and which, causes. The counter-trend happily shows in several of the identical low-spirited writers.

Poets, essayists, and fictionists seem to be rediscovering paths to positive meanings — some through what may be called revitalized existentialism. The reflections from and upon chaos are antithetically individuated; and desperations

over foregone defeat seem less-conclusive. There are (excluding the now-popularized, no longer avant, poverty-school) fewer mad, sad, sick, and ventureless jottings, and more speculations in terms of positive answers somewhere. The very prevalence of questions (for years, there had been few)—whether upon tangents or offside or backwards—suggests beginnings of answers.

Sometimes only textually — but hints that life after all, does matter, are becoming fairly frequent. In one specific area — instead of repetitious, passive, guilty acceptances of self-destructive urges in man and amongst men (inferring illogical denials that a 'yes' has to predicate every 'no'), actively-resistive awarenesses are finding expression. Earlier mystical counterparts may be recalled from less-sophisticated human resistances to gods of evil . . . 'a devil and his minions' . . . and through combats with 'demon'-possessed humans themselves. Writers are conceding that all contagions are not germ- or virus-borne, that lethal weapons, as such, may not pose the nearest threats, and that men must grapple with the enemy within the psyche — the only enemy really accessible to liquidation.

• 'Hey man hey man come out and hear, come out, man I have something real to tell you . . .' shouts Homer, at curtain-rise for *IN THE FIRST PLACE* by William Packard (*EXPERIMENT*, distrib. by ALAN SWALLOW, \$1.50). This Editor enthusiastically echoes Homer's call. Everyone reading the play (and everyone receiving *TRACE* should read it) will wish to see it staged. While uncompromisingly critical of today's 'civilization,' the deft dialogue and fey action make this what well might prove a Broadway success.

Not incidentally, Packard's play provides direct illustration of the new trend. Addressing both the metaphysically-sophisticated and the less-discerning (a rare twofold feat), he delivers philosophical wisdoms along with slashing-obvious psychological quips. For abstract

thinkers and students of Kierkegaard, the broad ethical implications are enlarged upon in an author's epilogue — remaining quite unobtrusive in the well-timed rib-rocking comedy of the drama itself.

The entire action fulminates in a lunatic asylum; and Homer, Negro patient whose lunacy is diagnosed 'poetry' by Dr. Kirk, the villain, is a prototype of the sane man in an insane world — recognized all the while as such by Elaine, the nurse. Elaine is typical of the acquiescent majority in believing ' . . . except she's shy about admitting she believes,' says Homer, declaiming: ' . . . the only blasphemy is being bashful.'

All characters use language that's quite unobscure and easy of recall when the less-unobscure theme starts to emerge. Other than the first-named three, the cast includes four patients of high metaphorical importance: LeRoy, the tailor who makes clothes to fit the true innerman; Kelly, a priest busy with murals of catsup and all the colourful victuals he denies himself; John, a congressman who makes flags which reverse allegiance by saluting people instead of demanding their salutes; and George, an economist who passes out 'hot' money, acid-dipped to ensure rapid circulation. The chief supporting-character is an interne, Dr. Peter Valentine, whose presence forms the mystery, and whose participation provides the suspense and the catalyst for the eventual denouement.

In this serious comedy of wide potential appeal, Packard communicates intricate ideas and profound speculations without any really-boring lapses; yet, a few speeches are too long for good theatre. Something should be done to break up a lengthy autobiographical narration with which Homer is indulged in the midst of Act II. Fortunately, this monologue's placement is dramatically the best that could have been chosen; if earlier, it would deter the buildup of tension — if later, it would dig an inescapable pitfall for a grand flop in

the finale. But, even with this long speech, keen interest is sustained straight through; momentum accelerates, with ever-closer and -stronger impacts, climaxed in closing lines. Packard does not share the fault of most beginners. Critical verdicts will not be reversed by the last scenes.

**MANY MAY DECLARE THAT CHARLES BUKOWSKI'S
FLOWER, FIST AND BESTIAL WAIL (HEARSE,
§1) ILLUSTRATES THE ENDURANCE OF THE
'NEGATIVE SCHOOL.' TO THE CONTRARY, THESE
SELECTIONS ARE SPLENDID EXAMPLES OF
FUNDAMENTALLY-OPTIMISTIC, POSITIVE PESSIMISM.
THEY MAY BE CALLED DARK REALIZATIONS OF
MOUNIER'S FAITH IN THE POWER OF THE
INDIVIDUAL OVER A FATE SPECIFICALLY
MALLEABLE, THOUGH CONCEDEDLY 'PREDESTINED'
IN PSEUDO-EVANGELISTIC TERMINOLOGY.**

Despite his absorption with evils in a world he hopelessly persists in trying to objectify — despite displays of depression — Bukowski is never unsure of tendentialistic premises. His projections of bestiality are realistically shocking. But the 'flower' is discernable, bearing the culminating (not predetermined) purposed bloom. The sole realness — the poet's self — never is disparaged on a premise of factitious chance. And no matter how savagely he focuses on alter-egos, his own optimism prevails at the deeper levels, — evidenced by belief defined by a refused overt recognition. He tries to misidentify love with the word falsely used in contorted condemnations of unprescient, sensual lives.

This analysis of negative-positive contradiction is confirmed in the opening piece, 10 LIONS AND THE END OF THE WORLD. It closes:

and some day when
they turn out the lights
and the whole thing's over,
I'll be sitting here
in the chalky smoke
thinking of those 10 damned
(yes, I counted them)
lions
blocking traffic
While roses bloomed.
We ought to
do that
now
while there's
t
i
m
e.

Influences of older romantics happen to show in these particular lines, quoted on the thematic point and not for authentic Bukowski flavor. The most moving poem is *THE TWINS*, concerning the actual death of a father; and another, which better identifies the author's entitlement to serious recognition, is *THE PAPER ON THE FLOOR*, elicited by the dead-in-life abstractions of newspaper comics.

- Examples of the three other types in the new trend are provided by the major contents and/or editorial announcements of very young periodicals.

The backwards reform is manifest in the first issue of *THE FAIR ABBOT*. (See *THE CHRONICLE* for prices and addresses of this and the other magazines reviewed.) It appears, on the opening page, with Editor Jay Keyser's choice of an ancient Sanskrit tale for preface — the possibilities of projective control over environment are assumed in this tale. Whereupon, undeniably-presumptive questions predicate these of a von Kleist translation and an original short story

by Russ Madison. Distinctly anti-fatalistic overtones give a very different sort of cast to a chapter from a novel which interestingly has the same French settings as those in several confused, despairing US works. Significantly, the editor himself authored this, revealing that he is utterly at odds with the world-view of Jean Paul Sartre. Finally — far from inconsonantly — there's a slashing attack on naysayer Robert Graves, as a critical review of *THE ANGER OF ACHILLES*, by Adam Parry.

The tangential approach appears in *ALPHABET*, with James Reaney's editorial statement that the impulse to found the magazine partly resulted from reaction to what is felt to be over-complexity in today's expression. This language is regarded as posing a challenge to seek employments of metaphor-as-reality, the words to be grasped as weapons to aid the rescue of life-meanings from threatening semantical obscurities. Support of subjective truth is limned in an essay *TO HARPOONERS*, by Richard Stingle — the poet-prophet's 'live' concept of history as drama, marked apart from scientific notation of history as 'merely a succession of events in time and space.' Though centered on literary aspects, the essay conjures far speculations: "A man is a man only when he becomes detached enough to perceive the pattern in his activity." Other contents seem rather limited by the Editor's preferences; and yet, by no means confirming that this is inevitable. Probably there were too few mss. to choose among. While the special criteria largely are met, contributions show undigested influences from other (and better) writers; the quality of the work is high, but Editor Reaney's anticipations are rather patly met, without any pioneering departures. A third periodical, *FIRST PERSON*, is the admirable surprise of the year: an original in the field where too many try too hard for newness. This one exemplifies the offside in the trend; and, in its aggregate presentation, also gets inside. M. D. Elevitch and associates

have gone back to a long disused focus upon less-palpable facets of the personae of artists; without overblown pretenses of baring innermost essences, they have assembled some remarkable less-guarded, less-obvious exhibits. A tricky focus — refreshingly diverging from the common approaches of formal (or informal) autobiography. Closing no avenues, they solicited memoirs, offbeat narratives of adventure, travel, and dooryard experience (factual, imaginary, or dreamed), off-the-cuff quippings on man or other life-forms. The very range of participants is delightful: Allan Seager, Mark Twain, Diana Athill, Thornton Wilder, Curtis Zahn, Ford Madox Ford . . . many more!

The general bent of positive revival is reflected through humor (slapdash and inferred) in a double BIRTH (3) with an extensive historical coverage and expose of representations concerning forbidden and unforbidden drugs, including alcohol, ‘tonics,’ foods, and even water. Also exposed are the contractory reports on effects from ‘habits,’ which aren’t always real habits in the popular conception, — the main thesis being that man himself is the problem, not what he swallows or injects into his blood. Without weighty pronouncements, it’s assumed that man can be guided toward self-knowledge. Such optimistically-serious implications don’t rise from superficial levels of the uproarious funnybook-humor that brings first laughs here; corny jokes notwithstanding, the collection holds tragic undertones, while confidently making light of the personality problems intensified by misuse of stimulants and sedatives . . . and all treated in ways to move readers to feel that man is not hopelessly deficient in will and determination to survive and expand his capabilities.

Arriving just as this was written — too late for adequate study — was an enlarged TOMORROW (No. 4). The breadth of contemporary British coverage here indicates the sounding of the new note in several areas.

SEVERAL GUEST REVIEWS

TWO BOOKS OF FICTION

R. E. Bachelor

HURRICANE warnings are up; weather reports cut in on the latest pop hit, and vacationers scurry away from coastal resorts or cancel flight reservations for tropical isles. But wait! The storm will pass and the balmy breezes will soothe the sun-splotched sands. The true climate of geographical localities is measured by noting what they are like from day to day, just as the real quality of our literature is measured by how deeply it probes American life.

Recently, our literature has kicked up a few sensationalistic storms such as PEYTON PLACE, alarming our more conservative readers and chasing them back to Fireside Theater or the Late, Late Show. But, for a deep reading of life, pick up Paul Goodman's OUR VISIT TO NIAGARA (HORIZON, \$3.95) or Guy Owen's SEASON OF FEAR (RANDOM HOUSE, \$3.95).

In the first, a collection of fifteen works of short fiction, Goodman provides material both for the ordinary college-grained reader and for the scholarly giant. The former will catch the pervasive love of the author for human life and human emotions in the five pieces he tags 'American Stories.' Perhaps he will even catch a glimpse of beauty in those things we usually think of as drab, dreary, and commonplace. These stories have narrative — that is, they have beginning and end, in time and space.

The meat of OUR VISIT TO NIAGARA is found in Goodman's seven 'Myths.' Although they lack direct narrative, they contain the real blood and guts of the book. To the reader who gets a full meaning out of the heavily-loaded, preceding

(including three atmosphere sketches) the author titles 'Community Pieces') narratives, these will be the challenge. Here, one has to read, think, and reread in order to believe, as well as feel, that in these mythical figures Goodman finds what he calls 'my daily business and intimate anxieties.' He will mull over such passages as the (two) beginning paragraphs of *THE COMPLAINT OF RICHARD SAVAGE*:

'Don't give it a 2nd thought,' said I. 'After a certain number of drinks you begin to have the thinks even before the one you're thinking. Let's call that certain number of drinks n . The $n + 1$ drinks gives you the $T - 1$ think. The $n + 7$ drink gives you the $T - 7$ think.'

I was beginning to be animated and friendly, but the feeling was already passing into fright. That hand I was reaching out to touch her ass was freezing and was about to push her away. Next moment I made an angry fist; I jammed it into my pocket in order not to see it crooked. Sometimes, especially if I fell into a rage, my hand was my hand; other times I did not recognise it, and it was none of mine. Time spent on these 'Myths' is an investment which certainly will yield increasing returns.

On the other hand, Guy Owen's first novel, *SEASON OF FEAR*, exposes life so completely, so realistically, as to make any literate person shudder. First, the main character, Clay Hampton, defies our image of the heroic figure. He is ugly. Yes, tall and skinny, with a hairy, spoon-shaped mole on his cheek, and red knobby wrists. He is poor, and stays that way. He believes with fanatic religious fervor in all that is right and good, but in his struggle there is no triumph. Indeed, it is the very goodness of the man that bears evil fruit and leads to his destruction. Yet, this man is a hero.

Why is Clay Hampton a convincing hero? Because his isolated life with two old women has made him a lonely, brooding man, and many of us (i.e. Goodman's Everyman) are lonely brooding men, even though our isolation may take

place in some thriving metropolis. Why? Because Clay's persecutors, the Ku Klux Klaners, do evil in the name of good; and every day, we too see the whip of injustice cut. So we sympathize with Hamp. His act of violence signifies, perhaps, our own rebellion against evil.

Because Clay Hampton's physical and spiritual existence depend upon the land he loves, the source of conflict rises from his belief that the drought which shrivels the crops is God's judgment on Eller's Bend. Here, Guy Owen carries off a remarkable feat. His poetic descriptions of the climate are, symbolically, double-edged.

. . . A breeze ruffled his jumper and he saw a streak of lightning, quick as a snake, on the horizon. Overhead he saw the moon had vanished, dragging the stars behind it.

Disbelieving, Hamp paused a moment. There it was again, sudden, like the red flicker of a serpent's tongue over church's steeple and away. The wind carried the green scent of the rain and he breathed it greedily. He took his hat off and let the breeze cool his head. He smiled, for above he glimpsed the moon plowing a furrow away from Eller's Bend.

But it doesn't rain. Clay knows that the moral judgment has not been lifted, and continues to believe that the pasteboard Christ hanging on his bedroom wall wills that the drought continue to sear both men's souls and their land.

Guy Owen has made this association of ideas which, in sophisticated logic, remains unsound, convincingly real. So real that we identify our own human plight with that of Clay—until the final chapter when torrents of rain stream down to cleanse the souls of the immoral people of Eller's Bend as well as our own; for we, the readers, are guilty of the false faith that we, by the author's ingenuity, shared with Clay. Paul Goodman and Guy Owen project many like attitudes in regard to American life, even though what each thinks is illustrated in a unique highly-individualized piece of literature bearing no similarity to that of the other in style

or content. Each dwells upon man's loneliness (Goodman's ADAM); each shows man so trapped in a three-dimensional web of circumstance that every step finds him even more entangled (Goodman's A LIFEGUARD). Apropos to both, Goodman poetically says : For we across these plains of hell are like the spinning dust filled winds . . . My works vanish in eddies and whispers. Yet most of the people that whirl by seem to me even worse off than myself, whistling vortices of personality. And, everywhere, mounting high into the sky and blotting out the sun, are cyclones of dead leaves. Neither Goodman nor Owen has hesitated to add a bit of spice . . . in the form of borderline bathroom language and details of what Hamp saw when he played peeping-Tom, But, why not? These things, too, have their noteworthy place in American civilization. Certainly, these authors haven't made sex and its tawdry trappings the whole backbone of their books. After all, what are spices without stew? Readers will find that both books read like yearlong seismographic charts of the climate of life in America.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Lawrence P. Spingarn

FOR THOSE who think certain contemporary self-appointed champions of photography have been involved with art, *UNDER THE SUN, The Abstract Art of Camera Vision* by Nathan Lyons, Syd Labrot, and Walter Chappell (GEORGE BRAZILLER Inc. — 36 plates — \$7.50) may be something of a shock. There are no pseudosurrealist contrivances here. Nor is the book ‘a game contrived for identifying the names of objects depicted from Nature with technical skill, nor a catalogue of perceived curiosities decorated with a nostalgic absence of beauty.’ Rather, in one-dozen images each, Lyons, Labrot, and Chappell place art in the realm of perceptions. Camera vision, ‘a responsive property of the human mind prehistoric to the invention of the photographic process,’ becomes the definition of an art, and the camera, a medium for the discovery of Nature’s creativity. All three photographers have moved close to their subjects for these images, and there is hope that the viewer will go beyond a superficial observation by means of which our vision ceases at the point of naming. For the literary-minded, approaching these reproMy taste runs to a sober balance between modern obscurity, often willful, and a controlled rhetoric turned aside, here and there, into dry channels of understatement. Durrant achieves this balance when he fuses personal statement with subaqueous passion; his women live in a tank of greenish water. He is superb in one striking poem which starts with Elizabethan élan: ‘My art is me or nothing is my art,’ and mounts from this refrain to ‘cry once at worlds of word inside’ and cure the English sickness.

The atmosphere of England abounds with almost Dickensian force in *BOYS* and *LINES TO AN EASTER MISTRESS*,

where Cockney becomes a term of endearment. Herrick and his hock-cart fit in somewhere to HARVEST LANDSCAPE. The rather deliberate choice not to be lyrical is manifest, yet the wish loses to the act of creation in CENTRE, where Durrant celebrates himself:

How can I be Without Without With this so potent
inwardness

This diabolic eye Within Within?

The book deepens as one savors it. True, the whopping impact is absent; as we should expect nowadays, the large vision is fractured into splinters of many-colored glass; yet, through each poem runs a lava of feeling and quick insight that repay further study. To recall Browning again,—could we have a better contemporary version of MEETING AT NIGHT than the short piece addressed to Enid F.? Despite his glib schooling in the posh tongue-in-cheek attitude, Durrant is always clever enough to take the bit in his mouth. He is a man who has waited for a girl. He can sing, and not feel ashamed of his true voice. Whoever Enid F. was, she could have appreciated these lines:

If you go down in the rain One night — Your hair loose,
Your legs bare, Your skirt as shiny as mutton bones —

Think of the man who waits in the window His white face
flat at the glass, His eyes alight And his soul despairing . . .
Give him some Hope on a rainy night.

AND MORE POETRY

TAKEN TOGETHER, three recent publications remind us once more of: (1) the necessity for providing individual poets with adequate space; (2) our consequent debt to the soft-cover publishing boom; (3) that wide range of world-art in the light of which arbitrary differentiations between techniques ('poetry vs. prose') lose their contraceptive significance. For, we should all be catholic enough by now to grant capital artistic gains their terms; and the terms of these three artists are quite different. Overlapping, but different. They are: Patrick Wilson, *STAYING AT BALLISODARE* (SCORPION, 8/6); William J. Margolis, the little love of our yearning (MENDICANT, unpr.); Jory Sherman, *SO MANY ROOMS* (GALLEY SAIL, \$1).

Wilson's emphasis is upon narrative (a search); that of Margolis, upon emotion (love); Sherman's upon eccentricity (a style of perception). Given a page or less in a literary magazine — whose editors like, and are forced, to cipher contributors — none of these efforts would come across. Wilson, of course, needs the space to tell his story. But Margolis and Sherman need room also, the former to construct a cumulative lyrical effect of a simple but profound feeling, the latter to manifest an individual voice.

Given opportunity, all three show up well. Patrick Wilson, a young New Zealander living in England, sprinkles his narrative with the voice of W. B. Yeats, essentially the cause of the search. He skilfully controls the release of information to the reader, and imbues the narrator's travels, first to the grave of Yeats, then to The Tower, with real meaning. We care. Finally, narrator and reader blend into such an indivisible searcher that we work with one (innocently illogical) brain. One reality raises doubt only so long as we are kept from a new straw to hang on. If, in the end, this can

be called another fall from innocence, let it also be known that the descent is made meaningfully specific. Even the most depraved will have difficulty remaining aloof from the calm that gathers to hysteria, due partly to Wilson's selective use of dialogue — not necessarily as imitation but, poetically, for effect.

William J. Margolis knows full well that poetry is no substitute for love: 'it is such a terrible world,/a conceptual miasma;/& to speculate on love/is the death of countless flowers . . .' Nor, obviously, is this collection for any one-sided hymn to runaway palpitations of the Valentine or the uplifting of the genitals. These are neither speculations nor imitations of emotions, but Songs of the Fact. And there is a positive involvement of the poet, a welcome stance in an area in which adolescent howls come up from the gutters in whole anthologies. Margolis moves, qualifiedly and qualifyingly from element to element in an expression of the ambivalence of the loved-unloved. The poet, a quiet talent in a country of noisy self-publicists, has produced a quietly beautiful book. And he has made a real effort toward controlling its visual presentation, primarily through the juggling of type-faces and sizes, and white space. I am only sorry that the edition of the little love of our yearning was limited to 50 copies. I think this is a book to be sent to friends. For evidence, here is heaven was four white walls: It was afternoon and the sun could have cried for joy . . . both of us, the sun and I, fell all over you when you stood by my door . . . of our laughter, while silly animals and birds played on your tongue . . . heaven was four white walls and your olive body and black hair on the white sheet, and the sun exploded on our bed. Jory Sherman covers extremes in a way that Wilson and Margolis do not. His is an individual voice, from which he has had the sense and courage to distill and sustain eccentricity. At the same time, he tends toward that contemporary device of 'social poetry'—cataloguing. I don't

think the title poem or *THE INVISIBLE MAN* can stand successfully with some here which undertake less. Such oriented narrations come precariously close to the socio-journalese which has been emanating recently from the aforementioned gutters. Fortunately, most of the book 'happens/in the vein of a tearfall; the pearl hidden in the wound,' carrying valuable perceptions which come forth, both in senses, liberally awakened). There is a feeling of the artist still struggling to reproduce his uniqueness; though some devices are youthfully overdone — particularly, in the joining of words to form already-modified nouns. But always there is Sherman's individual voice; and this is important. It would seem that this poet can go deeper into his own eccentricity, or backward to juvenilia. If little is heard from him for a while, it well may be that he chose the former path, down which he happily seems to be moving — with a photographic cover-assist, by Fortunato L. Clementi.

MU AS I REMEMBER IT

(AN ESSAY ON THE RECENT HISTORY OF IMMORALITY)

by Robert Vaughan

READERS FAMILIAR with Mr. Churchward's books on the erstwhile catastrophe of the sinking of the Lost Continent may, in ways, regret that they could not have been present at such a world-changing event; or they may, at least, regret that some better record does not survive for study. They should not. For, what is probably a parallel happening has taken place right here in American Literature over the past decade or so. This has been the advent of the Immoral Attitude in poetic approach.

Previously, even in our experimental Twenties and Thirties, writers approached the poetic act with the idea of transmitting at least a modicum of reaction in the reader. In many cases the extent of this reaction was founded on some sort of shock-value; and many present writers still depend in large degree on this poetic tool. But, largely, younger writers have begun a sort of counter-shock movement; and, in attempting to move away from the shock method have gone too far in the opposite direction. The result has been plain statement and rhetoric.

There is something pretty basically immoral about a poetry that does not attempt to communicate emotions or dredge up from the reader's subconscious a prior experience,— since this is what poetry always has been about, and there are other types of writings and means of expression better suited to direct statement or assertion of scientific fact. What is basic about this immorality is the attitude. Writers so long accustomed to speaking in small

groups (through their writings) and hoping to reach only a dozen or so readers who really comprehend their intentions, to be moved by their work, have thrown out the shock-tool (the baby with the bath), and are writing earnestly for the few who really appreciate them. This is fine, and it is well that writers have come to realize that readers are long since past the time when seeing the word shit (and other lately-famous four-letter words) in print excited them.

But writers, especially young writers, have to realize that a person busy in artistic creation is confronted daily by several alternatives to action — most of which leads up blind alleys. And if the creator does not have, for his firm foothold, a moral attitude or ethical approach, he is most likely to tread out his life in one or another of these misleading alleys. Moral is used here in a very narrow sense: the distinction between right and wrong in poetic creation. And a writer who does not possess the intuition for this should search zealously for the best substitute — such as a strict theory or method that he can use as a limitation to his spreading creativity. Unfortunately, it is just this substitute that the critics have laid hold of, and their rantings have led most of our fresh talents down a one-way street. A writer understands that he should try to reach as many readers as he can — without watering down his talent to meet them — and this can be done; he must hold firmly to the conviction that anyone reading his work should in some way react to it.

The dozen or so readers the poet has come to depend on — accustomed to his previous verse — will mostly understand his prosestatement poetry, and will likely react favorably to this. In addition, trained readers, if a poem is skillfully made, will react to it as a well-constructed piece. But this is not the traditional reaction that readers (any readers of poetry — even connoisseurs of modernity) have come to demand; they are likely to be turned away. The writer, on the other hand, can too easily be carried away by

the ease with which his output increases when he discovers prose statement in his poetry. Writing poems is difficult: sweating out the coming of the correct image, the precise phrase, the turn of a thought. Every writer of poems knows this; and when it is all over, he also knows that the work was worthwhile. But it is an agonizing experience, impossible to describe; and all writers, even the best, try to find some way out.

Poets who understand this moral attitude are not swayed to use easier methods. Likewise, they do not stoop to riddle when metaphor will not come. All these substitutes for good craftsmanship, found today in much work that passes for poetry, result from misguided and immoral attitudes; and these usually are not the fault of the poet who has been led astray by the critics.

Mu, as I remember it, sank beneath the ocean in some ancient catastrophe. Mr. Churchward does not bother to tell us whether this ensued upon misdeeds of that lost land's inhabitants, as in Biblical chronology. One rather supposes that it did not. But poetry, at the beginning of this second half of our century, is slipping under in a similar, if less obvious way, — largely due to the immoral attitude of the poetic approach.

THE OUTSIDER

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GREETINGS

Felix Singer

I am Felix Singer, author-publisher of THESE SEVENTEEN 16 Stories & One Essay. Softcover, sewn, c.

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