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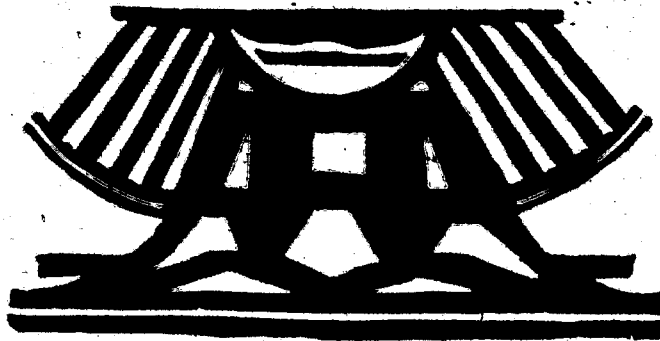
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SPRING 1950

# NEW MEXICO QUARTERLY



Wood engravings in this issue by **HOWARD COOK**  
Howard Cook by **CARL ZIGROSSER**

**Ramón J. Sender**    **The House of Lot (miracle play)**

**Alfred Kazin**    **American Naturalism: Reflections from Another Era**

**Frank Waters**    **The Navajo Missions**

**Mary Freeman**    **D. H. Lawrence. Preview of a Basic Study**

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## THE EDITOR'S CORNER



**THEATER.** Ramón J. Sender, the internationally known Spanish novelist, contributed an essay on "Faustian Germany and Thomas Mann" to our Summer 1949 issue, where we gave a biographical sketch of him. Since publication of *The Sphere* in February of last year, he has completed another novel, *The Affable Hangman*. A long book of poems with all the verse he has written (though never published) since 1912 is in the process of final editing.

Sender, like other contemporary authors a little irked at the growing commercialization of the theater, has kept at a distance from the scene, but has not been completely divorced from it. Before "The House of Lot," which was written expressly for the *NMQ*, he wrote "El Secreto" (1933), a one-act play, often staged in Spain, and translated and presented in most European countries. The American version of "The Secret" was published in *One Act Play Magazine*, 1938. Later he wrote "La Llave," presented in 1936 in Madrid by the Teatro Español, the leading playhouse of Spain. Art theater groups have given this one-act play in various countries. The American translation of "The Key" was published by *Kenyon Review*, Spring 1943, and staged in New York in 1945 by a group of Broadway actors under the auspices of the art magazine *View*.

Sender has published also a five-act drama, *Hernán Cortés*, 1942, not yet translated into English, and finished recently other plays which he expects to publish or offer to the stage.

With Sender's play the *NMQ* introduces literature of the theater, until now not represented in its pages.

**GUEST ARTIST, V.** In correspondence with the Editor, Carl Zigrosser, when speaking of his critique of Howard Cook, writes: "It is sympathetic, but I trust not too extravagant in its praise. I am interested in Cook as an artist apart from current fashionable trends." Many will agree with Mr. Zigrosser. Howard Cook is a sincere artist and craftsman, a "warm New Englander," who, wrapped in his work, has taken pains in mastering practically all media, and who has kept aloof from the enticements of easy success. His old house at Rancho de Taos, rebuilt with his own hands and graced with the presence of his gifted artist wife Barbara Latham, is a good setting for his honest industry, directness, and attachment to New Mexico.

Howard Cook wrote the critique of Ernest L. Blumenschein, our first guest artist, in the Spring 1949 issue of the *NMQR*, where a biographical sketch of him was given, which will not be repeated here. Salient points of the artist's career are discussed by Mr. Zigrosser. Mr. Cook's recent activities include a one-man exhibit of oil paintings, pastels and water colors of New Mexico at the Frank Rehn Galleries, New York, March  
*continued on page 123*



*Frank Waters*

## THE NAVAJO MISSIONS

**A**CCORDING to the terms of the Navajo treaty of 1868 whereby a school for every thirty children was to be provided, the first government school on the reservation was established in 1873 at Fort Defiance.

D. M. Riordan of the U. S. Office of Indian Affairs described it in his report:

It was managed as an industrial boarding school, though no system of teaching industrial occupations was in operation or could be under the conditions existing. This was owing to the usual failure of the United States to perform its agreements in connection with Indian work. The Government, by its failure, compelled the opening of the school in an unfinished building, without suitable appliances; even without a wood-shed or water closet; with a roof in its kitchen and dining room that was about as good as a sieve as a protection; . . . sans everything almost that was needed for success in a school of this kind.

In 1871 the Supreme Court had ruled that the Pueblos were not "wards of the United States" and hence not under government guardianship. Nevertheless Congress appropriated funds for other schools at Tuba City and Tohatchi, at Keams Cañon just east of the Hopi First Mesa, and at the bottom of the mesa. They were no better. Thus among the Pueblos, where schools

were not legally permissible, children were forcibly taken from their parents by Government troops to fill the schools. But among the Navajos, where ample provision of schools was required by treaty, few were thereafter provided.

With the failure of reservation boarding and day schools, non-reservation or "away" schools were established. The pattern was set by the Carlisle Indian School in 1879. Colonel R. H. Pratt, who had served in the Indian Wars of 1874-75, had taken a liking to the young prisoners placed in his charge. Lamenting that the few Plains Indians being schooled by the government were sent to Hampton Institute, Virginia, an institute for the segregated education of Negroes, he suggested that a school be provided for Indians alone. Accordingly he was allowed to use the abandoned army barracks at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, which had previously served as a cavalry depot. His success with 189 Kiowa, Sioux, Comanche, Cheyenne and Arapahoe children proved his point. There were built Haskell Institute at Lawrence, Kansas, Sherman Institute at Riverside, California, and similar schools at Phoenix, Arizona, and Albuquerque and Santa Fe, New Mexico—each drawing Indian conscripts from all Indian reservations in the United States. The theory was to remove the children from their home reservations and educate them out of their Indian background by a militaristic routine. Their hair was cut. They were forbidden to speak their own language, to wear their own clothes, to keep their traditional customs, even their own names. They were then expected to settle in white communities and forget they were Indians.

Among the Pueblos and Navajos the theory did not work. Both bitterly fought conscription. If the children were caught and sent away to school, they were dismissed untrained for anything but manual or menial labor. Developing a sense of inferiority under the racial discrimination of white employers,

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they hung around the edges of town unkempt and unwanted with that other Western racial minority, the mestizo "Mexicans." Eventually they returned to their reservation homes—"back to the blanket."

Indian objections to this system were not based, as supposed, upon a stubborn refusal to better their lot by learning new customs, trades and crafts. Boys were secreted in kivas and hidden in the mountains precisely because the age at which they were taken away coincided with the time during which they were prepared for initiation in tribal ceremonialism.

When this finally became apparent in 1926 the Indian Commissioner attended a council meeting at Taos pueblo. He informed the members that their religion made them "half animals," and forbade the withdrawal of Pueblo boys from school for kiva initiation. When the old men refused to comply, the whole body was thrown into jail for violating the religious crimes code—only to be released by the Federal District Court under press of publicity.

Meanwhile it was as incumbent upon the government to break the still resistant will of the roving Navajos, as it was to destroy the traditional self-enclosure of the Pueblos within their independent city-states. Both government reservation schools and "away" schools being failures, various denominational Christian churches and missionary societies were encouraged to establish schools on the reservation. The Indian Bureau agreed to the proselytizing of Navajo children and later subsidized the schools with Indian funds held in government trust. And the churches, grasping at the opportunity to bring salvation to the souls of heathen savages, agreed to give them primary schooling.

For a generation then, the result was the same. Cruelty and stupidity in government schools, kindness and incompetency in mission schools, combining to widen still more the gulf between the red and the white.

**THE NAVAJO METHODIST MISSION.** The first of these mission schools, the one whose background is an integral part of my own childhood, and with which I am most familiar, was the Navajo Methodist Mission along the bend of the San Juan.

When our family's two old-maid aunts, previously fictionalized as the Vrain Girls, in my novel *Below the Grass Roots*, went there in the 1890's the region had all the elements of a movie frontier epic. Farmington, at the convergence of the San Juan, La Plata and Las Animas rivers, was its center. Ten miles west was the little Mormon village of Fruitland. Twelve miles east was Bloomfield, home of the cattle rustling Stockton Gang. To the north was the Ute reservation, to the east the Jicarilla Apache reservation, and to the south and west the Navajo reservation. There was nothing at Shiprock but Hubbard's Trading Post. Gallup was four days travel by wagon. Durango, sixty-five miles north in the Colorado Rockies, was the closest railroad junction.

Farmington's main street was two blocks long. It was filled with swaggering cattle rustlers, unruly cowboys, Indian traders, Utes, Apaches and Navajos. Here from Hon-Not-Klee, the trading post at Shallow Water on the Gallegos which the Vrain Girls made their headquarters, they came on rare occasions to catch the stage and to bring to a boy those vivid reels of their unaccountable life and that of the other women with whom they were associated.

The earliest of these was Mrs. Mary E. Eldridge, the first missionary in the region. A member of the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, she founded the first mission near Hogback, about twenty miles west of Farmington. Her work consisted mainly of administering to the sick out of meager funds contributed by the church and the government. The second was Miss Mary Tripp who started the

## THE NAVAJO MISSIONS

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first school about 1893, assisted later by Miss Edith Dabb. In September, 1899, Miss Frances E. Rykert came from upper New York to help them as a teacher. I remember her vivid description to me of her frightening journey by train from Albany, by stage from Durango, and by wagon to Hogback.

A half-dozen women limited by funds, knowledge and experience, with little support and supervision, trying to convert, teach and heal the Navajo nation! In the movie they would have succeeded. In life their attempts were at once ludicrous and heroic.

Mrs. Eldridge soon homesteaded the land and offered to deed it to the Home Missionary Society of her church. When it was refused, she deeded it to the Presbyterian Church. She then located three miles west of Farmington, across the San Juan river, establishing a new post from which one of the Vrain Girls worked as a field matron.

The Methodists moved up the river and re-established the Navajo Methodist Mission School on bottom land about four miles west of Farmington on the west side of the San Juan near the La Plata suspension bridge. Here Miss Mary Tripp established a small place under the auspices of the Indian Rights Association of Boston. Here too Miss Rykert worked as a teacher; assisting her was the other Vrain Girl.

The work was progressing, but as a movie plot it was also developing complications. If it were not rivalry between the Methodists, Presbyterians and the Indian Rights Association, it was the admonition of the government Indian agent conflicting with the advice of experienced Indian traders, the demands of cattlemen and townspeople. Medical supplies were short and money to buy them. Only the women held together, riding to remote hogans by horseback, teaching the "Jesus Way" and how to sew and read.

How wonderful the children were! There was Enogah, the



spunky little girl named Kigpah ("on the warpath") and Yabaty meaning "brave" because he "always dared to do right." One of the most inspiring children Miss Rykert ever taught was a boy of five. He could read and embroider as well as a woman. Of him she wrote, "He left us when he was only nine. I think of him now in the place that our dear Savior went to prepare." Unfortunately there had been no medicine to cure him when he became fatally ill. His father carried him away and held for him a last sing. One of the Vrain Girls followed on horseback and looked after his burial.

It was discouraging work. Miss Tripp died in 1909; and after serving five years as a teacher and three years as superintendent Miss Rykert returned East seriously ill.

The new superintendent of the Navajo Methodist Mission was Mr. Simmons and his wife, both new to the country. With him were Miss Brown, a teacher; Frankie Damon, a blind half-breed interpreter; an old Mr. Western who boarded there; and a Mr. Tice from Illinois. The buildings consisted of a six-room adobe used as their living quarters, a two-story adobe whose downstairs was used as a schoolroom and whose upstairs served as a dormitory for the twenty-seven Navajo schoolchildren, a laundry building, and corrals and sheds for stock and chickens.

Here it was then, as I remember it. . . . No! It is too hopelessly tragic to be recalled in actuality. It had best be characters and setting of a movie after all. The plot reaches its climax in September, 1911. It is raining.

A thin drizzle obscuring the sage with a wet grey mist. Recurrent showers. A steady downpour. Then cloudburst after cloudburst in the mountains. The San Juan, Las Animas and La Plata rise ominously. By Thursday, October 5, the rivers are overflowing their banks.

Townspeople, ranchers and traders are in an uproar. Messages from Colorado warn of an oncoming flood; the Rockwood

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dam above Durango is weakening. All people in the lowlands are notified to move to safety. Particular anxiety is felt for the Mission School as it is located on the bottom lands of the San Juan roaring with the flood waters of both the La Plata and Las Animas. Mr. Simmons is notified.

It is noon. He is praying at the head of the dinner table. Around it are patiently standing Hortense, Alice, Geraldine, Percy, Abigail, John, Ira—twenty-seven Navajo children neatly named, with their hair cut, learning the Jesus Way.

"We will not move," he answers. "God will protect us."

Mr. Western is seventy-five years old. "The river has never risen this high in all the years I've lived in this part of the country. Take my word for it!"

Mr. Tice grins. "I am an expert swimmer."

Lessons resume. But late that afternoon Frankie, the blind interpreter, steals out to measure the water. It is waist deep before he reaches the approach to the bridge. He comes back to propose they all move to a vacant homesteader's house on higher ground nearby.

"Nol" shouts Mr. Simmons. "God will protect his children from the flood!"

This raises an ecclesiastical argument in the blind halfbreed's mind. According to the whites there is God and there is the rain, the flood, the mud and all inanimate nature. But according to the Navajos there is God in the heavens, God in the rain, the flood, the mud, God in his children, The People, and all these Gods together are one God, the God of all the living universe. What does it matter which manifestation of God is preëminent for the moment? It is most confusing. Still he is inclined to believe that for the present it would be expedient for God-in-the-children to remove to higher ground from God-in-the-flood lest they coincide with some inconvenience to all concerned.

So while the children are ordered off to bed and the white

staff obdurately retire, he remains at the telephone. More calls come. Angry calls from the Indian Agent, Mr. Shelton, demanding that something be done by somebody for the Wards of the Government. Imploring calls from neighbors. Mr. Simmons refuses to answer. Abruptly the line goes out.

It is still raining. Blind Frankie cannot hear it for the roar of the flood.

He gropes toward the dormitory, rouses Hortense, Percy, Abigail, Geraldine—all the twenty-seven Navajo children. They lead him out to the corral and help him harness the horses. Inside the house the two frightened women, Mrs. Simmons and Miss Brown, hear them. They come out and beg to go too. It is still raining.

The blind man loads them all into the wagon and takes the reins. The water has risen. It covers the hubs, is belly deep on the horses. They cannot get to the abandoned homestead. But they do make it upriver two miles to Mrs. Eldridge's place.

At two a.m. the first rise takes out the suspension bridge. At four a.m. the second rise strikes the Mission.

The sight at daybreak is appalling. The river looks like a monstrous brown snake writhing back and forth, uprooting huge cottonwood trees, gouging holes in the ground. The Mission buildings are all gone except the floor of the laundry, held down by heavy machinery. On it stands Mr. Tice and the Mission dog. Nothing can be done to save him. They watch him desperately all morning.

Indians come. They are carrying a bedraggled and unconscious old man. It is Mr. Western. He had jumped from the window, crawled through the water to a mud bank. Mrs. Eldridge manages to restore him to life, but he has lost his mind.

Suddenly Mrs. Simmons screams. Through a neighbor's field glasses she sees her husband perched in a tree top emerging from the river. When the walls collapsed he had been washed away, clinging to the stairway. Luckily he had grabbed on to the

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tree. Here he clings for several days until rescued more dead than alive.

Near noon the laundry floor rises and tips Mr. Tice and the dog into the river. The dog is washed toward shore and rescued by some cowboys with lariats. Mr. Tice disappears instantly. Two days later his body is found twelve miles downriver encircled by buzzards flying overhead.



And now the finale. Hundreds of Navajos lashing their horses up the muddy road toward Mrs. Eldridge's place. Is it an Indian raid? No! They are the parents and relatives of the twenty-seven children who had seen the Mission destroyed and had believed their children were drowned. . . . Close-up of the undisputable hero: Frankie Damon, the blind interpreter, who had saved their lives. . . .

Next year the Mission was rebuilt on another new site up-river just a mile west of Farmington, and Miss Rykert was induced to return and help it get started. But the Vrain Girls had gone. Something mysterious had happened to one of them. She had been converted by the Navajos. Becoming "queer,"

adopting their beliefs and customs, she vanished into the far reaches of the San Juan and has never been heard of since. . . . Strangely enough, one of the children she had taught loved her and took her English name. Today he is a Singer or medicine man; and with his wife, Tah Dez Bah, he is living in a hogan near Fort Defiance.

**GANADO MISSION.** A few years later the Presbyterians, like the Methodists, abandoned the site at Hogback and sent the equipment to another small mission established at Ganado, Arizona, in 1901. The site was fifty-six miles northwest of Gallup, near the location of the prehistoric Pueblo Colorado, and just one mile from Lorenzo Hubbell's Trading Post, the first post established on the reservation. For a quarter of a century it persisted as no more than another insignificant and ramshackle outpost in the wilderness.

Today, owned and operated by the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church, Ganado Mission is the largest Indian Mission in the United States. Nothing describes it so aptly as an exclamation made recently by a lady tourist to Dr. Salsbury, its head: "Why Doctor, it's an A-osis in the Desert!"

An oasis it is. Two hundred acres of green lawn threaded by flagstone walks and gravelled driveways, shaded by rows of elms and cottonwoods, and supporting nearly seventy buildings. It is as tidy as a college campus, modern as 1950, self-contained as a small city.

The million-dollar plant includes a power-plant, ice-plant, deep freeze unit, steam laundry, carpenter shop, swimming pool, commissary, and a farm with pigs, chickens and a registered Holstein dairy herd to supply food for the four hundred people who are fed three meals a day. Several miles away the Mission

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owns and operates its own coal mine. The High School, with an enrollment of 127 students, is the only Indian high school to be state accredited. In the "Cathedral of the Purple Sage" sermons are delivered in English, then translated into Navajo and transmitted by loud speaker into the wards of the hospital. This Sage Memorial Hospital with its 150 beds, its iron lung, X-ray, Wassermann baths, operating room and laboratory, is undoubtedly the show place of the reservation. In connection with it is conducted the only nurses' training school for Indians in the United States; over one hundred girls, representing fifty tribes, have been graduated.

The whole place is a memorial to its present superintendent and medical director, Dr. Clarence G. Salsbury. Today, at the age of sixty-three, his fame as the Sagebrush Surgeon has spread throughout the world. He has been elected to fellowship in the American College of Surgeons, the American College of Hospital Administrators, the International College of Surgeons of Geneva, Switzerland, and named President of the Arizona Hospital Association. Last spring some eighty eminent surgeons assembled in convention at Ganado to pay their respects to their remarkable colleague, the Big White Doctor—235 pounds big. To watch him do a Caesarean in twenty minutes was a pleasure this writer declined with thanks; but watching him clean a mess of catfish for two young nurses was just as revealing of character. There is nothing slow or awkward about his driving either. He hits the rutted dirt roads at an eighty-mile-an-hour clip that leaves no doubt he knows every stone, wash and curve. He is a kindly man, a real character, and his story is one of the most unique in the Four Corners.

A missionary doctor in China for thirteen years, he came home in 1927 to accept a temporary assignment among the Navajos. When he arrived at Ganado he found a ramshackle infirmary of twelve beds trying to serve a people much worse

off than the Chinese. Putting up tents to hold typhoid, diphtheria and tuberculosis patients, he talked the Presbyterian Board into building him a two-story, stone hospital. Then he struck out into the reservation to drum up trade.

According to the story, his first break came when he brought in a little girl for an operation. The child took the anesthetic beautifully. Then suddenly a thrombosis, a blood clot formation, set in. Despite his skill he could not save her.

Swiftly the news of her death spread. A mob of angry Navajos swarmed in upon the hospital, threatening to run him out or kill him. Then Red Point, a venerated old singer, stepped out and addressed the crowd.

"For many years I have been your singer. But I have not always succeeded. Did you talk of killing me, of running me away? This Big White Doctor is a medicine man too. He is trying to help the Dinneh. But what man has the power to always preserve life? So what is this empty talk of killing him, of running him away? Let him alone. Go home. I have said it!"

In return the Big White Doctor invited Red Point into the hospital to see how his medicine worked. The old singer was particularly fascinated by the microscope. "See those bugs?" The Doctor pointed to the contaminated water on the slide. "They'll kill all of you if you don't let me help."

Red Point was impressed; and when the typhoid epidemic struck in 1930, it was largely due to his efforts that The People were induced to receive inoculation.

In 1933 the first class of two nurses was graduated from the school of nursing. Both of the girls were Navajos: Ruth Henderson and Charlotte Adela Slivers or Nagliniyil Nazbah ("Peace Army"), the daughter of Da-Ha-Na-Hez, a medicine man. Red Point gave the commencement address.

Today the Ganado Mission is expanding its activities beyond its sphere of influence around the mission proper. One Satur-

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day we went with the Doctor, two nurses and interpreter to a field clinic held thirty-five miles north at Tselani. Here, to a little stone building near Art Lee's Trading Post, rode Navajos from their remote hogans along the heartbreakingly beautiful canyon and from the edges of the distant Black Mesa where there still live Navajos who have never seen a white man. Of the fifty patiently squatting on the floor only two spoke English. But one by one they got up, baring their arms for the needle. At Cornfields, Nazlini and Greasewood similar scenes take place weekly—field clinics with inoculations and emergency treatments carrying the Big White Doctor's powerful medicine to The People.

On Sunday we went with the Reverend Douthitt, the mission minister, and his interpreter, on still another field trip. His field is every hogan within two thousand square miles around the mission. His job is to convert The People to Christianity. In one hogan after another he stood before the family, the friends or neighbors who had been induced to attend. The Belicana Short Coat so incongruously attired in his black suit, white shirt and black bow tie—praying, telling a Biblical story, singing *Jesus Loves Me* or another gospel hymn translated into Navajo:

Jesus a-yo-a-so 'nih,  
Bi nal-tsos yeh sil hal-ne,  
Al-cin-i-gi a-nis-t'eh  
Do si-dzil dah, Ei bidzil.

After months of hearing about the "Jesus Way," a Navajo "makes his decision for Christ and the Church." Then he is brought into the Mission compound for baptism in the church. When a conversion is made, according to Reverend Douthitt, it sticks; there are few backsliders. The children are enrolled in the mission school, are taught to forget the old ways and to make a complete transition to the new.



**ST. MICHAELS MISSION.** The Catholic St. Michaels Mission, manned by the Franciscan Fathers and located at Cienega between Ganado and Gallup, operates just as efficiently. There is no hospital, but its influence on the Indians is very great in other ways, through the Mission's traditional reluctance to directly oppose tribal ceremonial life and the tremendous knowledge of Navajo psychology brought by Father Berard Haile.

It maintains a large boarding school for over three hundred Navajo children, and supports ten buildings including a chapel, dormitories, gymnasium, a light and water plant, a barn and shops in which farming and practical trades are taught. Father Haile opened the school in 1901. His admitted purpose was to teach Christianity to the Navajos. But seeing the barrier of language which alienated them and the more difficult task of teaching a religion to a people who have no word for religion in their own language, he set about learning their language and the meaning of their ceremonials.

Ednishodi Yazzie, "Father Shorty," first learned Navajo fluently. Then he set about transcribing it on paper with characters to fit the sounds. The result was a standard written Navajo language utilizing English and Greek characters, glottal stops, barred l's and other symbols. To reproduce these he set up a monotype of his own with a special keyboard, and printed his own books. Meanwhile he began compiling a complete encyclopedia of information on Navajo thought and customs, and this led to an exhaustive study of the great Navajo songs or "Ways."

His text books now include: *Learning Navajo*, a *Navajo-English* and *English-Navajo* vocabulary and *An Ethnologic Dictionary*—in which he devotes thirty-four pages of description to the name "Navaho" and accounts for this writer's preferred spelling and stubborn use of "Navajo." His religious translations are *A Catechism of Christian Doctrine in Navajo*, *The*

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*Holy Gospel For Sundays, Holy Days, and The Catechism and Guide.* And for posterity he has recorded *The Origin of the Navajo Enemy Way* for the Yale University Press, *The Flint Way* for the University of Chicago Press, and the *Navajo Fire Dance, and Navajo War Dance.*

Little wonder that The People have nicknamed him "The Little Priest Who Knows." Father Shorty, grey-haired, felt-slipped under his long brown robe, has done more than any man to codify their language, and probably knows more about them than any white man living.

Thus at this mission from the very beginning religious instruction was given to the children in their native tongue. Father Anselm Weber, another great missionary and linguist, rode horseback to Klagnetoh, Cornfields, Tohatchi and Lukachukai gathering pupils. With this close personal contact he also fought for Navajo rights against white aggression, and through his influence at Washington was able to obtain more grazing land for Navajo sheep, The People's only source of livelihood.

Unlike at Ganado, no tuition is required. Classes are held up to the ninth grade, half the day being spent in the classroom and the other half in learning practical arts. All students are encouraged to become Girl or Boy Scouts. Upon graduation, they are given opportunity to attend St. Catherine's Indian High School at Santa Fe.

There are several other small missions on the reservation: the Rehoboth Mission of the Holland Christian Reformed Church east of Gallup; the Seventh Day Adventist Navajo Mission near Holbrook; the Good Shepherd Mission at Fort Defiance, and St. Christopher's Mission at Bluff, Utah, both sponsored by the Protestant Episcopal Church; and the Catholic Tegakwitha Mission at Houck, dedicated to Catherine Tegakwitha, the Lily of the Mohawks, supposedly the first Indian north of Mexico to become a Catholic in 1655.

Most of these have been recently founded and like the older, larger missions their principal function is secular education. In addition to the missions, there are scattered throughout the reservation isolated missionaries like Shine Smith, I. G. Bennett at Tuba City and Andrew McGaffin at Kayenta—devout, humble, ill-paid men armed with no more than their Bibles and their own indomitable courage.

Today, three quarters of a century since the first school was established, over eighty per cent of all Navajos are illiterate, and there are school facilities for only five thousand of the twenty-four thousand Navajo children of school age. Whether this great need is to be corrected by endowed mission schools, State or Federal Government education systems still depends upon the formulation of a national, long-term Indian policy—a policy that will be formulated in part by these people who have now been granted the franchise as voting citizens of both New Mexico and Arizona.

## Howard Cook



By Carl Zigrosser

**A**RT IS THE making well or properly arranging," the late Ananda Coomaraswamy once wrote, "of anything whatever that needs to be made or arranged, whether a statuette, or automobile, or garden. . . . In the words of St. Thomas Aquinas, 'there can be no good use without art.' It is obvious that if things required for use, whether an intellectual or a physical use, or under normal circumstances both, are not properly made, they cannot be enjoyed, meaning by *enjoyed* something more than merely *liked*. Badly prepared food, for example, will disagree with us; and in the same way autobiographical or other sentimental exhibits necessarily weaken the morale of those who feed upon them. The healthy patron is no more interested in the artist's personality than he is in his tailor's private life; all that he needs of either is that they be in possession of their art."

Thus art, according to Coomaraswamy, is not an inherent or absolute quality, but is the technique for making things well; and a masterpiece of art is any work executed by an artist after he has

ceased to be an apprentice and has become a practicing master. This definition has the advantage of bringing works of art into the framework of healthy normal human activity, and is a statement of the traditional impersonal attitude, concerned with expression rather than self-expression. At any rate it will serve as an introduction to the work of Howard Cook, for he might be called just such a master of arts, a man endowed with and trained in special skills or arts, one who has produced masterpieces. His special skill is pictorial expression, the representation of nature, man, and his works in graphic form, in a language possessing widespread communicability and obeying its own laws of beauty, order, and fitness. Because his attitude toward expression is, in the main, detached and objective, his work does not require elaborate interpretation or exegesis. What he has to say about life or the phenomenal world can be read by any intelligent person without further ado. One may or may not like his message, but one is never in doubt as to what it is. Thus it becomes difficult or even superfluous to write much about his pictures because they speak for themselves and in their own tongue.

Howard Cook is primarily the observer, and his interest is in the thing observed. This fact rules out the *arrière pensée*, the autobiographical or sentimental touch in his expression. Not that feeling is ever absent in his pictures; it is always present, but only in connection with the object observed. He is ever the recorder. He began as the pictorial reporter and developed into the commemorating artist—a distinction not so much of inherent function as of depth of insight. A reporter illustrates a single incident or the surface aspect. The artist telescopes many experiences or facets into one telling synthesis.

His work is always well made and properly arranged; in a word, it has a technical perfection. In drawing with chalk or pen or dry-brush, in wood-engraving, lithograph, etching and aquatint, in water color and oil painting, and in the most exacting technique of *buon fresco*, Howard Cook has displayed an impressive techni-

cal mastery. Perfection of craft is not the end of creative expression, but it is a *sine qua non*.

A strong individualist, Cook is of his time, yet quite apart from its "isms." He has a personal vision, and he remains true to it at all times. To be expedient, to climb on the band wagon of this or that art movement because certain kinds of pictures sell, is to him dishonest and vulgar. There is a core of integrity in all his work. Yet he is no academician or traditionalist. He sees things in terms of today. He has assimilated the lessons of modern art and adapted them for his own use. The result is a dynamic framework, neither wild nor weak, a balanced yet eloquent idiom. It is such an endowment, coupled with sympathetic observation, that has made him an able interpreter of such diverse subject matter as New England, New York City, Mexico, and the Southwest.

Howard Cook was born in Springfield, Massachusetts, in 1901. In an autobiographical fragment he has written:

My boyhood was spent in Western Massachusetts working on farms and in the tobacco fields during the warm summers of high school days; and, between three sessions at the Art Students' League, working in photoengravers' and lithographers' shops and painting outdoor billboards. For five years from 1922 on, pen drawings and woodcut illustrations for *The Forum*, *Survey Graphic*, and *The Century* made possible some sketching trips to Europe, North Africa, Turkey, the Orient, Central America; sometimes in steerage, once working as quartermaster on a coastal steamer through the Panama Canal, drawing all the time on shipboard and ashore—this was my early independent schooling.

Compared to his later work, the productions of his apprentice period rank as competent reporting, not too good, not too bad. They did, however, give him valuable training in the techniques of pen drawing and other illustration processes. It is interesting to note that *The Forum* then made a practice of using woodcuts and linoleum cuts for illustration. The production of woodcuts naturally involved considerably more labor than straight pen or

scratch-board drawing. Young Cook was not one to shirk work, and he became one of the principal illustrators for the magazine, gaining thereby an unusual dexterity with woodcut tools. In 1926 *The Forum* commissioned him to make a series of woodcuts for Willa Cather's *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, to be published serially in the periodical. He therefore went to New Mexico to gather local color, and stayed for a year and a half.

It was around this time that he began to make prints for their own sake and not as illustrations. The first independent woodcut was made in 1925; the first essay in etching was begun during the same year in Paris in Thomas Handforth's studio; the first lithograph was printed in Paris in 1929. The period of his greatest activity as a print maker falls roughly in the period from 1927 to 1933. He did, to be sure, make occasional prints thereafter; but, with a few exceptions, they lack the impact of the earlier work. It is for such prints as *Taos Pueblo Moonlight*, *Skyscraper*, *Lower Manhattan*, *Queensboro Bridge*, *New England Church*, *Cocoanut Palm*, *Mexican Interior* and *Guerrero Woman* that he will be remembered as a graphic artist.

In 1932 Cook went to Mexico on a Guggenheim fellowship and on a subsequent renewal spent a year making studies and gathering material in the South. He went to Mexico primarily to study the technique of fresco painting, but the journey was more than a quest for technical information; it represented a new turn, a major step in his artistic development. He had begun as an illustrator, a pictorial reporter; from this he had grown into an important American print maker, though still limited to black and white on a relatively small scale. He now was entering a new phase, that of all-round artist with vast new potentialities in color and largeness of scale, as a painter in oil, water-color, or fresco. Coinciding with this expansion of interest, or perhaps symbolizing it, was his intensive study of the human figure, the portrayal of people and types. Hitherto the focus of his interest had been landscape and the aspects of a big city; now man and his activities



**BUFFALO DANCE.** Oil on canvas 24" x 30". 1947-1948. *Courtesy Art Digest.*





**OF VOLCANIC FIRES NO. I.** Oil on canvas 20" x 43". 1947. *Courtesy Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center.*



**TIO VIVO.** Lithograph 13 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 16 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". 1949. *Courtesy Southwest Review.*



SNOW STORM. Watercolor 27" x 38". 1945. *Courtesy Art Digest.*

MEXICAN BOY, TAXCO. Aquatint 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 15 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". 1940.

loomed large in countless drawings and sketches in preparation for his vocation as a mural painter.

He had been attracted to the austere and monumental forms of mural painting in preference to the more sensuous potentialities of easel painting in oil. To work in true fresco, that is to say, directly on the wall in wet plaster, demands clarity of conception (there can be no fumbling, since mistakes cannot be erased), sureness of drawing, an acute plastic sense, and a mastery of overall design. These challenges Howard Cook was especially prepared by temperament and by training to meet and to carry through to a successful conclusion. He was destined by fate to become a mural painter. He went to Mexico, as has been said, to learn fresco technique. He did study the great murals of the Mexican School; he had some advice from Diego Rivera about where to get pigments and materials; but most of his knowledge came from independent experiment and research. He had the opportunity to make his first fresco on the wall of a hotel in Taxco in 1933. He also executed several fragmentary sketches in portable fresco panels. In 1936 he completed a mural about ten by seventeen feet on the wall of the Pittsburgh Federal Courthouse.

In 1937 he was awarded, on the basis of open competition, the decoration of the newly erected post office at San Antonio, Texas. This was, at the time, the largest mural commission ever bestowed in this country; and it has been surpassed in size by only one other since, namely the post office at St. Louis, decorated by two artists, Edward Millman and Mitchell Siporin. With its seven hundred and fifty square feet of painted wall surface it is not only one of the biggest but certainly one of the most distinguished murals in this country. Its execution consumed two and one half years, not counting the time devoted to preliminary research for the competitive sketches. The artist has written an interesting article on his experiences in San Antonio for the *Magazine of Art*, from which I shall quote only the few sentences giving what might be called his mural credo:

It [the fresco] must retain its relation and sustain its own life and dignity in the message it conveys on a monumental scale coincident with the feeling of stability in the building structure. I feel that the subject matter must be of more than passing interest, that it must contain the elements of universality, and spring from a richness of vision and thought, revealing the deeper significance of humanity. To my mind our great murals will, with the power and beauty derived from ordered reason and far-seeing composure, create a record of enduring value.

After San Antonio, Howard Cook executed another mural for the post office at Corpus Christi, installed in 1941. This was smaller and on canvas. It marked his last mural commission, since, with the entry of the United States into the war, the government policy for the decoration of new public buildings was changed. For Howard Cook, the mural painter par excellence, the lack of walls to paint on represents a real frustration. He has, however, overcome it in various ways. He has come to terms technically with easel painting in oil, and he has explored more fully the possibilities of water color painting. He has reveled in the color and pattern of the Southwest terrain; he has re-created superbly the moods of sea and rock; he has returned to grapple with the plastic complexities of skyscrapers; he has recapitulated the rhythmic interplay of forms in Indian dances or children's games. His latest work, then, indicates a return to earlier subject matter, but with this great difference: that he has poured into it all the richness of his experience with a depth of feeling and concentration on inner structure previously absent. No longer the cub reporter, he has become the master of orchestration in line, form, color, texture, and design. The wise and mature artist now garners and shares with us his autumn harvest of pictorial images. What Cook has to say about the world and mankind today is well said and truly said and no nonsense about it.



Ramón J. Sender

## THE HOUSE OF LOT

### A Miracle Play

LOT	THE HIERARCH	HEARING	TASTE
ESTHER	VOICE OF A MAN	SMELL	TOUCH
STRANGER	VOICE OF A WOMAN	SIGHT	CROWD

*The patio of Lot's house. A large door, closed, in the rear. Light columns and arches, like those in the pictures of Italian primitive painters. A knock is heard at the door.*

ESTHER. Don't open.

LOT. Why not?

ESTHER. Don't open. *(Pause. Another knock at the door.)*  
It's a tramp. I saw him through the window. A hunchbacked tramp. The people are following him shouting. *(A stone is heard thrown against the door.)* You see? They're throwing stones at him. Don't open.

LOT. All the more reason. Those brutes can kill him.

ESTHER. And what's that to you? What do you care about the life of a stranger? *(They knock again.)*

LOT. There are no strangers. *(Opening the door.)* Come in, brother.

*A shrunken black bearded hunchback enters, wearing a dark cape and a cap of the same color. He leans on a stick. Lot closes the door again.*

STRANGER. (*Timidly.*) Thank you.

ESTHER. Why did you knock at my door? What are you looking for here?

STRANGER. The people are after me.

ESTHER. And what have I got to do with that?

STRANGER. Pardon me. As soon as I rest a moment I'll move on.

LOT. Sit down.

MAN'S VOICE. (*Outside.*) Open the door, Lot.

ANOTHER MAN'S VOICE. (*Outside.*) Lot, give the stranger to us.

WOMAN'S VOICE. (*Outside.*) He comes from Samaria. (*Laughter.*) Let us see the man from Samaria.

ESTHER. A Samaritan in my house! We could fall no lower.

LOT. Hush, woman, (*To the Stranger.*) Are you really from Samaria?

STRANGER. No, sir. I come from another country. Are you Lot?

LOT. Yes.

STRANGER. God bless you.

ESTHER. And how do you know my husband's name is Lot?

STRANGER. (*Pointing to the door.*) The people just said so.

ESTHER. And what do you care about what the people say? What business do the tramps of Samaria have with my family?

LOT. Don't mind her, Stranger. (*To Esther.*) Bring unleavened bread and Galilean wine.

ESTHER. (*Sarcastically.*) And what else?

LOT. Nothing else. Why?

ESTHER. You are wasting your estate on a Samaritan. That's the way things go for you. No one in Sodom respects you.

(*She goes out muttering.*)

STRANGER. (*Timidly.*) It looks as if they are all like that in the city.

LOT. It is sad to confess that most of them are worse.

MAN'S VOICE. (*Outside.*) Lot, there are only five of us. Open the door and let us see your stranger.

LOT. (*To the Stranger.*) What do they have against you?

STRANGER. I don't know. But they keep on shouting. They shout and insult me. Until now no one has dared do more.

LOT. Weren't they throwing stones?

STRANGER. One. Only once.

MAN'S VOICE. (*Outside.*) Hand over the stranger. There are six of

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us. Look, more are coming and if you don't open the door it will be worse.

LOT. (*Approaching the door.*) What do you want? Leave the stranger alone.

WOMAN'S VOICE. (*Outside.*) I want to touch his hump. They say it brings good luck.

(*Laughter is heard outside. They sing in a chorus beating out the rhythm with their hands on the door.*)

SEVERAL VOICES. I had in Samaria  
a one-eyed donkey  
ay, ay, ay, ay . . .  
a one-eyed donkey.

ESTHER. (*Entering with bread and wine.*) The neighbor women are at their windows. Everybody is laughing at us. (*Scornfully, she leaves the wine and bread on a stool.*) Rebecca, the scribe's wife, looked at me from her terrace as if I were a dog. What wretchedness! And you so calm!

LOT. Woman, bring water for ablutions.

ESTHER. A stray Samaritan doesn't need to wash his feet.

STRANGER. Don't bother.

ESTHER. Of course I won't bother. How could I?

LOT. (*Vexed.*) Why must you always be selfish and hard to get along with, woman? (*Starting to go.*) I'll get it.

ESTHER. If you are from Samaria, why do you walk? Samaritans usually have at least a donkey. Some have two. With them they cart water and firewood and they make a living.

STRANGER. I already told your husband that I do not come from Samaria.

ESTHER. Where do you come from, then? (*The Stranger does not answer.*) You must have committed some crime if you do not wish to tell. And who gave you permission to sit down? (*The Stranger gets up.*) You have lice. You surely have lice. What's your name?

STRANGER. Everyone calls me as he likes.

ESTHER. And what is your trade?

STRANGER. Messenger.

ESTHER. (*Laughing.*) Messenger, take a message for me to the Rabbi of Sidon.

MAN'S VOICE. (*Outside.*) Lot, let him go. Look, there are ten of us now.



ESTHER. (*Laughing, goes toward the door.*) What do you want him for?

MAN'S VOICE. (*Outside.*) We want to catch him alive. (*Laughter.*) And to make him dance in the market place.

ANOTHER VOICE. (*Outside.*) If you don't let him go, we'll notify the Hierarch.

(*Lot returns with water and towels, makes the Stranger sit down again and begins to wash his feet.*)

ESTHER. He isn't from Samaria, he has no donkey to ride, he scorns the people of Sodom, and he has lice.

LOT. Today is feast day in Sodom, Stranger. The people are more excited than usual because of the feast.

ESTHER. Any day can be feast day for honest people who have food and drink.

LOT. Woman, be quiet.

ESTHER. Throw that human wreck out into the street and I'll be quiet.

LOT. I told you to watch your words.

ESTHER. When I am dead of shame I'll watch my words.

LOT. (*Indignant.*) Woman. . . . A curse upon you!

ESTHER. No, not that. Don't curse me, for the spell will fall on my daughters. Rebecca's husband cursed her and a wen came on her daughter's cheek. (*Pleading.*) Take the curse off me. (*Lot dries the feet of the Stranger without answering her.*) Take the curse off me, please! (*Pause.*) Stranger, tell Lot to take the curse off me.

STRANGER. Listen to your wife, Lot.

LOT. May God be with you. And may He bless you, woman.

(*Sobbing, Esther starts for the interior of the house, but before going out she stops and turns her face toward Lot.*)

ESTHER. Aren't you ashamed to need the permission of a Stranger to take the curse off your wife? (*She leaves.*)

LOT. They are all like that in the city. Forgive her and forgive me, too.

STRANGER. You? Why?

LOT. Because I am unable to bring peace to her heart.

STRANGER. Like everyone in the city, she has a furious soul.

LOT. Yes. And a dry heart.

STRANGER. In the city everyone speaks wounding words.

LOT. It is true.

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STRANGER. The imagination of the people is full of lascivious shadows.

LOT. They don't distinguish good from evil.

STRANGER. That has been happening since the Demon of the Persians came to dwell in this city.

LOT. How do you know?

STRANGER. You only have to look at them. They all laugh. They all laugh without reason. They speak poisonous words and laugh without cause. It is the Demon of the Persians who laughs through them. I come to tell you so, Lot. To tell you that all will die a horrible death.

LOT. (*Astonished.*) Oh! All? Why all?

MAN'S VOICE. (*Outside.*) Deliver the Stranger to us. The strangers who come to the city belong to the people.

(*Another Voice outside imitates the bark of a dog. Laughter. Three knocks are heard at the door.*)

THE HIERARCH. (*Outside.*) Open the door to the Hierarch of Sodom.

(*Lot looks at the Stranger without knowing what to do.*)

STRANGER. Open, Lot, and don't be afraid.

*Lot opens the door carefully and the Hierarch enters. Cries and shouts are heard behind him. In vain Lot tries to close the door without harming those who are peering in and shouting.*

THE HIERARCH. (*Addressing those who wish to enter.*) Back. Don't you see that it is I who orders it? Isn't it enough for you that I am the one who gives the order?

(*Another Voice outside imitates the cock's crowing. Lot succeeds in closing the door.*)

LOT. As you see, Your Honor, these superstitious people are insulting the Stranger.

THE HIERARCH. Easy, Lot. (*Looking at the Stranger from time to time.*) You call superstition what I call tradition. Tradition is respectable. But you also forget that Sodom has laws. It is true that none of them are obeyed among us. (*Laughs.*) Why should we? We understand each other. But with strangers it is different. Why have you opened your door to a Stranger who has not registered in the market place or paid his traveller's tax? Eh? Can you answer me that?

STRANGER. I was there, Your Honor, but the rabble. . . .

**THE HIERARCH.** In my city there is no rabble, only citizens. Honest citizens. Why do you answer when I asked Lot the question?

**LOT.** Your Honor. . . .

**THE HIERARCH.** (*To the Stranger.*) They say you come from Samaria. You know that in our city no one looks at or speaks to a Samaritan. I speak to you because I have no prejudices. (*Outside a Voice is heard imitating the mooing of a cow.*) Do you hear? (*Laughs.*) How droll. The one imitating the cow is a nephew of my wife's. A son. More than a son, to me. (*Laughs.*) No one, then, would speak to, or touch a Samaritan with his hands. There are some who say that we are proud, but it is not so. It would be reasonable for us to be a little arrogant because we have wealth and nobility, and we are all better than those of Galilee and infinitely more clean and handsome than those of Samaria. Really, one could say that we are unique. (*Laughs.*) I don't say so, but the Galileans themselves do. But we are not vain. As you see. Even though you are a Samaritan they all want to come in and touch you because you have a hump and it is the day of good luck, seven days before Passover.

**ESTHER.** (*Entering.*) Thank you, Hierarch, for bringing so much honor to this house. Let me perfume your mantle.

**THE HIERARCH.** (*Flattered.*) I have no objection. (*He takes off his mantle and gives it to her.*) It is not the best one. I have others of royal purple, one of them with silver fringe.

**ESTHER.** More than all the mantles I admire the natural grace of your body. (*Pointing to the Stranger.*) This one must have committed some crime in his country.

**THE HIERARCH.** He will pay. Foreign criminals pay. (*Laughs.*) They pay in good gold and then they dance naked in the market place for the merriment of the people. It is the tradition. I have never seen a hunchback dance. You, Lot, are guilty of having taken him into your house, but as courtesy to your wife I pardon you the fine.

**ESTHER.** Thank you, magnificent Lord.

**THE HIERARCH.** You, Stranger. Do you or do you not come from Samaria?

**STRANGER.** No, sir.

**THE HIERARCH.** Don't tell me that you are from Pentapolis.

**STRANGER.** No, sir. I am not of this country.

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*(Outside a Voice imitates a pig.  
The Hierarch listens and laughs.)*

THE HIERARCH. Of course you are not from this country. Here we have not a single hunchback. That is the reason for the interest and curiosity you excite. Good, let me touch your hump. *(He does so.)* This is not superstition. Could anyone also call superstition the virtue of the sapphire I wear in this ring? It is possible. Lot is a man who dares to have ideas like those. And worse. But allow me, Stranger. It brings still better luck to spit in a hunchback's face seven days before Passover. *(Laughs.)*

ESTHER. *(Returning the mantle to him and putting it on his shoulders.)* Lord. . . .

THE HIERARCH. Thank you, Esther. *(Smelling with delight.)* M m . . . M m . . . Civet?

ESTHER. Civet, saffron and cinnamon.

THE HIERARCH. Now you know, Lot, that I pardon you the fine. *(Laughs.)* And you, Stranger, who come to dirty our city with your presence, listen to me. *(Laughs.)* Don't look at me. You are too ugly even for a Samaritan. *(He approaches him and without ceasing to laugh spits in his face.)* I did not wish to insult you. This evening I have a very delicate business on hand and now I am sure it will turn out well.

LOT. He is mad. They are all mad. *(To the Stranger.)* Forgive him, for the love of God.

ESTHER. You see, Hierarch? He asks *him* to forgive you. You! Oh, what I have had to endure with him!

THE HIERARCH. *(To the Stranger.)* Are you still stubbornly hiding your country and origin? To what tribe do you belong?

STRANGER. There is only one tribe, Hierarch.

THE HIERARCH. Now you've heard it. Only one tribe. Then *(laughing)* you and I are brothers. Is that what you mean? All right, you tell us nothing about your country and origin, but it is useless. You know that you are obliged to wear a belt with the colors of your tribe. Everyone has that obligation in Palestine. And ignorance of the law is no excuse. I suppose you wear such a belt beneath your cape. If you do not it is really because you have something to hide. Come on, show your belt.

ESTHER. Obey the Hierarch, you louse-ridden man.

*(The Hierarch approaches the Stranger who backs away.  
The Hierarch snatches off the Stranger's mantle. The*

*Stranger, who wears a white tunic and has two large wings of a light rose hue on his back, slowly straightens up. His golden hair falls over his shoulders. When the Stranger's cape is torn off his cap and beard come off also.)*

THE HIERARCH. An angel?

ESTHER. A miracle. A miracle in my house.

LOT. (*Kneeling.*) Thank you, Lord, for choosing my poor dwelling.

STRANGER. (*To the Hierarch.*) Respect this house. Respect Lot who is just. Respect the will of Elijah. Go away and tell no one what you have seen.

THE HIERARCH. (*Stammering.*) I will not tell it. No . . . but, who are you? I do not believe in miracles. It is not enough to be handsome and have wings to be an angel. I . . . I know my Cabala. I do not deny that you are an angel, that, no. Remember, I have not denied it.

STRANGER. Neither your faith nor your doubt counts, Hierarch.

THE HIERARCH. I know my Talmud and I doubt, doubt. Forgive me, Stranger, but I doubt.

LOT. Lord, he is not in the habit of believing his own eyes.

STRANGER. Get up, Lot. Prepare yourself for the exodus in order to save the seed of Abraham. Think of yourself and your kin. We are going to leave the city.

ESTHER. Who, Lot? It is true. He has never thought of his kin. But don't you go, Messenger. Stay here. The best bed in my house for you. I have fresh linen sheets and rose water.

STRANGER. Forget it all. The hour without name, the hour of terror, approaches.

THE HIERARCH. (*Laughing.*) The hour of terror? Why? I am not afraid. You are prophesying and that can be done only in the name of Elijah. What harm will Elijah do us? We are the best people of Pentapolis. Why do you threaten us?

ESTHER. It is true, Messenger. The wise men have said and have written that we are the salt of the earth.

STRANGER. Tremble. You have done nothing in your whole life but spin around yourselves and your vices. My words announce the end to you.

THE HIERARCH. I don't believe it. The old scriptures must be fulfilled. But what you say about us is quite true. (*Laughs.*) We are like the cat that turns around chasing its own tail. (*To Esther.*)

## THE HOUSE OF LOT

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How does what I just said strike you? (*A Voice outside imitates the braying of an ass.*) Don't worry, Esther. It still isn't certain that he's an angel. And even if he were, there are angels of light, false angels without any power over men. And whether he is an angel of light or not only the Sanhedrin could say.

LOT. (*To the Hierarch.*) Your heart is rotten.

THE HIERARCH. (*Indignant.*) What words are those?

LOT. The words of truth.

THE HIERARCH. (*To Esther.*) It fills me with pity. Do you hear what Lot is saying? He thinks he is protected by the angel and he dares anything. Stupid! You, Stranger, come with me to the Sanhedrin. It is my command. If you had come at the behest of Elijah you would have gone to the Sanhedrin or to my house and not to the home of Lot.

ESTHER. No, don't take the Messenger away. Take my husband and leave the Messenger with me. He has milk and honey in his cheeks and his breath must smell of gilliflower. Hierarch, leave him with me tonight.

THE HIERARCH. Let us suppose that I leave him. What about tomorrow?

ESTHER. Let the world go hang.

THE HIERARCH. Very handsome he is, I do declare. But only the Sanhedrin can decide. Some time ago it met to deal with the important question of the sex of angels. (*Laughs.*) A difficult but very suggestive topic. Some believed that they were sexless, others that they had a certain angelical way of loving. I gave my opinion. Notable persons were there, but my opinion is always highly regarded. (*Laughs.*) And that hour which is approaching . . . eh . . . What kind of threat does it hold?

STRANGER. It is the hour of desolation.

THE HIERARCH. I've heard words like those before. They go in one ear and out the other. Only Elijah could speak like that.

LOT. Hierarch, the hour of expiation. All will pay for their crimes.

ESTHER. I too? I have done nothing.

STRANGER. It is everyone's hour, Esther. Everyone's hour, Hierarch. Rabbis, pagans, old and young, babies clutching their mothers' breasts and virgins on their wedding night.

ESTHER. My hour, no. Impossible. We are the salt of the earth. That has been said of me at least.

VOICES OUTSIDE. (*Singing.*) The judge of Sodom  
knows his Torah  
squats like a lady.

THE HIERARCH. Like a lady. (*Laughs.*) Those rascals keep on making a racket. (*Approaches the door, opens the peephole, and shouts, feigning indignation.*) Silence! Don't sing indecent songs. It is the Hierarch who commands it.

MAN'S VOICE. (*Outside.*) Give us the hunchback. Look, there are already more than a hundred of us.

THE HIERARCH. Today everyone dares to threaten the authorities. They threaten from within and without. (*Shouting to those in the street.*) He isn't a hunchback. He's an angel.

MAN'S VOICE. (*Outside.*) We have seen his hump.

ESTHER. (*Shouting.*) It was his wings folded on his back.

THE HIERARCH. (*Shouting.*) He is an angel. An emissary of Elijah, they say. (*To the Stranger.*) You see? I impose respect upon the mob. Even without being sure of what you are I impose respect for you. It won't last long, that respect. I know them. But don't you thank me for it? Tell me, Stranger. I can ask you one question. Just one. Are you man or . . . woman?

ESTHER. The Messenger is a youth.

THE HIERARCH. The fact is that I ought to take the news to the Sanhedrin. It is not unhealthy curiosity, but my hierarch's duty. Are you man or woman? I promise you to keep the secret.

LOT. He is supreme truth and beauty. Fear your own irreverence, Hierarch.

THE HIERARCH. (*Laughing.*) Supreme truth, supreme beauty, supreme foolishness. (*Laughs.*) Forgive me, Messenger. The supreme foolishness!

ESTHER. Messenger . . . I want to kiss you with my lips. . . .

THE HIERARCH. Pardon my insistence. . . . You are like . . . Esther? Or like me? You, Esther, are the salt of the earth as you say they have said. They could say so of me with greater reason . . . but. . . .

ESTHER. Ishmael has written it on the wall of the temple.

THE HIERARCH. It may be true but I have not seen it.

LOT. (*To the Stranger.*) What shall we do, Lord? The Hierarch does not believe in you nor does he go away. My wife looks at you with impure eyes.

STRANGER. Don't mind them. They have some moments still to see themselves in all their vileness and to recognize their own crimes.

## THE HOUSE OF LOT

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THE HIERARCH. My crimes? What are my crimes? I will go into the temple and I will bow my head in prayer if you tell me what your insides are like. Are you like her or like me? Or different from her and me? Won't you answer? I see. You want to frighten us. (*Laughs.*) The timbre of your voice is adorable. Your face is divine. But I have to know what you are. Let me touch you. I am the Hierarch and no one can oppose me. I am the. . . (*He approaches the Stranger with his hands in the air, feverish and impatient.*) Eh? Who has put out the lights? Lot, I can't see. Why did you snuff the tapers? Light them again, for I can't see.

LOT. The tapers are lighted, Hierarch. The shadows are only in your eyes.

STRANGER. They are the very shadows of his soul.

THE HIERARCH. I am blind, then? How is it possible? My talisman has lost its virtue. Stranger, don't forget that in my city I am a highly honored man. Light the tapers.

ESTHER. Hierarch, it is useless. The Messenger has punished you.

THE HIERARCH. I am blind. (*With a pitiful voice, almost weeping.*) Let me go. I am good. I am a model citizen and I have at times believed in Elijah. Stranger, you have thrown me out of the house of Lot and I obey you. I obey you humbly. I'm going. Where is the door? I want to go out. Where is the door?

STRANGER. (*To Lot.*) Accompany him, but that door is not for leaving but for entering.

THE HIERARCH. (*Groping about in the air with his hands.*) For entering where?

STRANGER. For entering the misery of your past once again.

THE HIERARCH. (*Feeling his way through the air.*) Help me, Lot. You see? Those who are outside have quieted down, thanks to my orders, and no longer bother the Stranger.

(*Lot takes him by the hand and leads him to the door. When it is opened the shouting begins again and a Voice imitates the cawing of a crow.*)

Make way for the Hierarch of Sodom. And don't molest the Stranger. He is an archangel, an emissary of Elijah. (*He goes out.*) Don't molest the emissary of Elijah.

LOT. (*After closing the door again.*) Lord, he had to lose his sight to begin to see. Forgive him.

STRANGER. He only sees his misfortune, not his degradation.

LOT. He went away, Lord. Forgive him.



STRANGER. He didn't go away. Even though he has gone to his palace his five senses have remained here behind the door. I see them.

ESTHER. His senses? (*Goes to the door and opens the peephole. Closes it again frightened.*) Yes. The Hierarch's sense of hearing, smell, sight, taste and touch are here. They are horrible. Black, black as night.

LOT. His senses? Can man understand it all, Lord?

STRANGER. It is well not to understand too much, Lot. Esther, fetch your daughters.

ESTHER. They are in the market place, Messenger.

STRANGER. We are going out and with them you will all four walk toward the mountain. I will guide you. You, Esther, you will not look back again. Fire will descend from the heavens. Other angels more powerful than I, stronger than rock and fire, are approaching. Don't you hear the distant roaring of a storm? That fire cannot be extinguished, because the Lord kindled it in the beginning of the world and it is a white fire, without flame or smoke. Everyone will die and everything will be turned to ashes.

LOT. Lord, why must everyone die? And if there were fifty pure men?

STRANGER. If there were just ten I would save the city for their sake.

LOT. There are, Lord.

STRANGER. But the fire of their imagination is also extinguished and they are perverted by cowardice and fright.

MAN'S VOICE. (*Outside.*) Give us the angel or we will batter the door down. Hand over the angel. There are now a thousand of us. Over a thousand.

ANOTHER VOICE. (*Outside.*) Is the angel fair or dark? Open the door. The Hierarch went away weeping and talking to us about the sex of the angel. He said that he had seen him. Is he a man? Is he a woman?

ANOTHER VOICE. (*Outside.*) It doesn't matter if he's man or woman. Open the door. He is ours. Open, Lot. Behold, all the city is here now.

LOT. (*Fearful.*) Lord . . .

STRANGER. Open and have faith in me.

A VOICE. (*Outside.*) Bring the battering ram. We are going to knock the door down. All together! (*A knock harder than the preceding ones is heard.*) All . . . together. . . !

## THE HOUSE OF LOT

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ESTHER. Wait. I have two daughters. I will give you my daughters, but let the Stranger be.

MAN'S VOICE. (*Outside.*) We don't want your daughters. We want the angel. The Hierarch went away weeping but his senses remained in the door. And his senses want the angel, too.

STRANGER. (*To Lot, who opens the door timidly.*) Don't fear, Lot. All are blind. And for the moment they are confused and terrified.

*The door opens wide. Five figures, one beside the other, representing the five senses in this order: Hearing, Smell, Sight, Taste and Touch, fill the doorway. They are all dressed in black tights that cover them completely, even their heads and the tips of hands and feet. In place of the face—covered by the tights—Hearing has an immense ear, Smell a huge nose, Sight a large eye, Taste an enormous mouth, and Touch a big hand. Behind them the crowd is seen, motionless.*

*Someone imitates the grunting of a pig.*

LOT. Lord, once again. Have pity. They are like animals.

STRANGER. May Elijah have pity, if there is still time for forgiveness.

HEARING. (*With an affected voice, as in ancient tragedies.*) I hear the voice of the angel. It sounds like the zephyr on the waters of Siloe.

SMELL. I sense his aroma. It smells of the breezes of May at the foot of the tower of David.

SIGHT. (*With the same voice used by the other Senses.*) I see his countenance, his wings. His wings are like the light of dawn on the nacres of the Ark of the Covenant.

*(A growing murmur is heard in the crowd. The Stranger looks in that direction and the murmur ceases.)*

TASTE. I feel in the air the savor of his divine essence.

TOUCH. I perceive the forms that the different climates of desire issue and transmit to me.

*(The growing murmur of the crowd is heard again.)*

LOT. Mercy on them, Lord.

STRANGER. The mercy of Elijah is present here, Lot.

LOT. Where?

STRANGER. On the backside of the Senses. (*Shouting.*) Make way for the family of Lot. Make way in the name of Elijah!

*(The Five Senses turn their backs and like policemen begin to open a path in the crowd. On the backs of their black tights they wear skull and skeleton so that when they turn around they look like five skeletons walking backward.)*

ESTHER. Horror!

LOT. That is your mercy, Lord?

STRANGER. Yes. It is the only possible gift of God for them.

LOT. Your mercy is death, Lord?

STRANGER. *(Moving toward the door followed by Lot and Esther.)*  
Yes, Death.

CURTAIN



*Fray Angelico Chavez*

## THE BLACK EWE

AFTER PENNING up his master's pet ewe in the small round palisade of juniper posts behind the low adobe house, old Agapito stacked some hay against the palings; then he filled the hewn-log trough with water from the stream close by. This ewe, which he had raised from a lamb, was most unlike the rest of the grey and brownish flocks. The fine wool alone, and the almost jet sheen of it, set her off from thousands of others. The *patrón* had entrusted this sheep to his care all winter, but now he had ordered Agapito to leave her in the corral at San Blas, so that he might enjoy the sight of her, he said.

San Blas was but a handful of earthen huts by the shallow Río Puerco where the wives of the sheepherders stayed while their men went out on the range with the flocks shared out to each. Young or old, most of these women had families to keep them busy day and night; a certain young one, however, had become a byword among the herders when her husband was beyond earshot. Although the hacienda of the *patrón* was on the great river in the valley, north of the Indian pueblo of Isleta, he often came to San Blas and stayed a few days each time

to oversee the work, so he said. This time he had called for Agapito and the black ewe; but now, as the old herder was about to leave with his sheep for his own range of pasture, he did not look into the master's eye. Gravely doffing his tattered sombrero, Agapito bowed deeply and trudged off under the hot afternoon sun with a heavy heart.

Not that Agapito had any worries of his own, or about his own, for he had no kith or kin. He was a gaunt, gentle fellow with the white beard of a Spanish grandee set on a kindly Indian-like face, and this made it look almost false. Standing among his sheep he looked from afar like a scarecrow in a field in bloom. Nobody knew where he came from, or if he had been born in the region or elsewhere. He was by far the best sheepherder on the *patrón's* vast ranch, venturing alone deep into the Navajo country where virgin pastures lay, since these wild people did not have many sheep or horses in those days. It was told about that the Navajos never bothered him or his flocks when other herders closer to the valley had to be ever on the watch against a raid. Nor did his fellow sheepherders envy him in the least, but rather sought his advice about the care of sheep, even if they let his counsels go unheeded whenever idleness or thievery could be covered up by blaming coyotes, the weather, or the Navajos. It was to him they came in time of sickness, whether it was a lamb or one of their own children, for Agapito held the secrets of various herbs, and his hands, they said, had the touch of prayer.

The *patrón*, still handsome and vigorous despite his graying hairs, took it for granted that the flocks Agapito cared for were the fattest and the most fruitful, as they had always been since he could remember, for the old fellow had served his father quite as faithfully; and he did treat him with all kindness after his own fashion, just as he now, for example, showed a tender concern for the black ewe. But to the *patrón's* wife, who always stayed at the hacienda by the river, Agapito was not merely a

shepherd but a shepherd, clothed with the aura which that word has kept from the gospels and the psalms.

As Agapito followed his close-packed bleating sheep eager to reach their usual feeding ground, he thought of Doña Isabel down at the hacienda and felt very sorry for her. A true lamb of the Lord's flock she was, he thought to himself—a white ewe. His mind could form no more flattering likeness for someone so meek and good. Although her grandparents had been great captains in the conquest of the land, she did not look down on her household servants but treated them more like cousins. Agapito felt like the father that he never was as she embraced him whenever he came to the hacienda. Although past middle age, her dainty hands, her clear blue eyes, the grace she lent to her sweeping skirt and slender bodice, all presented something beautiful to be worshipped. He would never forget that time, last year, when the rattlesnake bit him. While cutting across a field towards the rambling hacienda under the great cottonwoods, he had stepped on what his aging eyes told him was a long-dried cow dropping; the angered coiled viper dug viciously into his foot through the torn rough-hide shoe. As soon as he reached the house, Doña Isabel tore off the shoe and, slashing the flesh with a razor over the ugly marks of the fangs, began sucking and spitting out the dark gory ooze until she was satisfied that the color of the blood was as it should be. It was like the story of her namesake, the great Queen Saint Elizabeth of bygone ages, washing and kissing the sores on the feet of lepers, for a shepherd's feet are not very clean things. Afterwards, having washed both his feet and bandaged the injured one with cool linen strips over the herb remedies he took out of his pack, she had put him to bed, in the great white bed where she and the *patrón* usually slept—for he was at San Blas at the time—and there she kept him for some days until the fever that had set in was finally gone.

All that time, however, he had watched a deep sadness in her

blue eyes, and he knew that she knew without saying a word. Indeed, her eyes seemed to say that he also knew and ought to do something about it. But how can a poor peon give advice in such matters to his *patrón*?

It was drawing on to dusk and Agapito was still far away from his usual range, having traveled but a few hours away from San Blas. First he drove the sheep into the shelter of a blind canyon, low and shallow, which he had often used before. At its mouth he sat down to munch a piece of dry bread and some jerked meat, then prepared his bed on the soft sand in a shallow cave under the low sandstone cliff. But try as he would, he could not fall asleep. The thought of what the *patrón* was now doing plagued him like a toothache. Agapito was not one to judge or condemn with just ire. If he saw evil in others it was to regret the fact deeply and pray for its removal. And here there was greater cause to pray, for Doña Isabel's sake—and the *patrón's* also, of course. So now, as he lay curled up in his small shelter, he began fingering the large string of beads that always hung around his neck under his coarse frieze shirt and leather vest.

How long he prayed he did not know, except that the full moon, after coming up like an overripe squash over the far valley where the hacienda lay, rose steadily higher and smaller into the velvet night, its light sharper and more silvery as it dwindled in size. His thoughts, too, had traveled from the Garden of Olives, where he had placed them at the start, up to the haciendas of Caiphas and of Pontius Pilate, thence to the top of the mesa called Calvary. But more than once he had to round them back, like so many sheep, as they strayed to Doña Isabel at home by the big river, or to her husband at San Blas.

The sharpening moonlight had backed up over the canyon floor, like the imperceptible rise of a flood, until it crept along the outer edge of the little cave. It was then that the beads dropped from Agapito's fingers and he sat bolt upright. Some-

one was crossing the sandy bottom and coming up the small slope to where he lay. It was a lone Indian, a tall Navajo. Agapito had never seen a Navajo so tall. He threw a shadow like that of a long pine tree. He was naked except for a breechclout, as Navajos went about in those times. His chest and limbs, even his cheeks, were streaked with weird jagged lines, luminous in the moonlight. Whether warrior on the warpath or medicine-man on a cure, or both, he carried a war club and some scalps on his belt, as also some trinkets of human bone dangling from it. But all this did not amaze Agapito so much as the fact that the warrior or witch doctor was carrying a sheep, a black sheep, across his broad shoulders. It was the *patrón's* black ewe. There was no other like it in the whole country; and if there were, Agapito could have picked it out from a whole flock of black ewes.

First, Agapito uttered a greeting in Navajo; he knew a few phrases of the language. The Indian grunted a courteous reply, but then continued in Spanish. No Navajo knew more than a few Spanish words, but this witch doctor spoke the language better than Agapito himself, better even than the *patrón* or Doña Isabel. His inflections were more like those of the Lord Governor himself, who had stopped at the hacienda with his retinue once when Agapito happened to be there overnight. Still, this did not keep the herder's eyes from wandering away from the black ewe, which trembled and struggled in stark terror. However, the Indian's two giant fists gripped each pair of legs like a scabbard around a rusted sword. And yet, all this was not half so outlandish as the request he was making in very high Castilian. It was more of a command.

"Agapito, the master wishes you to shear the black ewe tonight, right away. I shall hold it for you and, after you have shorn off the wool—closely and evenly, mind you!—I shall return both sheep and wool to the master." His eyes lit up sharply and seemed to spit forth fire when Agapito did not offer to make



a move. "Simpleton! Spur your old lazy flanks! Here, take these freshly ground shears which I brought along!"

The old fellow obeyed as though in a trance. His thoughts, however, moved about freely, knocking each other down like panicky wild horses shut in a small round corral after a round-up. As he began to clip off the wool while the Indian's massive arms pinned the ewe to the sandy ground, he wondered what this cacique was doing all alone in San Blas, and so near to the valley. If he had stolen the black ewe as the prized prey that it was, why did he want it shorn now when the wool was not yet full-grown? But there was no answer to this and many other jumbled questions. The stampede in his mind merely served to raise greater clouds of dust. Nor could he understand why the ewe struggled and bleated so much. It was not the way of sheep, and her alarmed cries were more like those of a frightened nanny-goat. What with the poor light of the moon and the animal's spasmodic struggles, not to mention his poor eyesight and the whirl in his brain, Agapito pinched and cut the pulsing hide several times. The master would be very much displeased. Finally, the distasteful task was over.

As the shearer got up and stepped back, the Indian's arms and fingers relaxed somewhat. In that instant the ewe broke loose and scampered madly down the silvery sandbed. Promptly, and very gracefully, the Navajo unslung his war club and sent it speeding like a hawk after a low-flying grouse. The heavy stone end caught the ewe in the middle of the back, and she rolled over with a heart-rending cry, like the pained shriek of a woman in the still of night. The Indian ran down to it, stuck the club back in his belt, slung the limp animal across his neck—all this in one continuous motion—and kept on running like an unburdened antelope in the direction of San Blas. Agapito cupped his gnarled hands and shouted for him to come back for the wool, but the Navajo kept on bounding across the rise and fall of the moonlit landscape, when suddenly a black cloud

## THE BLACK EWE

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blanketed the moon, throwing the whole countryside and the enchanted shepherd into total darkness.

Agapito did not even lie down to sleep. Early at dawn, before the sun slipped out of the horizon where he had watched the moon come up the night before, he was driving his bleating



herd back over the rolling yellowish grasslands towards San Blas. In his knapsack rode the balls of black wool which the Indian had left in his haste. If he had any misgivings, they were too vague to chase away the prayers he kept telling on the beads around his neck. He laid no stock in the common superstitions regarding Indian medicinemen, but he did have a good idea about the devil going about the affairs of men. But why a dumb animal should be the one to suffer, this bothered him. He would look into the corral as soon as he arrived.

By midmorning he came within sight of San Blas and of the low adobe house where the *patrón* was staying. Behind it lay the corral along the little stream. But there was the master already, and running forward to meet him, an unusual thing for a *patrón* to do, as if he had been watching for his appearance all morning.

"Come into the house right away, old man, my friend," he said, his handsome face drawn so tightly down as to show the

red flesh under his lower eyelids. "Agapito, something terrible happened to *her* last night."

Without a word, Agapito unslung his pack and laid it by the door, then stepped inside, his master respectfully holding the door for him and following after. In a corner was a bed, a large bison hide stretched across a square frame slung from the ceiling vigas by four stout braided thongs; on it lay a moaning young woman covered with a blanket. Her head was wrapped in a towel which she held with both hands. Her eyes stared with terror from the frame made by her forearms and elbows.

"It is her back," said the *patrón*. "As though it were broken. But she does not remember falling out of bed. I myself did not hear her." Here he stopped short, like the breathless pause of a penitent waiting for a scolding and absolution.

The woman moaned and shrieked when the two men slowly turned her face-downward. Modestly, Agapito raised her blouse a little and lowered her skirt a bit at the small of her back. In doing so his deft fingers found the spinal bone that was out of place. He ordered her to say the Apostle's Creed; it was commonly used as a measure of time in those days, but she also took it as part and parcel of the old shepherd's curing powers. In a way it was, for, as she was engrossed in reciting the articles of faith correctly, Agapito suddenly pressed heavily with both thumbs and jerked the bone back into place. The swinging thongs sang out and were drowned at once by the woman's piercing cry of pain and surprise. The towel fell off her head, revealing a close-clipped scalp which was chafed and bruised in several spots. She looked so utterly funny that Agapito might have laughed were he a laughing man, or if much more serious thoughts were not beginning to make sense in his muddled mind. She had reached down for the towel and was wrapping it back on her bare pate in a fluster of deepest shame. For the hair of a woman's head is indeed her crowning glory, Agapito ob-

served to himself—and the *patrón*, too. With her thick black tresses this now pitiable creature had been quite a beautiful woman, even to Agapito's disinterested eye; for he had known her since she was born, the child of a Pawnee squaw captured on the bison plains and of the Spanish soldier who had brought her in. Many of these *genizaras* were often prettier and more appealing than the Spanish women.

Muttering something about herbs, Agapito went out to his knapsack by the door. By now he was not surprised to find two braids and the rest of a woman's hair instead of the much bulkier balls of wool. Taking out a leather pouch filled with herbs he returned to the room. After making a paste from various dried-up leaves and roots, he applied a poultice to the woman's sore back, and also persuaded her to let him use it as a salve on her ravaged head.

Then the master followed the servant to the round corral. There, peacefully browsing, as innocent as any young sheep can be, no matter what the hue of its coat, was the black ewe with all her wool. As both men watched the glint of sun outlining her slow movements with gold, Agapito began to tell his story. When he was finished he looked at the *patrón* straight in the eye.

Dofia Isabel became a very happy lady although she never heard about what happened at San Blas. The village is no more because this took place a couple of centuries ago, before long periods of drought turned the high grasslands into a desert, when the shepherders abandoned their homes there, and the once shallow Río Puerco cut through the site to form the wide and deep black arroyo that you see today.



Alfred Kazin

## AMERICAN NATURALISM: REFLECTIONS FROM ANOTHER ERA

**W**ITH US naturalism has been not so much a school as a climate of feeling, almost in the very air of our modern American life, with its mass patterns, its rapid social changes, its idolatry of the mechanical and of "facts." The French may have conceived *le roman naturaliste*, but Chicago, many an American writer has suspected, is its incarnation. And while the term is inevitable to our discussion of the twentieth-century American novel—it evokes for us a particular concentration on "society," from Frank Norris and Theodore Dreiser to John Dos Passos and James T. Farrell; it establishes a dividing-line between temperaments in the novel (certainly it is hard to think of Hemingway and Faulkner as "naturalists," their sensibility is too wide)—it will not help us much to trace its intellectual pedigree too solemnly, to follow its track, in the usual academic way, out of literature into the history of "influences."

The influences are there; they are still here, in the life all around us. Naturalism in America is not easily reduced to the well-known formula of determinism, its pretensions to "laws" of human behavior, its severe air of necessary meanness. Think only of the career of Theodore Dreiser, the most deeply grounded of

our naturalistic novelists, with whose *Sister Carrie* (1900), so much of our twentieth-century social fiction seems to begin. Stephen Crane, exactly his contemporary, and Frank Norris, only a year older, were writing "naturalism" before he did, but for them it was still in the experimental mode. Crane's *Maggie* (1893, and almost too pointedly subtitled "A Girl of the Streets"; it comes out of the world of Jacob Riis's *How the Other Half Lives*) is a social exposé and rather a trick, the book of a precocious and restless young reporter who has found an untouched subject in the slums. It has nothing of the daemonic sincerity of *The Red Badge of Courage*. Frank Norris's *McTeague* (1899) is powerful, and as we so often say of the characters in the naturalistic novel, "tragic," for we still have no other word for it; but there is something curiously repellent about it, not because of its subject, but because it is so obviously patronizing toward the "common" and "brutal" materials he has chosen. Morally Norris is not in his book at all, just as Crane has been led to *Maggie* by its scandalousness; everything seems just a little too deliberately planned; Norris has been reading Zola, and without anything of Zola's humanity, would like to manipulate tragic destinies; he is ironic, superior, and rather coldly intent on squeezing all the horror out of the situation and his characters—whom, in fact, he has chosen because they are so "primitive," either in their grossness (*McTeague*) or their piteousness (*Trina*), rather than for anything felt in their characters.

As soon as we turn to *Sister Carrie*, we know that we are in the presence of a writer for whom "naturalism" is the only way of addressing himself to life. There is an impalpable emotion that arises from the very commonplaceness of human existence.

Dreiser had been a newspaperman writing Sunday supplement "human interest" stories; he was now a novelist, but only because he found in himself the courage to believe that the kind of life he had always known could be brought into the novel—it was a belief that came slowly and painfully, and one he was to lose for a

time after *Sister Carrie* so shocked his publisher's wife that she had the first edition withdrawn from circulation. In many ways he was closer to the worldly, driven, inarticulate characters in his novel than to sophisticated young naturalists of his generation. He was not a reformer, least of all a revolutionary; because of his own bitter poverty and his life-long identification with the failures in American life, he yearned toward success with that love of the power-world that he was to bring into *The Financier* and *The Titan*. For all his reading in the complacently sceptical philosophers of late nineteenth-century materialism, he had no coherent philosophy, and tended to brood like an animal in pain over the "welter" of life. When you compare him with the older "realists," like Howells and Mark Twain, who were also challenged to their depths by the urbanized and plutocratic society of the nineties, and who were outraged by its degradations of the old American freedom, you cannot help feeling that Dreiser was not even concerned with questions of human justice. These older writers had been shaped by Western life before the Civil War, with its relatively unformed class structure; egalitarianism was still the breath of life to them, as it had been to Whitman. They have an ethical directness (if no longer the old certainty), a deep sense of their own dignity, the artist's dignity, with all its consonant feeling for personal style, that are completely missing in Dreiser. Howells and Mark Twain are in their different ways elegiac in their hostility to the emerging new patterns of power; they are still outside the age they are writing in. Dreiser is not; he is confined to the American success story of the period for his whole experience of life.

The distinguishing quality of Dreiser's characters, that which particularly marks his thought as a novelist, is the air they have of being limited entirely to the society of their time, of being locked up in the terrible equation: life is only what America has made it. His people are not simply *doomed*, like the characters in Frank Norris and John Dos Passos; the cards are not that coldly

stacked against them. Dreiser is too little the prisoner even of his own theory, vague as it is, to fit his characters to a rule. It is rather that he can start only with what is most ordinary in life. He is possessed by the force of the banal. I think you would feel this even if you knew nothing about Dreiser's career. There is in *Sister Carrie* none of that savagery against the eternal bourgeois which we find in Flaubert's portrait of Homais in *Madame Bovary*, or in Hemingway's ironically constructed platitudes. Far from being detached from "Sister" Carrie (whom he called that, unconsciously putting the name down on a piece of paper before he even thought of the novel, because she was *his* sister, as Jennie Gerhardt was another), he overvalues her symbolic humanity at the end of the book, addresses her sentimentally, does not seem to realize how mediocre she appears to us. These are the only kinds of people he has ever known—the provincial girl on her way to the big city; the cheap drummer, Drouet; the flashy restaurant manager in Chicago, Hurstwood, with his rings and his condescending heartiness, whom the young Dreiser had so much envied. But in some way born of his own narrowness of experience, of his leaden concentration on what is most familiar to him, he brings us face to face with the idea of necessity.

If Dreiser had been more sophisticated, more intellectually self-conscious, the effect of *Sister Carrie* would be diminished; we would feel that he is trying to prove something to us, to give us a theory rather than an experience. And, in fact, Dreiser is annoying whenever he is tempted to "fine" writing—the difference between the careening "philosophy" of his chapter titles and the painfully sober prose of the narrative is startling. The chapter titles show Dreiser in his real uncertainty, trying to blow realism up into a metaphysic. But the awkward honesty of his narrative style is finally overwhelming; one feels the imponderable meanness of daily life.

Carrie looked about her, very much disturbed and quite sure that she did not want to work here. Aside from making her uncomfortable



by sidelong glances, no one paid her the least attention. She waited until the whole department was aware of her presence. Then some word was sent around, and a foreman, in an apron and shirt sleeves, the latter rolled up to his shoulders, approached.

"Do you want to see me?" he asked.

"Do you need any help?" said Carrie, already learning directness of address.

"Do you know how to stitch caps?" he returned.

"No, sir," she replied.

"Have you ever had any experience at this kind of work?" he inquired.

She answered that she had not.

"Well," said the foreman, scratching his ear meditatively, "we do need a stitcher. We like experienced help, though. We've hardly got time to break people in." He paused and looked away out of the window. "We might, though, put you at finishing," he concluded reflectively.

"How much do you pay a week?" ventured Carrie, emboldened by a certain softness in the man's manner and his simplicity of address.

"Three and a half," he answered.

"Oh," she was about to exclaim, but checked herself and allowed her thoughts to die without expression.

"We're not exactly in need of anybody," he went on vaguely, looking her over as one would a package. "You can come on Monday morning, though," he added, "and I'll put you to work."

"Thank you," said Carrie weakly.

"If you come, bring an apron," he added.

He walked away, and left her standing by the elevator, never so much as inquiring her name.

The simplicity of this writing is oppressive—certainly nothing could be more naïve of its kind than "Carrie, already learning directness of address," or less encouraging about a writer's mind than "she . . . allowed her thoughts to die without expression." Yet the whole scene, delivered in the most flat, toneless words, has in the context of Carrie's arrival in Chicago something heart-breaking about it. There is an immediate image of the factory wall itself, of what is purely abashed and helpless at this moment

in Carrie, staring straight at it and at the man who spoke to her "vaguely, looking her over as one would a package." That "vaguely" makes the whole scene come through: Carrie is suspended in the inhuman air. I can never read it without a feeling of dread. And it is a dread that remains with me long after Carrie has made herself independent of factory jobs, something not to be explained by her joblessness alone. It is in the very nature of life. There is nothing else but this. We are moved not because the people are suffering—when they are, they cannot give voice to it—but because with these broken gestures, these natural silences, these fits and starts and *ends* of communication (as if speech were the hopeless résumé of an experience too deep for it), they seem to be commenting uselessly on their own destinies.

The textbooks call it "determinism," and in its grimmest signification it is an idea which Dreiser upheld about as steadily as he did anything—that we are not responsible for what we do, that "we suffer for our temperaments, which we did not make, and for our weaknesses, which are no part of our willing or doing." Yet this does not convey the real tone and quality of *Sister Carrie*, which is anything but complacently "scientific," and in fact rouses us to a deeply felt sense of the mystery of the human condition, a compassion for all that is beyond our control. These people may not be conscious of the dark power that moves them; they do not protest; but they are humanity under the pressure of life itself; nothing intervenes between them and the cruelty of the human condition. There is an unconscious loneliness about them that is more affecting than any critical suffering could be, for *they do not know what is happening to them*. Carrie goes to Chicago, then to New York; she lives first with Drouet, then with Hurstwood; she becomes an actress and finally leaves Hurstwood, but all with the same dreamy subjection to the forces around her. She is taken up, she plays a part, she is unwittingly the instrument of Hurstwood's downfall; but fundamentally there is no reason for her doing one thing rather than another; she is simply swept

on by accidents more akin to nature than to her nature; to the very end of the novel she takes in life with the same dim, incredulous stare with which she first looked on Chicago, "a lone figure in a tossing, thoughtless sea."

So, too, the deeper story in Hurstwood's degeneration is the general indifference to his fate. Once he has been cut off from his accustomed success in Chicago and has come, already more than half a failure, to New York, he is absolutely defenseless. He is falling out of life before our eyes; his decline is awful in its steady, remorseless consistency; there is no one—least of all Carrie, the catalyst of his fate—to stop him. Yet worse than all this is the indifference, which he accepts as a matter of course, and which finally kills him. Force alone rules this world, as Simone Weil wrote of the *Iliad*—a force like the tyranny of everlasting war over the Homeric warriors, the reasons for which have been almost forgotten, while force still hangs over them like the real divinity that shapes life, calling out awe and submission in the heart of man. And it is our world, incontrovertibly it is *this* world, in its most naked essence. With all his faults, Dreiser has gone straight to the issue, that which it was his whole merit to understand—the tragedy of man in a society fundamentally more inhuman than "nature" ever was.

It is unnecessary for me to speak at length of Dreiser's defect as an artist, of his fearful lapses in taste, of his pedestrianism—that which everyone knows best about him, and has always made him fair game to his critics. At a time when his kind of writing is completely out of fashion, when we are ready—at most—to praise him for his "candor," to bury him deep among the pioneers of our self-conscious modern "honesty," it seems to be more useful to stress his involvement in the human problem, his creative pity, and all this leads to in the actual texture of his novels—his way of converting his slowness, a certain stolidity in his world-view, into the novelist's grip on character. Let us bypass for once the pseudoscience of his philosophy, the fundamental illiberalism of his so-

cial thought, the brutal commonness in much of his writing. Dreiser certainly made every mistake a writer can make and still remain alive; but in our current reaction against naturalism, we tend to forget that in his best work he is, fortunately, superior to his own ideas. For Dreiser was in many ways really an old-fashioned kind of realist, or "portrait-painter," with all that implies. If, today, we do not go in for "solid" character; if we are suspicious and rightly so—of his literalism, it is because we are no longer sure what character is. We see it as a complex of inward forces or symbols; it presses upon our consciousness as something half in and out of the visible world we inhabit. We "have" a character only in its subtle infinitude of suggestion; but in all the flickering, there is the steadier light of an idea. Every note on a character is crossed by an intimation from the private imagination; in the merging the fundamental note of consciousness is struck. For Dreiser, character was built up as a matter of course from the outward details—dress, the "brilliance" of the decor, the bourgeois details on which he feasted with such helpless admiration (how religiously he noted the splendor of the American parvenu in the big city!). And though some of the best things in his work are significantly moments of some deep human inarticulateness, of a half-felt awareness—Carrie facing the immensity of Chicago, Drouet coming upon Carrie in the dark, Hurstwood clinging to his rocker against life, Jennie Gerhardt following the body of her lover as the train bears his coffin out of the station—one remembers how methodically he got the surface toil of things into his books, piled up the "facts" until he forces the density of human affairs upon our minds. He was a man who could write, as it seems to us now, only from one side of the page to the other. His characters are so saturated in detail that long after they have withdrawn, their image is still blotted over the world through which they have passed.

Yet if they live so hauntingly for me, it is hardly because of Dreiser's literalism alone. It is because he still feels a certain awe

before life as a whole; he never ceased to be amazed by the cruelty of the human condition. I do not think he ever explained it very well by his excursions into philosophy and science, nor are we likely to forget the essential pathos of his career, which petered out after *An American Tragedy* into long years of silence, political confusion, and that fifth-rate book *The Bulwark*. But for him character was still more than an example of the social mechanism; it was a portion of the human tragedy. And it is in this that I mark the essential difference between Dreiser and the naturalists who come after him. For with them, as even Vernon Parrington had to admit (and Parrington is usually only too quick to honor a book just for its "liberal" message), the naturalistic novel relapses into social inquiry. There are the reformist tracts of Upton Sinclair, now largely unreadable except to students of the period, the work of a writer more radical than intelligent, and fundamentally not *radical* at all; there are the pseudo-Nietzschean adventure stories of Jack London; the documents of the Progressive period; the dreary wastes of the "proletarian" novel of the 1930's; the outraged war novelists, spewing up all the misery and degradation of war, but most of them hopelessly outweighed by one such cardinal work of imagination as E. E. Cummings' *The Enormous Room*; and there is James T. Farrell—honest, eternally aggrieved, the very incarnation of all that was once so urgent and is now so mechanical in the American social novel. Of late years Farrell has increasingly identified himself with Dreiser, and very understandably, for he comes out of much the same kind of world, had the same long and bitter struggle against the arid Catholicism of his youth, and has always written against all the obstacles that gentility and the rationalizations of "good taste" could put in his way. Yet creatively they seem to me very different writers. For Farrell's real story—one might say his only story—has been himself. Despite his militant defense of naturalism and the formally Marxist aura he has put around his novels, he has been unable to get free of his early struggles, much less to create

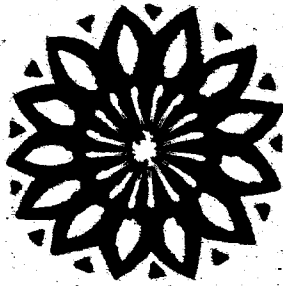
characters out of his own imagination. He is much concerned to-day with defending the "tradition" of naturalism, and has rather ambiguously found new ancestors for it, starting from Tolstoy and Chekhov. But this seems to have very little relevance to the actual spirit of his work; he tends to read into "naturalism" his own fierce ardors and defects as a writer. The truth is that his literary and political creed is outside the crucial promptings of his novels. For the novels are an autobiographical saga, the story of an education—deeply moving for what they tell us of his life, an unforgettable record of what, behind its sleek and smiling face, society has imposed upon the children of the "foreign" poor, especially when they are heretics. But it is so repetitious and self-absorbed that to find ourselves being confronted these days with the same story in *Bernard Clare* and *The Road Between*, after the *Studs Lonigan* trilogy and the Danny O'Neill tetralogy, is to feel that Farrell has missed the distinction between art and life.

The only naturalistic novelist in America after Dreiser who seems to me as interesting an artist is John Dos Passos, a far more finished and expert writer, certainly, than Dreiser, and one whose inventive skill has influenced many European and American novelists. *U. S. A.* is inseparable from our consciousness of American life in the twentieth century. But I feel increasingly that it brings to an end a whole tradition of naturalistic social fiction in America, that it is the memorial not only to a vanished social period, but also to the kind of writing Dos Passos practices. I admire his inclusive power; I think I admire even more Dos Passos's feeling for the dissenters in American life against *all* the orthodoxies, of the Left as well as of the Right. But somehow it is a very dated kind of book, wearisomely familiar; and this not because all the storms of our twentieth-century life play in it, but because it is too much like the thing it describes. It even seems to me quite a deadly book, conceived and carried through with a certain dead accuracy of contempt for most of the people in it.

I am not concerned here with Dos Passos's political opinions;

so far as they are about the patterns of our society, I agree with them. The trend toward his current thought was implicit in *U. S. A.*; it has more and more directly entered into all his books since then, and it is of the very cast of his mind—sceptical, aloof, deeply concerned with principle, above all with the salvation of the individual in our mass society—for Dos Passos has always been on the individual's side, no matter what class he comes from. But the paradox of *U. S. A.* is that the individual does not get into it. What is the final effect of the four-fold plan—the narrative, the acrid “newsreels,” the biographies of the true and false heroes of our time, the “Camera Eye” which is turned back on Dos Passos's own life—but to show man irrevocably split up between its mechanisms? And what is it that makes the “Camera Eye” section itself so ineffective and sentimental but that it is the only way Dos Passos has left of commenting on his own world? It is the tiniest possible hole cut into the prison wall to let the spirit breathe. It is a confession that Dos Passos has closed himself up within his own devices. In *U. S. A.* man is no longer part of history; he is only acted upon by forces, turned into a *thing*; and Dos Passos has not left himself time or space or love—certainly not Dreiser's brooding love—to sorrow over it. The book is a triumph of method that confutes its moral purpose. Just as the narrative style has the final impersonality of a machine dragging lives into its maw, so the crucial images for the book, in its outward structure, its concrete details, are entirely functional and technological. In the end, Dos Passos is less compassionate for the victims than he is dazzled by the power mechanism that consumes them; he has created the greater machine. The book is an image of the thing that destroys almost everyone in it. It was the whole merit of naturalism to describe the society of our time, in its fundamental aspects; and here Dos Passos has done it almost too well. *U. S. A.* is irrefutable proof—though other evidence is not lacking—that naturalism brought us into the modern world, but has left us to work out very different problems in it.

## POET SIGNATURE



*Byron Vazakas*

**T**HIS IS A poetry of acts narrowed down to a cold stamping ceremony on the heart's floor. A hard spotlight glares at the spot where the poem is made. As we view it the focus shifts, the trajectory of vision changes. And we are aware that governing each change is an order mathematical as well as physiological. We are infinitely removed from it and suddenly it is dangling on our eyelids. ("The landscape parts its nightlong ferns. Sequins of dew discover loss. . . .") The object of loss is rationalized if not retrieved by our glands. ("Beneath these shades, beneath love's gluttonous drains, stoked fires forge innocence.") And while this ceremony continues on the increasing and diminishing heartbeat we must look closely at the denuded form of the poem to see how really time-bound are its grave romantic flourishes, its fevered classical pauses.

The poet has discarded the traditional line and stanza divisions for the simple unit of the poem as a single utterance. His subdivision is the phrase, the clause—a deliberate grammatical exigency basic to his interest in language and the possibilities of what language may perform, for instance, when weak nouns are used as concrete verbs or when faded verbs are used to support tremulous abstract nouns. Language made like steel to flash and cut or like a veiled fire to dart allegorically. The basic meter is still iambic-trochaic, but rhythmically pitched to the spondee for the



effect which verbal mutations can give to heighten the voice and tighten the texture of meaning. Meanwhile the periodic division of phrase or clause maintains a strict measure through natural and punctuated pauses, much as the caesura does in Pope's verse. The pattern is there, only it is not arbitrarily ordained by the conventional typographic system of stanzaic or linear symmetries. Yet it shares with the sonnet form an emphasis on the poem-length as a single comprehensible unit and with the couplet form a closer insistence on the value of individual phrase through a balance of intermediate rests.

Modern poets, particularly the French, have been attempting to dispense with the same conventions by blocking out the poem in paragraph units. But unlike Byron Vazakas in these poems, they do not usually convince us that they aren't exchanging a number of arbitrary measures for one which is even more arbitrary. Mr. Vazakas indicates that the justification must be radical, a matter of reordering the roots of language to the requirements of new poetic rhythms and a new poetic tone. The ceremony has to be made to perform the acts of the word renewed by a strictly organic use in each poem. Then it can be judged by its own standards and not by those of an irrelevant poetic diction.—*E. H.*

## POET SIGNATURE

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## AN EASTER OF DETACHMENT

Six trees with rickets stamp the view. Smoke papers clouds; and sulphur stinks for miles around. Scrapped to rejection, bottles burst; and debris rots like hoarded enmities. Nothing to lose grins back like death. The dump smells high. The useless glitters, thumbs the hurt. Winds whistle where the heel-deep muck stiffens like pain; and scrap-iron rusts in soured pools. This is the end, the final scheme to be outcast, how, overground, to be one's self on gritty basis, still alive. Crocks crack with jagged arrogance. Rats root in spongy oranges. As loss decides, the independence of the lost grows fixed. Ash flowers flame. Stench resurrects decay like thought. On mounds, in dugouts, fear retires; and ruin resolves the need to act. As nuclear as bone, bells clash, glass-splintered, bursting suns that sound the alleluias of their anarchy.

BLUE AFTERNOON  
WITH FACTORIES

Mist softens cinders rimed with rust; and calm consoles abandoned factories. Like glass on glass, thin rain sieves blue. Disquiet totters, and the nerves lean back. Now nothing but this peace is here, absent of pain, yet not the end. Like closing wounds, clouds close on wounds. The railroad siding lies alone. This is the unction of a death provided by a deathless world. Enisled by rain, time waits in rain. No forges hammer; and the yards are still. As streams salve stones, the moment soothes the unaware, the silent winch, the gutter flowing in the deepest will.

## REQUIESCAT

Umbrellas raven tomb-lined walls. A crowd collects. The old musician's dead. But through the cemetery fence, mad trumpets keen mad promises. His cronies shift and cough and spit; at midnight blow a hallow's date to coin his eyes and wail his wake. His end is ours, a whiskey chaser that the jig is up. The spectral watchers squat and sweat. The March winds toss a ribald skirt. Hear how the unstripped rain cracks down besotted brick! Horns bugle home. Somebody says a requiescat. Beads dog a bone.

## THE AUTUMNAL ESPLANADES

Piers jut. Stone loops. And the river-straddling granite slaps the water back. As tinpan as indifference, guns grin and grey. Offshore, the seagulls squawk for crumbs. The landscape shuttles through the nerves. Like sound, pain plays the past, sing-song of vice, Chopin regrets. Here atmosphere is rich in furs, a card engraving of a mood in place. Mist cottons air. Clouds ink the sky. Roads turn. As weather turns, emotion turns; griefs somersault; an adult season ages to a change. It is enough, now, just to be, to think the past, and not to think a future any less the same. Across the bay, ships bob replies. Wind wizens waves. Sun shafts the light. Odd comfort that accustomed things seem bettered by a backward look. Place settles claims. Leaves lip nostalgic parapets. The opposites run up, run down. The snakey tide gropes for the shore. Fear hugs its softness like a sin. Light salts its sequins on the flow. The weeping traffic dims and dims.

## POET SIGNATURE

65

## NIGHTSCAPE

The landscape parts its nightlong ferns. Sequins of dew discover loss, plucked somberly from blade to blade. Wind shakes. Fields frown. And levitations rise and rise. Here, gaged expanses gage expanse. Though fences wire, horizons spin. Sound sleeps. Sound falls to sound, as self to self transcends its flags, worn messages flashed face to face. To be exposed to pain, to be exposed to silence on unlivened paths dissolves in me. The leaves are bordered with aseptic light. Distress is frozen in a photograph.

## THE SOON OF LEAVING

Injustice sidles from the door, gloves curtains with a calm deceit. Lamps lockstep patterns on the rug. He's gone, now, from this room's sole court and simple round of habitation. He's gone. But weather shrieks and stays. Surely, before tomorrow, pain will go, a quintet frisking to an end. Perhaps . . . but still these endless winds prefigure Spring. Now, in a bribe of absence, let love pass from poignant rooms, skilled smiling, and his unmasked steps. A chair, a table, swipe his place. A tumbler poses with a jug. Not for a final look, will love stretch back accordions of eagerness. Names, words, pained antidotes file down their pain. Clothes amputate this unlimbed house. Glass thumbprints thought. Let him go! Let him go! Behind these shades, beneath love's gluttonous drains, stoked fires forge innocence. Things change. Pain props a maudlin melody and rattles a piano all this afternoon.

## TOCSIN

Sour sirens sap my humped-up heart. Bells clank and  
bing. Shrieks brain my sleep. Out in the windy  
whining, engines spank; and skidding wheels cry  
lost, cry lost, cry lost. Now flame peels dark across  
the street. Roofs wrench. Steel snaps. Glass tinsels  
stone. Where night clamps dread, like guilt, to fact,  
the mind deserts. Nerves fret. Fear fumes. Stripped  
danger dragnets atmosphere. Against the stone, be-  
yond entangled spigots, streams collapse. Heat  
cracks. Fire fumbles shadows. And the nerves thump  
down. Here all horizons shred and doom. Heels  
scud. Feet flash. Heart heads for home. As search-  
lights twin their terrors, motes of guilt rope night-  
mare from the midnight street. Walls warp. Nets  
strain. Steam spits. Smoke clots a window's scream-  
ing head. The eye turns in.

## SPRING REACHING OUT TO BOSTON

The night sops exhalations of itself. Lone crossing  
signals redden, blur. Now sex caresses wiry fears as  
neat as clockfaced right and wrong; as neat as I step  
out between desire and danger, curb, and cross. Airs  
air their spiritual bouquets of Parma violets, acts in  
drains. Search and rejection, circling back, tube hol-  
lows in the hollow streets. I shape a hollow in my  
hand, another, merely human face. Where Spring is  
sudden, hard and cold, the heart dogs sensuality;  
the mind sniffs futures late and long. Rococo street-  
lamps memorize the grass-damp earth in shabby  
squares. The past is here, green, bronze, equestrian;  
and all the wishes of the flesh stamp out escape.

*Frank Brookhouser*

## THE GRAVE DIGGER AND BIGGIE DOONE



ONE DAY when Windy Hill came down into the town from his home in the cemetery for groceries—it was not a business trip at all—he happened to meet Biggie Doone and they spent some time together drinking beer and discussing the past, present, and future.

Windy's full name was Wendell Harrison Hill, but everybody knew him only by the nickname. One of his delights was to tell stories and he had gained a reputation as a funny man with a line, but it is probable that many of his statements achieved a macabre humor not so much because of their inherent wit as because he was the grave digger in the town.

Because he was the grave digger, a sober countenance would have been appropriate for Windy. He had never had one, however, not even when he refrained from drinking. He had watery blue eyes in which there lurked an air of latent mischief, a large mouth seemingly always posed for laughter, and spindly legs which, overburdened by his stocky body, gave him a silly, mincing step as he walked along the streets of the town, known by all, ribbed by many, inspiring feigned fear and undeniable awe in the youngsters.

"There comes Windy Hill! He's the grave digger!"

And the children would run excitedly, withholding laughter

for the moment, as though pursued by unseen phantoms; building the laughter inside them for later, when the phantoms were outdistanced.

In addition to talk, Windy Hill delighted in drinking, but a simple and—in his case—ironic law of economics decreed that he could drink only when business was good.

He received a small annual sum for taking care of Manor Cemetery but what might be termed the dividends—which amounted to his money for drinking—came only when he had to dig the graves for the newly dead.

Windy lived in a small house—not much more than a shack—on the edge of the cemetery, which was located at the highest point of the big hill that hugged one side of the town, a narrow dirty river completing the encirclement on the other side. Through the years Windy had tended the cemetery like a garden, hating particularly the long winters when the ground was frozen, the earth more solid, and, unfortunately, the people more inclined to die.

This day, in late summer, he had made one of his frequent excursions into the town. He had already bought his groceries, consisting largely of the baked beans on which he had virtually lived since the death of his wife twenty years before; and then, after considering his finances from a studied appraisal of his pocket coins, he had concluded that he had better not have any beers.

The decision regretfully made, he walked across Forge Street and went into Ben Wilson's Drug Store for a soft drink.

Jim Janten, the assistant cashier in the People's Bank and Trust Co., head of the Rotary, and chairman of many banquets, was sitting on a stool at the counter and he laughed loudly when Windy approached the soda fountain.

"Hyah, Windy," he said. "How's business?"

"Only one in the last six weeks," Windy said. "That's pretty good."

"You mean good or bad?"

## GRAVE DIGGER AND BIGGIE DOONE 69

"All depends on how you look at it."

"I see what you mean."

"I guess Ben there's giving them too good a medicine these days. Keeping them all healthy."

"Hey, Ben, you hear what Windy said?"

"No."

"He says you're giving them too good a medicine here these days. Hurting his business. He only had one in the last six weeks. You're going to put the guy on relief."

Ben laughed from behind the drug counter, where he was making up a prescription, as the girl brought Windy his root beer.

"I guess this here cremation is hurting business, too, ain't it?" asked Janten, mopping his perspiring forehead with his handkerchief. He was a fat man, with ruddy cheeks, loose lips, and thinning hair about which he made many jokes.

"Nope," Windy said. "Hasn't hurt me."

"It will."

"You won't see it in our time," said Windy philosophically.

"Maybe you're just whistling in the dark out there at the cemetery."

"All the whistling that's done out there comes from the wind and a lot of other people."

"You mean you got ghosts?"

"Maybe. I wouldn't be surprised at nothing any more after all I've seen. Maybe some of them people feel like whistling—just because they don't have any more troubles."

"Hey, Ben, you hear that one?"

"No."

"Windy says there's a lot of whistling out there in the cemetery. People glad their troubles are over."

"Maybe he's got something there, Jim."

"Could be."

Windy picked up his bag of groceries from the floor.

"Well, I'll be seeing you," he said.



"But don't make it too soon," said Janten, bursting into almost uncontrollable laughter. "Hey, Ben," he shouted, "you hear what I said?"

"No."

"Well, Windy says . . . and I told him. . . ."

Once he was outside the drug store, Windy pulled the coins from his pocket once more. He examined them, he counted them carefully, he considered them, he reflected about them; and he finally decided that maybe he could afford a couple of beers. Not more than a couple.

Frequently when he was this poor he went to a couple of the richer families—the Adamses or the Renfrows—and told them their graves needed a little fixing up. They were always good for a dollar or two. But he had made both stops only a few weeks ago and that was out now. No, he'd have to depend on the coins in his pocket this time and he'd need a little money later in the week. But still he guessed he had enough for a couple of beers. Sure, he could manage that.

The happy decision made, he walked swiftly with his mincing step toward the Forge Tavern, pushed open the door jauntily, and walked in with a feeling of elation. As soon as he entered, he was greeted raucously by Biggie Doone, who slapped him resoundingly on the shoulder and stared at him from drink-heavy eyes.

"Well, if it ain't old Windy Hill from high on the hilltop!" Biggie exclaimed. "You still digging them six foot deep?"

"Yep. Same as always."

"Great. Glad to hear it."

"I don't want to be around when your turn comes, though, Biggie. You're sure gonna make somebody a lot of digging."

"Damn right I am, Windy. And you'll still be around."

"Not me."

"Sure you will. And I'll give you the biggest excavating job you ever had. That's the one thing I can give you, that and a

## GRAVE DIGGER AND BIGGIE DOONE 71

beer. Hey, Mike. A beer for Windy and give me another shot."

"Two beers," Mike said casually. "No more liquor. I told you that two hours ago."

"All right, two beers. You know Biggie Doone, Mike. I wouldn't make any trouble. I'll take a beer."

Biggie Doone *was* big. He had always been big and now he towered over Windy as they clinked their glasses together.

In high school he had been a hero, the finest all-round athlete the town had ever produced. He had been a star end on the football team, a brilliant center on the basketball team, and in track and field he had high jumped, pole vaulted, and tossed the javelin for a distance that still remained the county record.

He had been a great freshman athlete at college, too, and then he was injured playing football in the fall of his sophomore year. His athletic career interrupted, he had flunked out by spring. He started to drink and he came back to the town and he went into the factory, and he had been drinking ever since.

The factory fired him after a couple of years and since then he had worked intermittently at any odd jobs which were around. He would work for a few weeks and then quit and spend all of his earnings across the bar in a few days and nights.

Now, leaning heavily against the bar in the Forge Tavern, he had a heavy growth of beard on his large-boned face and his eyes were almost closed. The sweat seeped through the thin sports shirt which looked too small for his wide shoulders and jutting chest. He had developed a flabbiness in his stomach but it was hardly noticeable when he stood up to his full stature of six feet four inches because the rest of his rangy body was still so well proportioned.

As he drank with Windy, he became sad. "I'm just a bum now," he confessed solemnly, tears coming to his eyes.

"What do you mean, Biggie?" said Windy, drinking his beer and making an elaborate act out of his expression of disbelief.

"I know. That's what everybody says—I'm just a bum."

"Don't worry about what people say. They gotta have something to say about everybody or they ain't happy."

"Well, I *am* a bum. How do you like that?"

"Biggie. . . ."

"Sure I am. But I like you, Windy. You're my pal." Biggie hugged Windy tightly. "He's my pal," he told Mike. "Give my pal another beer."

Mike drew the beer.

"How about me?"

"Jeez, Biggie, you can hardly stand now."

"Listen to that guy, Windy. Who says I can't stand? I can stand here and drink and drink and drink, and I'll still be a hell of a lot stronger than anybody in the place. This is Biggie Doone, man. When I was in high school. . . ."

"Ah, can it, Biggie. Christ, I heard that a million times already. I know it by heart."

"I remember you then, Biggie," Windy said. "I was only about thirty-five myself those days, and I saw all the games. I remember you. You were sure all right."

"Sure, see my friend can tell you. Mike here, he wasn't even born then."

"Okay, so you were terrific. You were great. I believe you." Mike turned his attention from Biggie temporarily. "Windy," he said, "I just heard the other night that old man Rantall is just about ready to kick the bucket. You hear anything?"

"No, I didn't hear nothing. Usually I do, but this one missed me, seems."

"You know old man Rantall, lives in that house way out there on the end of town, right by the tracks?"

"Sure, I know him. He's been poorly a long time. I ain't surprised about what you tell me."

"Yeah, that's what I hear—he's ready to kick off anytime."

The conversation was interrupted by Biggie's shout. "Come on,

## GRAVE DIGGER AND BIGGIE DOONE 73

Windy," he said, "you and me drink together. Two old friends."

"Right, Biggie."

Biggie drank his beer down in one gulp, wiping the foam off his mouth with his hairy arm, and then he started to lurch away from the bar.

"He ain't so goddamned terrific now," Mike said. "Better sit him down in that chair, Windy."

Biggie opened his eyes with effort and straightened up.

"I ain't sitting nowhere," he said. "I don't need no help."

"Let's you and me take a walk," Windy said. "Get some air. I could use a little air myself."

"Sure, me and Windy are gonna take a walk. Good idea. Take a walk."

The two of them moved away from the bar, Windy holding Biggie meaninglessly by the arm. As they lumbered toward the door, Biggie stumbled into the shuffleboard alley. He looked at it through glazed eyes.

"Anybody want to play shuffleboard?" he asked the empty taproom loudly.

Mike was smiling behind the bar. "Nobody here now, Biggie," he said. "Come back tonight."

"Damn shame. Nobody here. Nobody here or I'd take them over right now. I can beat anybody in the world at anything," he announced laboriously, trying to make the words sound right, measuring each of them so that it could contribute its proper significance to the statement.

As he made the announcement with an upraised arm, in the flamboyant manner, he lost his balance, groped for leverage, and grabbed for the door. He caught it and then, hanging on desperately, he buried his face in his hands and began to cry like a child, the sobs shaking his huge body.

"Let him cry," Mike said. "He'll get it all out of his system and then he'll go back to work for a while."

Windy watched with embarrassment until Biggie had finished

crying, and then he helped him to walk out of the door into the clear sunlight of the late summer afternoon.

Trying ineptly to shield his eyes from the bright sunlight, Biggie stared at Windy as though he were seeing him for the first time that day.

"Well, if it ain't old Windy Hill from high on the hilltop!" he exclaimed, grinning widely.

"It's me all right," Windy said.

"Hey, Windy, you still digging them six foot deep?"

"Yep. Same as always."

"Got one ready for me yet?"

"I ain't figuring on you yet for a while."

"Better get mine started. I'll need a big one."

"You sure will, Biggie."

"Guess mine will be the biggest one they ever had up there on the hill."

"Wouldn't surprise me at all."

"Damn right," Biggie said, stopping suddenly.

"Come on, let's walk a while," Windy said.

"Not me. I walked enough. I'm gonna sit me right down here on these steps and take a rest."

Biggie sat down awkwardly and dropped his head to his chest. Windy shook him several times, but there was no response.

Guess he'll be all right there, Windy thought; he'll sleep it off. Windy started to walk away. He felt the coins in his pocket again. He hadn't spent any of them yet. Sure, he could have some more beers now—and he was beginning to feel pretty thirsty. With elation in his mincing walk, he retraced his steps to the Forge Tavern.

"Back already," Mike greeted him.

"Yep. Think I'll have another beer."

"Where's Biggie?"

"He's sleeping it off on the Eagles Hall steps."

"I figured he wouldn't get very far. Boy, there's another guy

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that's going to kick the bucket any day. He'll go quick, the way he beats himself up."

"I wouldn't be surprised none. Fellows like that—they always go quick. He was sure some football player, that Biggie Doone."

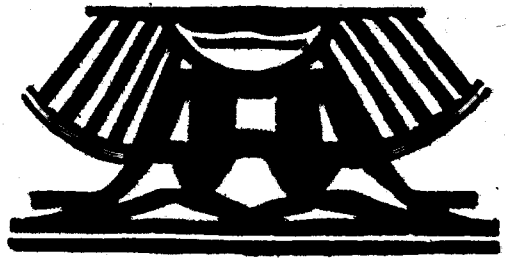
"That's what I hear."

"Yep, he sure was. Say Mike, you get that about old man Rantall from pretty good authority?"

"Best there is—his neighbors. Any day now, that's what they told me. Just the other night they were in."

"He's been poorly a long time all right." For a moment Windy paused thoughtfully. Then he said quickly, "Mike, I think I'll have a shot of liquor to go with this beer. Might perk me up a bit."

Mary Freeman



## D. H. LAWRENCE PREVIEW OF A BASIC STUDY

**E**VERYTHING in the world is relative to everything else. And every living thing is related to every other living thing."<sup>1</sup>

All of Lawrence's writing might with justice be regarded as explorations within this premise. Certainly his dominant characteristic is the recognition that no experience escapes its context, no man his limitless connections. The search for man's place in the scheme of things, a trade practice of philosophy, found in Lawrence, the writer, expression peculiarly vivid, for in his work extension rarely destroys focus on the specific, and universality finds its most acute expression in extreme timeliness.

Lawrence was deeply disturbed by the tendency of our prevailing philosophies and religions to separate daily life and universal truth. To him the succession of experiences constituted not only the apotheosis of our relations with all we see and touch but also with whatever may penetrate, encompass, or lie beyond, known or unknown. "If we look for God, let us look in the bush where he sings."<sup>2</sup> This was not, however, a plea for isolated concentration under the bush, for Lawrence's Infinite was, if anything, lively and social. He expressed this numerous times, frequently with his light touch so characteristic and so often overlooked, as in the dialogue between fowls in "Song of Evolution":

<sup>1</sup> D. H. Lawrence, "Aristocracy," in *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine and Other Essays*, Philadelphia, 1925, p. 223.

<sup>2</sup> "Democracy," in *Phoenix*, New York, 1936, p. 708.

Each said to the other: till I came across you  
I wasn't aware of the things I could do!<sup>8</sup>

It was Lawrence's most pervasive aim to link experiences in his writing as they are seldom linked in our thinking and in so doing even to reveal an ethos at once individual, social, and, perhaps, universal. This led him to many of the speculations on values that have grown ever more frequent and urgent during the eighteen years since his death. Lawrence was spurred in this effort by World War I; in order to identify what men should be willing to die for, he felt it essential to know first that for which man can live. Impending death argued most cogently for an interim, at least, of more abundant life.

Lawrence soon concluded that abundant life was not to be found in the main currents of our culture, neither in determined service to material progress nor in hot defense of words of good repute. He found inadequate also the current versions of social reform and revolution. It seemed to him they failed to liberate themselves from the flaws of the past; too often humane motives took a form too lean, too arid. Neither our old culture nor our ready-made panaceas for its ills appeared conducive to individual life. Nevertheless Lawrence felt no individual could or should escape his fellows or his age. Man lived within a social context; without it he died. But why should social movements sharpened for action so frequently mutilate the integrity of most adherents? Could social hate ever create individual good? Could individual pain purchase social ease? Was it necessary that men live at the expense of man? It became an obsession with Lawrence to find a category of understanding that reconciled these apparent contradictions. What was the nature of this relatedness, at times so flexible, at times so rigorous? If our culture had become too complex to be compatible with individual viability, Lawrence foresaw, at best, an apocalypse.

<sup>8</sup> "Him With His Tail in His Mouth," in *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine and Other Essays*, p. 134.



The effort to arrive at understanding at once extensive and intensive led Lawrence to sacrifice precision in many areas and to be frankly individual in his choice of materials, traits taken as proof of his mystic insight on the one hand and of his intellectual impotence on the other. For the most part, however, the range of Lawrence's interest has been disregarded, and he has been characterized most frequently by a supposed and specific eccentricity. Open season has prevailed for spotting the key idea, the hidden motive, the dominating maladjustment that seems to promise unraveling the whole man. Consequently, numerous Lawrence ghosts have been evoked to stand between the writer and the reader.

The wraiths most in evidence until recently have arisen from Lawrence's so-called "sex obsession." Sex is certainly a legitimate subject for literature; even a "sex obsession" would not necessarily reduce the status of an author; yet the fact remains that Lawrence's interest was not so limited but was exceptional in its breadth as well as depth. The disturbing peculiarity of his handling of that conventional topic lay in his unconventional integration of sex with other aspects of experience usually regarded as unrelated—a broad view which was not regarded as such but was seen only as a perverse extension of an interest in sex. Actually Lawrence frequently came close to presenting perception, not as we like to rationalize it, but as it comes to us, with its incongruous juxtapositions, intricate relationships, and obscure emotions, composites which, because unnamed, appear somehow abnormal and forbidden. Moreover, in style Lawrence not only shed tradition but also abjured cynicism. The resulting unmannered honesty seemed to many a breach of taste to say the least—"sinning against art" as Katherine Mansfield put it. The incidents he chose to write of were too ordinary, their ramifications and implications too extraordinary and elusive, to be immediately palatable to a wide public. Words that had seemed hard and flat and unmistakable became in Lawrence's writing

gravid with nuance. Unconsidered trifles, as familiar as dinner at home, built arches and naves in a cathedral to some looming unknown that readers felt might contain anything: demoniac religions, weird perversions, whatever the dazed imagination could fetch from its own hinterland. It became typical of Lawrence enthusiasts to hedge against contamination by a tone of malicious love or tender malice.

This creative exuberance of Lawrence's, besides adding color and comedy to literary criticism, provided a lush field for the amateur analyst. Behind such passionate effusion must lie complexes of purple virulence. Much was made of Lawrence's close tie with his mother, his attraction to men, his struggle for sexual maturity, and, lately, of his inability to conform to the mores of any social group even though he acknowledged his deep need for contact with others. Since he was never able either to find conclusive answers to his own questions or to achieve resignation, it was assumed that his whole outlook was the extrusion of one or more personal defects. The solid structure of Lawrence's work is only too easily lost in hypotheses regarding its genesis unless it is kept in mind that although maladjustment may give emotional impetus, and even direction, to any creation, the achievement is more than the distillate of abnormalities.

Beyond a doubt Lawrence suffered deep maladjustment, to some extent both sexual and social, but, when we consider the frequent misery of the man in the street, it seems likely that Lawrence appeared more tortured only because he was more expressive. It should be kept in mind also that if life frequently appeared bad to him, it was because he could conceive of it as good; if his black moods were blacker than we deem reasonable, his bright moods were brighter than most of us find possible. Certainly Lawrence should not be disposed of by pity so long as maladjustment is pandemic, nor by patronage so long as the problems he fell short of solving are still marked urgent on the docket of our most significant writers.

Beside the Lawrence who means to so many readers a perverse, heroic, or pathetic preoccupation with sex, or, to others, chronic rebellion, there hovers another evoked Lawrence ghost that should be laid at once: that arising from Lawrence's descriptions of characters in terms of animals, in effect linking them with a totem; his admiration for "Dusky, slim, marrow-thought of slender, flickering men of Etruria"; his lament that

. . . in the dust where we have buried  
The silenced races and all their abominations,  
We have buried so much of the delicate magic of life.<sup>4</sup>

This is Lawrence the supposed atavist who proved an irresistible lure to potential cultists. While it is true that Lawrence wished to regain some of what he referred to as the buried "delicate magic of life," yet it is just as true that he knew time never rolled backward and asserted that while we should take "a hint from the relics our scientists have so marvellously gathered out of the forgotten past" we should not try to "revive dead kings, or dead sages," but should instead "from the hint develop a new living utterance."<sup>5</sup> If the terms "atavist" and "primitivist" so frequently assigned Lawrence are to do more than obscure him, it is necessary to qualify the words out of their customary usage. Just as one cannot consider the parsimony of modern art primitive in the literal sense, for it is grounded in sophistication where that of the primitive springs from naïveté, so one cannot without inaccuracy regard even Lawrence's deliberate "animism" as identical with, or truly imitative of, that of the savage, for it too derives from profound understanding rather than from crude assumption.

<sup>4</sup> "Cypresses," in *Birds, Beasts and Flowers, Collected Poems*, London, 1932, pp. 35-37.

<sup>5</sup> *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, London, 1923, p. 10. Further illustration of Lawrence's opinion that no culture of the past is adequate for the future may be found in the following: "Indians and an Englishman," in *Phoenix*, 1936, p. 99 (first published Feb., 1923, in *Dial*); *Studies in Classic American Literature*, New York, 1923 (August), pp. 201-204; "On Human Destiny," in *Assorted Articles*, London, 1930 (first published in *Adelphi*, March, 1924); and *Mornings in Mexico*, London, 1927, p. 103.

A more and more frequently heard characterization of Lawrence is summed up in the word "reactionary." Liberals regard his complete independence from any altruistic "line" and frequent attacks on what appear our most humane sentiments disturbing to say the least. They point out that he presents some of the ideas that have been used by fascists in their rationalizations, that he even has been hailed as a brother fascist. It is difficult to reconcile these facts with the deep humanity animating much of Lawrence's work, and one is tempted to regret his frequent excursions into politics and economics. A way out for humanitarians loath to relinquish good literature was provided by Lawrence himself when he wrote:

The great social change interests and troubles me, but it is not my field. I know a change is coming—and I know we must have a more generous, more human system based on life values and not on money values. That I know. But what steps to take I don't know. Other men know better. . . . My field is to know the feelings inside a man, and to make new feelings conscious. What really torments civilized people is that they are full of feelings they know nothing about; they can't realize them, they can't fulfill them, they can't live them. And so they are tortured. It is like having energy you can't use—it destroys you. And feelings are a form of vital energy.<sup>6</sup>

But Lawrence did not and could not leave alone that "great social change" which he said was not his field. Hence the delusion of accepting him as a great writer devoid of political implication. Lawrence found "the feelings inside a man" so intimately connected with what went on around him that his books are sequential efforts to understand the complex forces affecting those feelings as well as to track them as they in turn determine our social history. He saw with remarkable thoroughness the relation between individual and group satisfaction, between the feelings in people and their political slogans and economic conditions. He pointed out that the social effectiveness of our finest

<sup>6</sup> "The State of Funk," in *Assorted Articles*, New York, 1930, pp. 113-114.

thoughts is negligible if contrary to our emotional hungers. As he wrote to Aldous Huxley, apropos the latter's *Point Counter Point*: "It is as you say—an intellectual appreciation does not amount to much, it's what you thrill to."<sup>1</sup> He knew how boredom created addiction to emotional jags. He insisted that we recognize the detours by which our sharpest thoughts so frequently lead to brutal conclusions. In the progress of Lawrence's writing we can see presented with startling authenticity how, at this time, the worst and the best in life so frequently brood in the same nest.

Few writers, even now, stir up more revolutionary speculations than does Lawrence, and few are concerned with problems more crucial in understanding our times. He was not alone in his rebellion against mechanism, or in his insistence on the relativity of "good," or in his call for a drastic revision of our whole civilization, but he ventured where few dare in the complex integration of these ideas as they develop and apply in daily experience. It is fortunate for the reader, if not for Lawrence, that he played fast and loose with other people's specialties. His temerity exposed not only the mutilation of individuals resulting too often from rigorous application of even the most beautiful ideals, but also the social dangers of adjustments which in more arid fiction possess deceptive charm. He went so far as to disclose the dangers of some of his own attitudes. What at first appears an uncritical assimilation of reactionary thinking is often found to be the exploration of some yet insoluble psychosocial snarl.

These special gifts endow Lawrence with much of the prophetic significance for which he hankered. Believing himself one of the few aware of the finger of death under the crust of habit, his feeling of personal responsibility for events lent him Messianic intensity and sometimes an apostolic manner. This set him apart from established society, not as a self-pronounced misfit, but as one who believed our social order misfitted mankind.

<sup>1</sup> *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, New York, 1932, p. 765.

All the "isms" mushrooming in the last century spawned on the confusions that troubled Lawrence and offered their respective solutions, but Lawrence regarded those "isms" likewise poorly tailored for men. This set him apart from contemporary iconoclasts as well as from conventional society. But it should be noted that it was Lawrence's insights more than his desires which made him unique. He deplored, as do we all, that life is too often empty or brutal. He wanted, for the most part, what others want: a full life, a warm-hearted relation to others, and no more pain than man can assimilate. If he thought it took a new mode of consciousness to achieve this, he conceived of this consciousness as springing from a no more esoteric source than the depths of man himself.

"You are your own Tree of Life, roots and limbs and trunk. Somewhere within the wholeness of the tree lies the very self, the quick: its own innate Holy Ghost. And this Holy Ghost puts forth new buds, and pushes past old limits, and shakes off a whole body of dying leaves. And the old limits hate being empassed, and the old leaves hate to fall. But they must, if the tree soul says so. . . . The whole responsibility is on your shoulders all the time, and no God which man has ever struck can take it off. You *are* yourself and so *be* yourself. Stick to it and abide by it."<sup>8</sup>

Come a Laurencian world we should see few things more odd than those we now accept as possible, for example: the dream of a benevolent economic man in a free market, of intellectual giants in a self-induced optimal environment, or even a government by paragons of wisdom perfectly responsive to majority opinion. Lawrence's sensually alert men and women often appear less fantastic. Certainly in the bulk of his work Lawrence represents an unusual approach to usual experience—not a strange world where unheard of people do ecstatic things mumbling obscene words—but ordinary life seen with extraordinary sensitivity.

<sup>8</sup> *Aaron's Rod*, New York, 1930, pp. 342-344.

Lawrence's inclusive viewpoint—which left the moralists deploing his sensuousness, the literary purists his taste, the conventional his instability, the modernists his primitivism, the specialist his irreverence in special fields, the reformer his excursions into politics—also alienated rationalists by its presumed mysticism. Out of his efforts to reconcile the daily contradictions of living—beauty and ugliness, pleasure and pain, men and society, life and death—grew strange elusive thoughts. Although he insisted on the relativity of values, on a dialectic of history, on partisanship as a mark of vitality, nevertheless, he had the Romanticist's longing for omniscience, for becoming, or at least understanding, more than a fragment of universal life, for feeling at one with it all. This desire led to frequent confusion and lessened his social effectiveness, but it led to a fruitful integration of many diverse things, carried his explorations into the uncharted wilderness between life and logic, and was in this way the source of his characteristic and unique insights. Whether these wide and uncontrolled explorations tailor Lawrence to fit the term "mystic" depends on the accepted definition of that elusive word. Certainly Lawrence disliked the term, but, of course, that dislike would constitute proof of his bent toward mysticism only to those who are convinced, as is Dr. Tindall, that Lawrence's aversions betray his greatest debts.<sup>9</sup> More significant, however, is the incompatibility of his ideas with any of the established mysticisms, and the fact that he sought truth ultimately, not in a transcendent God, but in the perceptions of man. Actually such an effort might be said to place him among those searching for a more adequate "rationalism."

<sup>9</sup> *D. H. Lawrence and Susan His Cow*, by William York Tindall, New York, Columbia University Press, 1939.

## *NMQ Poetry Selections*

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### DAWN

We must not make it six again,  
Sitting up while other men  
Take proper sleep.  
To bed, to bed! And yet how wise  
This dawning is that still has eyes  
Aware and deep  
And likes to look around while none  
Gives audible opinion. . . .  
The night and I  
Most tenderly, with nothing said,  
By morning light open the bed  
Where we shall lie.

WITTER BYNNER

### SOFT ANONYMITY

How the waves spill upon the blotter beach  
to drag a watery, embarrassed tail,  
and return, leaping high, to be sopped up,  
pride and fury, by lascivious sand.

Again and again from the master, urged  
by its swollen form toppling upon sand,  
paw sucking sides where a tree stands.

From the salted, rolling body stinking embalmment,  
rot to plunge into above the head. Soft  
is the stinking corpse of anonymity.

DAVID IGNATOW



## ORDER AND FRUITFULNESS

The light of the morning on her good complexion,  
on her blue eyes that stuck out and on her little chin—  
She was brought up simply.

" . . . a fundamental rule, to be courageous, firm  
and honest as you have been," Victoria's uncle wrote to  
her, when she was eighteen just before she became Queen.

After the Coronation she ran upstairs at home and  
changed her clothes and washed her dog, Dash.

Victoria — Goethe — The different countrysides where  
each lived had parks and formal gardens and animals  
with graceful claws and horns and diaphanous-finned,  
diaphanous-tailed fishes.

When Goethe was eighty he wrote, "No more on  
silken page I write symmetrical verse, no more framing  
them in golden tendrils. . ." Courtlife was good for him,  
the regularity. When he was about eighty he also wrote,  
"We must not try to get behind phenomena: they them-  
selves are the lesson."

In the morning foggy light his old hand hardly  
touches the paper, from emotion and sensual lightness,  
as he writes.

LOUIS SECOND

## THE MEANINGS OF CONSENT

Even in winter air his voice is choral of comrade crew  
And reaps the full tone from the seed of sound  
The nighthawk with its wing-dip dropped  
Into the furrowed, loam-soft sky.

Surely himself, he passes at evening  
Under the red-reined control of the returning road  
And gives his greeting that is flushed  
Cheerful with the subject of the heart.

## NMQ POETRY SELECTIONS

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The soil he treads is soul of artifact:  
 He walked here with ancestral warmth  
 When the winds of undying weight, the leaf-bearing air,  
 Caressed him to the forward pitch  
 With which he bore down his mortal bride.

He goes toward his lighted house, easy over the earth,  
 A man unencumbered by his breath:  
 The whistled threads are sheared away  
 Upon the axe-edge silver of the sky.

MILES WHITE

## T O B E

I thought this would be easiest to say  
 But remembered waking mid-night,  
 Hungry to whisper "Love, love!"  
 My very life dependent by that thread,  
 But ah, the lazy lecherous tongue  
 Lay still, it would not stir.  
 So now.  
 The usual things:  
 Ducks, their wild color floating on mirrors;  
 My lover's ghost speaking the night into promises;  
 That one horse I could never ride  
 Out of the pasture lot and splendidly down dreamed  
     fields  
 Into someplace I have been always looking for.  
 Like mercury under my fingertips  
 It gets away,  
 Rockets into corners of an invisible room.

All I can certainly say  
 Looking through green days of my coming here,  
 Counting the marbles, sand-lots, beaches, lovers  
 Most of the time it evaded me; or I it.  
 It was not there  
 Often.

CAROL REED SHOCKEY

## BOOKS and COMMENT

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Thelma Campbell Nason

### THE WORLD AND NEW MEXICO

**T**HE SALLOW sands of New Mexico have recorded the footprints of many kinds of men. From the time of the Spanish conquerors who carved their names and destinations on Inscription Rock to the scientists who scarred the desert with the first detonation of the atomic bomb, many individuals have left their marks upon the state. Prominent among them, of course, are the writers, of whom New Mexico boasts a number out of all proportion to her population. They, too, have always displayed the "confused and manifold variety" which Ross Calvin mentions as characteristic of this section. Even though the region at first supplied the milieu for almost all the works by New Mexican authors, the products were as different as Bandelier's *The Delight Makers*, Lummis' *Land of Poco Tiempo*, and Eugene Manlove Rhodes' *Pasó por aquí*. Increasing that diversity still further, a new trend now manifests itself in the works of recent writers. It disregards regional atmosphere, using the region only as a base of operations from which to view the needs and problems of the world beyond. This trend is evident in four books published in 1949, all relating to the New Mexican scene or produced by New Mexican authors. Their variety continues the tradition begun so long ago.

A tongue-in-cheek account is contributed by Bill Mauldin of

war cartoon fame. His *A Sort of a Saga*<sup>1</sup> is the story of his childhood, most of it spent in New Mexico with intervals in Old Mexico and Arizona. Bill's memories begin in Mexico, where his father was working a mine in Parral and where the inquisitive, mischievous youngster learned to smoke cigarettes at the age of three and became the close friend of the fat, jolly ladies of Parral's leading bordello—until his horrified family discovered where he was spending his time.

From Parral to El Paso, Texas; thence to Mountain Park, New Mexico, where his father owned a fruit farm; from there to Arizona, where Pop was determined to grow a citrus orchard; and back again to Mountain Park, the reader follows the bumping progress of the itinerant Mauldins. The entire story is dominated by Pop, a man of impetuous enthusiasms and a "pleasant, rolling voice" who could talk "on completely empty lungs." His most remarkable feat, aside from his ability to construct weird engines from the pile of junk he kept behind the house, was his repeated success in talking his wife into participating in—sometimes even believing in—the schemes that occurred to his restless mind. The Mauldin family was always poor, always searching for the one project that would be successful. The fact that they did not find it did not destroy Pop's faith; it only made the continuance of the search inevitable.

Childhood insecurity may explain the lack of feeling for the country reflected in Bill Mauldin's determinedly humorous account of those early years. The story is told pertly in a journalistic style in which details are exaggerated to make a good story. The incidents show clearly the cartoonist's eye for the humorous line, his necessity for making each episode complete in itself. The effect upon the reader is to destroy the impression of reality, of the continuity of events. Nobody quite lives the life of a comic strip. One has the feeling that Bill Mauldin is a man too far from his sources to write this sort of book successfully. Through the haze

<sup>1</sup> William Sloane Associates, 1949.

of popular acclaim justly aroused by *Up Front* (1945) and *Back Home* (1947) and from the safe distance of New York, those early days seem good only for a laugh. It is only fair, however, to admit that one does laugh, though not always with much conviction. The principal value of the book lies in the illustrations, the same vital, appealing cartoons that lighted the grim days for the nation during the war. (Willie out on the Arizona desert peering into a crock of homemade beer!)

A warmer, more genuine view of New Mexico is that portrayed by Alice Marriott in *The Valley Below*.<sup>2</sup> Miss Marriott, an outstanding American ethnologist, has produced several books on Indian cultures, the best known of which is *Maria, Potter of San Ildefonso*. After the war, she came to New Mexico to live and to continue her ethnological studies in one of the small villages of the state. Round Valley, twenty miles from Santa Fe, offered itself as a place to live because there she and her friend Margaret Le Franc, the illustrator of *Maria* and *The Valley Below*, were able to rent a house with a well for five dollars a month. Later, they bought the house and settled down as bona fide members of the community. Of the intention of her book, Miss Marriott says, "I started with the idea of an orderly description of a society that was blended of three elements: Indian, Spanish, and Anglo. I found that I couldn't describe the society without telling how we came to be part of it. I couldn't analyse the people without describing them, and the description took the form of telling the impact of their character on ours. Then I came to the talcum powder—in this case, our house—and it got all over and into everything. What I have finally written is a book about a house and its being lived in, and about some of the people who came and went there."

The account of "the house and its being lived in" includes their troubles with a recalcitrant pump, the sex life of the Siamese cats for whose care they were rash enough to accept responsibility,

<sup>2</sup> University of Oklahoma Press, 1949.

the "care and feeding of stoves," the problems of irrigation, and the neighborhood "*animalitos*," together with descriptions of their Spanish-American neighbors, the Indian women who worked about the place, Indian dances in nearby pueblos, and even the inevitable adventure with the Penitentes.

As in all "The World and I" type of writing, the humor is a bit too deliberately introduced, the author appears a bit too deliberately scatterbrained. However, since that quality seems to be one of the accepted standards for a book of this kind, perhaps it is churlish to object. At any rate, Miss Marriott brings to the subject enthusiasm and an understanding of the people involved that lifts her book into the class of authentic New Mexicana. One preference of mine — and admittedly, it may be ungracious — would be to have less sex life of cats and more acquaintance with Miss Marriott's charming neighbors, Maclovio, Cristina, Boulder Johnny, and the rest.

Indicative of the tendency to go beyond the region into national and world problems is *The Hours and the Ages*<sup>3</sup> by Edward Nicholas. A native Ohioan who has studied history in Princeton, Harvard, and Cambridge, Mr. Nicholas now owns a ranch near Roswell. From that contemplative vantage point, he is engaged in shaping his historical research into articles and books. *The Hours and the Ages*, is a real contribution to the stature of Southwestern literature.

In his book, Mr. Nicholas has attempted to explain the development of America by presenting certain figures who express the tenor of the epoch in which they lived and who contributed their own efforts and spirit to its further development. The thesis of the book is set forth by a quotation from Emerson's essay, *History*. "The hours should be instructed by the ages and the ages explained by the hours. . . . Each new fact in his [individual man's] private experience flashes a light on what great bodies of men have done, and the crises of his life refer to national crises. Every

<sup>3</sup> William Sloane Associates, Inc., 1949.

revolution was first a thought in one man's mind. . . . Every reform was once a private opinion." Developing this thesis further and adapting it to his own objectives, Mr. Nicholas remarks in his prefatory chapter, "The history of America is that of innumerable men and women, each one enmeshed in his days and places, each one confronting alone the eternal human problem of realizing the impulse of the spirit in the intricate recalcitrant stuff of the world. . . . And yet, the social organism is outside the individual as well as within him. The life of society is more than the sum of the lives of its members. . . . The courses of nations exhibit huge moods and intentions in which the individual is swept along. . . ."

Mr. Nicholas shows us how the America we know developed through the lives of a series of individuals who "... had their small personal concerns and patterns; but within them and above them moved the overlife of their society." He begins with South Carolina in the pre-Revolutionary period and pictures it through an enterprising and remarkable young woman, Elizabeth Pinckney. He continues through the Revolution with such men as Sam Adams and Thomas Jefferson, the formative years with Andrew Jackson, the Transcendentalist movement with Margaret Fuller, and the years of the imperialists with Jessie Anne Fremont. In short, as Henry Seidel Canby says in his review of the book, Nicholas portrays "an American pageant" that lends to eras and people "the composition and focused interest of great historical paintings."

As the artist adds to the interest of his composition the beauty of color and line, so the writer here strengthens his impressions by the clarity and charm of his style. The author of *The Hours and the Ages* is a man whom New Mexico is delighted to include with her best, past or present.

Another equally deserving of distinction is Rudolph Kieve, author of one of the year's significant novels, *The Sorcerers*.<sup>4</sup> Now

<sup>4</sup> Houghton Mifflin Company, 1949.

a practicing psychiatrist in Santa Fe, Dr. Kieve was born in Heidelberg, Germany, where he began his training. Confronted by the approaching shadow of Naziism, he left Germany, completed his studies in Italy, and came to the United States in 1936. *The Sorcerers*, his first major work in English, is a beautiful, violent, gloomy book showing how the evil forces that resulted in Nazi Germany rolled relentlessly over the land after the First World War, like a unit of tanks in attack.

The novel spans the years from 1910 to the early 1920's and depicts Germany during the war and the regime of the short-lived, unhappy Weimar Republic, doomed before it was born by the warlike spirit of the Prussian Junkers. The fundamental conflict lies between the ingrained, militaristic belief in a ruling class on the one hand and the democratic belief in the value of the individual on the other. These contrasting beliefs are embodied in Schuck, the Prussian manager who comes to southern Germany to take charge of a run-down estate and in Albert Sulzberger, the young Jew who is for a while Schuck's partner in the venture. In his youth, Albert tries to run away from his race and his responsibilities. His partnership with the slave-driving Schuck is something that he can endure only by shutting his eyes to brutality and abuse. Slowly and inexorably, a social consciousness develops in Albert, and eventually he is driven by his own nature to championing the cause of the ordinary man. Therein lies the tragedy of the book, the futility of the fight against that entrenched militarism which uses the people only to serve its own designs. The ending of *The Sorcerers* is one of the most bitterly tragic in contemporary fiction. As the gigantic swastika rotates against the mountain side, the physical sickness of Albert Sulzberger symbolizes the spiritual sickness of an entire people enmeshed in that advancing, crushing emblem.

The hand of the psychiatrist is evident in the splendid, well-developed characterizations of the book. The brutal Schuck who dies by his own violence; his voluptuous, amoral wife; Albert's



irresponsible brother Gustav who typifies the evil which results from a lack of social morality; Carola, mother of three sons of contradictory character; Pauline, whose life is over at eighteen because of Gustav . . . these are a few random choices from a rich gallery of personalities, all distinct, all carefully evolved with rare, incisive insight.

Here we have considered four books which represent the great variety characteristic of the works of this region. Two of them picture the Southwest from divergent points of view. Two survey the outside world with the calm detachment afforded by the ability to work in this quiet corner of the world. The latter development is a valuable one, avoiding as it does the danger that regionalism may succumb to the sterility which is the result of inbreeding. Perhaps Dr. Kieve was able to write more objectively of the Germany he knows and whose problems haunt and harass him as he contemplated it from the comparative quiet of New Mexico, and that for Edward Nicholas the concept of our nation's development took on clearer proportions when viewed from one of its youngest states where social frontiers are still taking shape.

*Edwin Honig*

## TOWARD A LORCA THEATRE

**A**RTURO BAREA'S early book on Lorca, recently issued in America,\* still urges the poet-dramatist's untranslatability, a paradox in the face of the increasing availability of his work outside of Spanish-speaking countries. True, there has always been the difficulty of making decently approximate

\* *Lorca: The Poet and his People*. (Translated from the Spanish by Ilsa Barea), Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1945.

translations of Lorca's poems, at least in English. But the difficulty is general and applies as well to Englishing Rilke, Valery, Eluard, etc. The paradox is only irritating and needlessly intimidating when it involves his drama. For one thing, as Messrs. Graham and O'Connell have shown with regard to the plays, the task of adequate translation is not as formidable as with the poetry. For another, performances of Lorca's drama in many American cities emphasize the conviction on the part of certain venturesome companies that there is a wealth of actable dramatic material in the plays. So the paradox is misleading now, based as it is partly on excessive theorizing about the Spanish temperament, which ignores practical dramatic values inherent in the plays, and partly on a misreading of the facts regarding the failure of earlier stage versions outside Spain and Latin America.

I don't deny there are problems in getting Lorca staged. But again, some of these problems are general because they are the same confronting any poetic or highly imaginative drama—a fact which Lorca himself constantly recognized and contended with. (See his introduction to *La zapatera prodigiosa*, his speech to the original actors of *Yerma*, his puppet farce *El retablillo de Don Cristóbal*.) One would expect his supporters to be at least as militant as Lorca was in the battle against apathy and bad taste in the theater. Not that his plays today, any more than those of Brecht, are better able to find an enlightened reception by the commercial theaters. The best potential audiences are still the patrons of university theaters, semi-professional little theaters, and summer stock companies. And it is there that the issue must be fought and won. But Barea speaks of specific failures, such as that of *Bodas de sangre* when in 1939 the French version was staged in Paris. It failed there, he says, "despite an excellent translation and in spite of praise from critics who mixed admiration for [those fighting for] Republican Spain with a mystical—and snobbish—admiration for the 'blood and soil' quality and the lyrical symbolism of Lorca's text." And Barea goes on to explain:

"It was bound to fail, because foreign spectators understood it only through a labored intellectual process, not through the swift, piercing associations and sensations it produced in a Spanish public."

Granted the difference in reaction between a native and a foreign audience (a difference based on many incommensurables), Barea seems only to be exchanging snobberies with critics: one stamped with nationalist pride for one chained to transient historical phenomena and literary dandyism. Besides, the judgment is relative to matters which the play itself has little to do with except as an object for stimulating social or ideological sanctions. For example: couldn't one use quite similar reasons to account for the recent success, rather than failure, of Lorca's *Bodas*, *Yerma* and *Bernarda Alba* in Israel, Russia and Czechoslovakia? But Barea says nothing about the play as a spectacle, the dramatic action, the interpretation of the actors. Instead he quotes R. M. Nadal's comment on the play's earlier reception in New York where it also failed because "whether we like it or not, Spain is from many points of view a world apart, and an attempt to transfer, in Lorca's most Spanish poetry, Spanish values of men and things, meets with an almost insurmountable barrier." Add to these opinions the cautious disclaimers they have inspired in timid non-Spanish critics, and you have a situation in which an arbitrary judgment is hallowed to the detriment of further Lorca productions on foreign stages. In one sense the same sort of categorical criticism must originally have hampered the theatrical propagation of Synge and Chekhov, writers whose tone and spirit are a good deal like Lorca's. One can only guess how much more persistently it has stymied the production of new international drama in general.

Lorca's theater delights in variety: spectacle, mood, dramatic inventiveness. And these are things which can be superbly translated by directors and actors who know a rich text when they see it. But even more essential to his drama is the subtle interrelation

of those characteristics demanding restraint in direction and acting, a toning down of all elements of exaggeration for the effect of the whole: comedy on the borderline of caricature becoming pathos; tragedy on the verge of melodrama becoming lyricism; the strong fulcrum of reality provided by an old servant or an earthy peasant woman to keep the fantasy and near-tears from becoming maudlin; a leading lady constrained from overt exhibition by a company of clearly individualized counterparts.

I once saw a French production of *La Casa de Bernarda Alba* which failed not because of the untranslatability of language or spirit, but because of an overemphasis on *décor* and stage business. There was exquisite attention paid to the whiteness and thickness of the inner walls, to the bluing lights of dawn, to the somber essentials of a household where no man was allowed to enter. And even though the language was French, there was no incongruity in the offstage Spanish male voice and guitar mutedly invading the tense company of five expectant virgins. But the play was produced as though it were another *Bodas de sangre*. The *criada* cackled like an old bawd, the hardbitten indomitable mother boomed out her prohibitions like a basso profundo, tirelessly hammering the stage with her tremendous mahogany cane. It offended the eye, it confused the ear. And though one heard and understood the language of the five daughters, one could never tell them apart, so stylized in movement, so unmodulated in tone were their gestures and accents. It might have served partly to render the anxious chaotic movement and ephemeral lyricism of *Bodas*; it distracted one from the stolid but sharply differentiated crises of *Bernarda Alba*.

Later I saw an amateur group of American university students perform *Yerma* on a very cramped stage. None of the players knew the original or had much knowledge of Lorca's other works; few had held roles in more than two or three plays before. The *décor* was crude but unobtrusive—and in this the amateurs escaped a pitfall which professionals might less easily have over-

come. But the production was vibrant—it stressed the right things: Yerma's own fertile questioning, her obsessive yearning for a child, which, though slowly progressing to a violent climax, never touched hysteria, never broke Lorca's illusion of self-embracing impasse. I remember the moments when in the company of Victor, her natural though not her legal mate, Yerma held her breath, and Victor was silent without awkwardness or heaviness, passionate without moving a muscle; and though they stood facing each other only a few inches apart, one felt that absolute distance which Lorca had ordained must lie between. Finally, when Victor turned to leave, it was the audience which broke the spell by drawing in its breath and sighing.

This performance convinced me that Lorca's spirit could be translated on an American stage. And if it could be done there without the advisements and elaborations of the professional theater, how much more effectively could it be done if the interpreting imagination were both zealous and trained.

The real problem then, as with anything original and valid, is somehow to give potential audiences more and more accessibility to Lorca's work. The plays should be presented in repertoire, if possible, and in a cycle of five or six repeated weekly for a season. Directors, actors, and stage workers could thus be brought to concentrate on the variety and genius of each play in turn. Having learned in this way, they would eventually familiarize their audiences with that rich spirit now obscured by stale disclaimers in Lorca criticism. When this comes about, a book like Mr. Barea's, with all its insight into the "profoundly and revealingly Spanish and at the same time universally human" nature of Lorca's idiom, will have a sure basis for being used and enjoyed.

*Rudolph Kieve*

## MARCEL PROUST, CORRESPONDENT

**L**ETTER WRITING was of unique significance in Marcel Proust's tragically vicarious life. His letters connected him like so many Ariadne threads with the outside world while his steady retreat into the labyrinth of his inner being was in progress. But they could not keep him from meeting death through his maternal Minotaurus. His was increasingly the life of an invalid, obsessed with the state of his health, eternally vigilant for signs of deterioration or improvement. He noted them down with agonized precision, aware of the decaying burden of his body. As the years wore on, this body grew ever more into an unwelcome intruder. The sensations of its insufficient functioning commandeered spreading areas of attention from the realm of his awareness. They reached an extent hardly imaginable to any one beyond himself.

His body became his alter ego, his demanding child, never to be placated for long. He had to tend it, now lovingly, now hatingly, but always more carefully: a never silenced companion, enemy, with whom he could not be as one, against whose droning he wrote his letters and his great novel.

There was hardly an instant's harmony between Proust's body and his spirit. The two were always warring, always at odds, irreconcilable. And as the time passed, the war became more cruel, the moments of truce shorter and shorter. Toward the end, between choking asthma and a heart that could not hold out against the strain of contracted blood vessels in the lungs, Proust had to somnify his body to the point where his mind also became clouded. His memory began to fail and deprived him momentarily of his greatest solace: his intellectual sobriety, his super-

receptive sensibility. Yet until the moment of his extinction, he is at work on his epic. As the one is finished the other expires, as the body dies the work is complete.

Miss Curtiss, the translator and editor of this remarkable collection,\* has performed two simultaneous services, each of which alone would have made her labor a significant contribution toward the understanding of Proust. First of all, she has given the American reader a translation of great and beautiful faithfulness, fabricating for the purpose a suitable language, at once subtle, easy, urbane. A translation in many ways superior to Scott Moncrief's and carrying also an excellent selection of informative notes and a beautifully complete index, this by itself would have been an accomplishment. But in addition she has gleaned from the almost astronomical number of Proust's letters a sequence of such suggestiveness, clarity and comprehension as to give us what is virtually a biography.

Proust's life and person were not of the kind that lends itself naturally to any conventional biography. It was a *drame intérieur*, the drama of the inner stage of memory and reflection where past events were enacted as for the first time, removed from their original places, times, causes; where friends, lovers, acquaintances, adversaries went through a special process of emotional and mental purification and were dissolved into their component elements in order to become real to the author's delicately refined, selective and exclusive system.

The magic of Proust's art is the magic of the flesh-eating plant and the parasitic orchid. In highly complicated, cleverly camouflaged ritual, the cruel but compassionate cannibal sterilized, anaesthetised, digested and assimilated his companions, shedding bitter tears over his destructiveness, suffering untellable agony over his cruelty which never passed the threshold of his own exis-

\* *Letters of Marcel Proust*, translated and edited, with notes, by Mina Curtiss, with an introduction by Harry Levin. Random House, 1949.

tence. For he was the most modest, considerate, sympathetic and helpful of men, in the world of action.

As we read these letters, as their writer grows older (or more mature, if we realize that with him maturing was dying slowly), more withdrawn, more absorbed (and we mean absorbed, as the juices of the fly that is still alive but paralyzed and caught in the net, is being absorbed by the spider), we come to realize in slow but incontrovertible steps that we are witnessing the spectacle of a human life, all but intolerable to itself, compelled to transform itself into a work of art. We are witnessing a mysterious transubstantiation that is at once terrifying and awe-inspiring. Maybe we had a faint notion that such transfiguration occurred occasionally in a poem. But never yet had we stood before anything comparable to this wanton act of absolute creation, as though a sculptor were to use his own flesh and limbs from which to fashion a statue.

It is not that the man recedes before the importance of his work, becomes uninteresting, insipid. Nothing of the kind: to his last heart beat Proust remains fascinating. It is rather that right before our eyes his very substance changes and flows transformed into his work, leaving no waste, no refuse, nothing that did not transmute into his novel. The most private and remote corners of his self melt under the heat of his creativeness and come out pure artistic matter. In the end there is a corpse and a work of art. Life has slowly moved out of the tortured quarters of a gradually dying body into the permanence of an immortal literary structure.

The letters show this change very clearly. From the clever, self-conscious gossip of the youth to the movingly serene, resigned, self-assured, because selfless, notes of the dying man. First we meet a clinging, arrogant, apologetic, introspective young man of the world (which actually he never was, but rather the opposite: the unconscious, scornful caricature of such a character). Deep and hidden psychological blocks kept him from becoming a savage social satirist of Swiftian dimensions for which he had all the



natural equipment, save one, the capacity to come face to face with his abysmal hatred. Thus impeded, he did the next best thing: instead of drawing a caricature, he enacted, embodied one in startling emulation of his friend Robert de Montesquiou, a precious, quite insignificant *homme de société*, remembered today not for his writing but for having posed for Proust's portrait of Baron de Charlus.

This long maintained emulation will serve as well as any to point out Proust's basic attitude toward his friends. Much has been said of his excessive courtesy, modesty, obsequiousness, his inclination to overpraise the works of his friends, the beauty of his feminine acquaintances, the wit and talents of people manifestly mediocre. Excess and exaggeration are the psychological key to caricature. And Proust's letters overflow with both. Until we become aware of his hidden quality as arms, they tend to embarrass and anger us. His devastating ambivalence toward those close to him made it necessary to conceal his hostility in wads of cotton. This ambivalence—charged with suppressed hate—forced him to overemphasize out of all proportion, in the direction of flattery. In this, his technique is entirely Victorian: ingratiating and genteel. And this technique he borrowed—although unconsciously—from the surrounding world of fashionable ladies. Anything he touches becomes vitalized by this ambivalent, feminine malice, the malice of the disinherited, enslaved sex with whom he identified himself. Therein he was a woman of his time, and not a man. In the end he can never be sure whether he loves whom he hates, or hates whom he loves. The supreme exception, apparently, is his mother. But she is also the supreme example. This he could not face. He preferred death to the acknowledgment of the fact that he not only loved his mother adoringly, but also hated her devastatingly, and both in the same breath.

But back to Montesquiou: here was a precious dandy, displaying peacock-like the insufferable artifacts of the quasi-intellectual. Here was what Proust detested most deeply and was compelled

to imitate most meticulously, that is to say, to caricature, and further than that, to flatter, idolize and defend. The younger Proust doted upon the older Montesquiou, as his mother had doted upon him, spoiling him to the point of destruction with the surrogates of her love. Here we see him compelled to enact the scenes his mother had enacted for him: the unconsummated love between mother and son, although in caricature. But the reverse is also true, as almost always with Proust. All people with whom he had personal dealings for any length of time and who would lend themselves either to the role of mother or that of son were obliged to do so, as he in turn would supplement the play by assuming the other role. And occasionally these roles oscillated during the performance.

In the first analysis, his whole (non-technical) correspondence is one long letter to his mother in which he flatters her as he chides her, indicts her as he exculpates her, seduces her as he rejects her. The two are no longer apart. He has absorbed her *in toto*, has devoured her. It is only after her death that the long projected work gets under way. It could not have been written before. And now his asthma becomes worse, as though he had inhaled a substance which clung to his lungs and defied all attempts at exhaling it. The mother within chokes him. But he will not give up until his work is done. He will not atone with his demise until the novel is completed. Then, at last, he lets her take revenge on him, offers his breath to her and chokes to death. We can have only a limited understanding of Proust as long as we do not see the pervasion of his life, his cosmos, his work by the exhalations of his mother—at once poisonous and eternalizing. Anything they touch dies and becomes material for his work. Immortality has been achieved, and with it final independence from his mother.

This was a dreadful life of unrelieved misery, unrelieved dependence upon a gentle, overdevoted mother who could not give up her son, and more tragically, whom her son could not give

up. All other human relations were to him real only insofar as they permitted the primal one to be re-enacted. Else they were but pale, shadowy deviations from the original, the sole relation.

Of course, we realize that this brief psychological enquiry contributes nothing toward the explanation of his genius. It is not the suffrance-charged, unresolved bond between mother and son which is at the base of his tremendous intellectual and creative endowment, although there is not a word he uttered and wrote which is not touched by it. And it is quite clear that the particular direction of his literary research (he considered, and rightly so, his entire work as a sequence of researches into the human soul) was determined by this attachment, his interests were made specific by it—his strikingly feminine sensibility and gentle touch were borrowed from his mother. They supervised the selection of his material; they confined him to this particular world of the elegant, wealthy and decadent French aristocracy whose only virtue is in his exploration of it. It is not nearly so vigorous or dynamic a world as that of Balzac and Stendhal. But in Proust's presentation it becomes exemplary, a laboratory in which the laws of human intercourse are made visible: the laws of memory, of attraction and repulsion, of nostalgia, jealousy, possessiveness, prestige, greed, fear, grief, courage, unfaithfulness, loyalty, and the infinite facets of the human character which are lit up by conduct only to be proved illusory by the oscillating tool of his ambivalence. The human character is assaulted with the devastating concept of relativity, and nothing is left of it but the barely related projections from his magic lantern.

Harry Levin has furnished the introduction to this volume. He points out the operation of what he calls the Proustian irony. But he does not show us how intimately this irony is related to the most savage satire. Nor does he tell us of Proust's peculiar obsession with caricature. Proust's novelistic characters are, after all, caricatures lifted to the height of finished portraits taken from memory. (And in this Proust is not unlike Henry James, or

rather Henry James not unlike Proust. James can afford to be less gentle, since his hate is less intense. But both share that love of beauty which in reality is but a lying in wait for cracks in the armor of perfection so that they may pounce upon anything less than perfect and tear it apart. A love for the absolute which is but the mask of hate for the imperfect, a secret, cruel enjoyment in the flaws. What would Henry James' novels be if all people could have perfect manners and taste! But apart from this omission on Levin's part, he does a most satisfactory job of investigating Proust's specific ability to express himself through the means of the opposite statement. He also says interesting and pertinent things about Proust's manner of writing and dealing with human contacts in the phobic Proustian way. He amplifies what many of the letters state more obliquely: that when the final count is made, we find Proust on the side of the angels, on the side of tolerance and justice.

*Florence Hawley*

## ONE NAVAHO'S LIFE PROBLEMS

**F**OR SOME YEARS, one of the most detailed and carefully planned studies ever attempted by students of mankind and his ways has been going on in a little known corner of New Mexico. This is the "Ramah Project," conceived by Clyde Kluckhohn and a group of advisers and co-workers (often graduate students) who began observations on the Ramah Navahos in 1936 under the auspices of Harvard University. The intention is to describe historically, physically, culturally, psychologically, and in relation to acculturation this rather isolated group of people, whose nearest neighbors are the Indians of

Zuñi Pueblo, Spanish-American and Mormon ranchers. The project, to be continued on into the future by a series of observers trained in different disciplines and hence, through extension in time and the number of individuals checking upon each others' interrelated data, aims at providing a more meaningful interpretation of the culture dynamics of this group than otherwise would be possible.

The first report arising directly from this study is *Gregorio, the Hand-trembler*,\* the combined work of two prominent psychiatrist-anthropologists, Alexander and Dorothea Leighton. It is not exactly a literary production but bears on human affairs and is of interest to scientists and laymen alike. Two volumes by Clyde Kluckhohn and Dorothea Leighton, *The Navaho* and *Children of the People*, appearing in 1946 and 1947, provide background to the present monograph concentrated upon the events in the life history of Gregorio, which finally led to his becoming a hand-trembler or diagnostician of disease, an honored profession among these people.

Gregorio's father was a silent man who took almost no part in raising his sons. Gregorio's mother died when he was seven and he became a part of the household of an aunt and the maternal grandparents. His childhood was spent herding sheep for the family. During one of his lonely vigils he saw his first white man: "It looked like a man, I said, that had wool all over his face."

Gregorio's grandfather was a medicine man and four of the family practiced hand-trembling, the device by which the diagnostician, after deriving power through trance and revelation, identifies the ailment of a patient by sitting beside him, thinking of possible diseases and noting at which thought his extended hand begins trembling. A certain medicine man is prescribed for the curing ceremony, and if his cure is successful both specialists are rated efficient.

\* *Gregorio, the Handtrembler, a Psychobiological Personality Study of a Navaho Indian*. Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, Vol. XL, No. 1, 1949.

At fourteen Gregorio moved away from the home of his maternal grandparents and went with his uncle to herd sheep for the local "Mexicans." The considerable knowledge concerning handling and breeding of flocks picked up during this period of contact with Spanish Americans became the background for his scanty economic subsistence when he returned to his people. But the long isolation left him slightly ill at ease among the other Navahos and deprived him, likewise, of that knowledge of native religion which would have permitted him to utilize at once the power for hand-trembling acquired in a strange illness which occurred during this sheep herding period.

After eight years he returned to his people. His relatives, almost at once and without consulting him, arranged a marriage which was a failure from the start. The hand-trembling, which he now began to practice, afforded some compensation in outside interests and after the second year he left his wife. Four years later an enterprising old woman persuaded him to marry her daughter, who was dull but not uncompanionable. Their first four children were stillborn or died in infancy, after which a girl was born and survived, two more were born and died, and finally two more were born and managed to live. These losses, plus illnesses and riding accidents experienced by Gregorio, are added to his childhood experiences in analysis by the Leightons as major events pushing the individual toward insecurity, in combat with those few pushing toward security. Gregorio, as the result of this battle, is characterized as ". . . shy, timid, sensitive to the opinions of other Navahos. Desire for prestige, capacity for hard work, low normal intelligence. Backache. Easy to get along with." The authors conclude (upon the basis of a previous background survey of sources of fear and uneasiness in the community) that disease and the violation of religious rules rank first as source of concern to Navahos in general and to Gregorio as an individual. Interpersonal conflict is the second important source of distress.

Anthropologists and others dealing with psychology of non-white groups will be interested in both the methodology of field collection and of systematic presentation of this material for maximum clarity of interpretation. The first section, entitled "Formulation," covers the problem, the condensed material, and general conclusions. Following this is the life story as dictated by Gregorio. Then, for each major need in Gregorio's life (subsistence, survival, social relationships, etc.) the authors give a summary of pertinent data, followed by breakdowns of such data by subtopic in text or charts, a synthesis of attitudes toward the general topic, an explanation, and a notation of gaps in available information. Material for this section is taken from field notes of other workers in the Ramah area as well as from the life text. The biography of Dezbah, Gregorio's second wife, makes up the last section of the volume.

Biographies provide basic data concerning the effect of a culture and especially of its value systems upon its carriers. As the author points out in his summary, insight into the equilibrium system of a number of individuals representing some group, combined with a knowledge of their cultural patterns, provides not only scientific understanding of cultural dynamics but also the most practical background possible to administrators responsible for plans concerning control and guidance of a people. Gregorio is very dependent upon the opinion of his own people. That is not surprising but we are struck by the implications for Indian Bureau and other acculturation programs of Gregorio's valuing the judgment of Spanish-Americans and trusting them further than the Anglos. Consequently, it seems apparent that "methods for improving agriculture and husbandry techniques should not be such as to interfere too much with his religious and social life, should not expose him to criticism from other Indians, should not put him in the position of being dependent on the word of [an Anglo] and would be much more effective if taught by a Mexican [Spanish American] than by [an Anglo].

... He would resist to the last any effort that threatened his position as a diagnostician, but he would respond readily to instruction in first aid and bonesetting, provided he could trust the instructor and could see results from the work."

The only criticism which might be leveled at this excellent piece of work is the small matter (but of emotional connotation and possible confusion in the Southwest) of retaining the Navaho translator's appellation of "Mexican" in referring to Spanish Americans and of "white people" in referring to Anglos.

*Archie J. Bahm*

## COMMON SENSE FROM INDIA

**W**HEN THE western scholar seeks beyond the bed of spikes, rope tricks, and trances for the philosophical bases of India's outlook in the Vedas, Upanishads and Bhagavad-Gita, he may yet be misled, for most of those who sit on India's doorsteps are not good guides. A. Thangal Kunju Musaliar, business magnate of Travancore, writing in Malayalam, published in 1946 "the slim little volume bearing his name": *Man and the World. Practical Philosophy and Law of Nature*.<sup>\*</sup> The book was written to be read aloud in native village gatherings as a sermon to help the humble to find happiness. For the common man it is packed with common sense, drawn from innumerable sources, not the least of which is life itself. Western science and Eastern mysticism intermingle with charming simplicity, yet with noticeable absence of both Hindu excesses and American exact-

<sup>\*</sup> Translated from the Malayalam by S. Sathyavageswara Iyer. San Vicente Foundation, Inc., Santa Fe, 1949. (A note on the San Vicente Foundation was given in "The Editor's Corner," Winter 1949 issue.)



ness. Not once is there mention of Brahman, Nirvana, Yoga, nor once of a chemical formula, mathematical equation, or statistical graph.

No plot or theme, except the persistent one of how to find happiness, inhibits the reader who might wish to begin wherever the book happens to open. He can find exhortation on an endless array of homely topics, such as eating, sweating, bowel movements, sudden changes in atmospheric pressure, fresh air, pure water, games, rituals, pilgrimages, autosuggestion, and of everyday virtues such as early rising, systematic habits, self-reliance, thrift, decencies and proprieties, and retirement in comfort. Yet these are interwoven with remarks about man's destiny and cosmic significance. Man is depicted as endangered both by aggressive egoism and failure to rise fully to his potential heights: "In his vanity man imagines he can alter the face of things and make events to order." Yet there are "no limits to man's progress." Even though man's fate is destined by laws of eternal justice, power over his own happiness remains largely in his own hands. Divine doom and human hope, pantheism and humanism, brute facts and tender values appear together as naturally as common human experience demands. Both reincarnation and heaven-hell doctrines live together uncritically with each other; yet happiness is to be found not by running away from life but in attending efficiently to life's most ordinary needs—such as urination and gratitude.

Science is advancing by leaps and bounds. The relentless struggle for existence results in the deaths of thousands and the wanton waste of means of subsistence. For it is the immutable law of life that all things grow, reach their climax, and then die away—to resume their original state. . . . The days of the week, month and year are caused by the movements of the sun and earth, for if these did not move there would be no past and future. . . . Between his loss and his regaining of consciousness, man does not know anything of the elapsed time, no matter what its length, no matter if it was only a second's duration.

Westerners will approve the author's ability to make wide use of simple scientific knowledge for human improvement, though they may be appalled and irritated by his mistakes, even if trivial for moral purposes, as, for example, that "the sun burns as it travels owing to its tremendous speed."

The Western mind may never be able to understand how the spirit of India can be at once so diffuse and yet so integrated, so unsystematic and yet so unified, so spiritual and yet so practical. Musaliar makes multitudes of different philosophies—contradictory and incompatible to analytical minds—merge imperceptibly together, with no feeling of rough edges, unless the reader, already trained to detect and magnify, brings his intellectual slicing tools with him. Their naïve coherence may well represent a profounder wisdom than sophisticated analyses—may not be so naïve after all. Sweeping generalities illustrated by homely examples and intuitive appraisals of life not bound by the laws of "mere reason"—yet inherently reasonable to common sense—leave a feeling of depth and grandeur, of scientific holiness, of profound simplicity. S. Sathyavageeswara Iyer of H. H. The Maharaja's University College, Trivandrum, translated the book into English. It may have lost in the process some of the charm of its original genius. Yet it remains an excellent table piece, an inspirational handbook, a steady source for those in a mood for meditation. And it has been beautifully designed by Merle Armitage and attractively printed by Progress-Bulletin under the supervision of M. A. Johnson.

Erna Fergusson

## WESTERN NOSTALGIA

**I**N HIS "Salute to Gene Rhodes," which introduces this volume,\* Frank Dobie has presented the man, the quality of his writing, and the reasons "a passionate few" keep his work alive. Much of it is nostalgia, though it may be that when the young and brash critics who do not like Rhodes' style or his point of view have been forgotten Gene, like Stevenson, will be revived as a writer of good, racy, and characteristic prose.

One might take exception to Dobie's statement that Rhodes' characters' "talk is uniformly natural." Frank Dobie has known more cowboys than I have and it may be that they uniformly talk like this: rounded periods, sparkling with whimsicalities, heavily interlarded with classical allusions and apt Biblical and Shakespearean quotations. But I somehow doubt it. When a sheriff named Barela, a near-illiterate cowboy, and a tenderfoot proving his mettle talk just alike I suspect they are all Gene Rhodes. Because Gene, of all things, loved words. He may have been an indifferent cowboy, as hinted. But he always carried a book in his saddlebags, and as he rode he read. He read under a flickering mesquite or aromatic creosote bush, or resting up against the station water tower. He was always reading. A real reader is little distracted by what he is supposed to be doing. So a lot of words and apt quotations drifted through Gene Rhodes' mind, and many stuck. He loved words, the very sound of them, and their synonymity: the way they could be piled up, played with, arranged and rearranged to say the same thing over and over, maybe better and better. So that's the way his cowboys talk—like Gene Rhodes who loved the vernacular and used it as well as he

\* *The Best Novels and Stories of Eugene Manlove Rhodes*, edited by Frank V. Dearing, with an introduction by J. Frank Dobie. Houghton Mifflin Co., 1949.

used the classical speech. But who, whatever he did, did it like a literary man.

So were his plots literary, intricately contrived. Inconceivable that such things could have happened. But they were fun to read, as any lover of stories would have to admit. They are, in addition, unfailingly true to the scene in which they are laid. Nobody was better than Gene Rhodes at giving the feel of air, the smell of growth or sand or a corral, or the way a country rises to pale blue peaks or fades off into desert nothingness. Most of all, his tales are true with the truth-to-type of a man who writes of life not as it was or even as he knew it to be, but as a man of his generation would speak of people not present—with gentle judiciousness. Only his villains are presented with some rancor, but amused rancor and in the sure knowledge that they will be downed in the end when the knightly hero gets the delicate heroine, whose hair is soft and misty even in a sandstorm and whose hands are always small. No wonder *Saturday Evening Post* readers loved Gene devotedly for a whole generation.

This is a volume to have at hand for escape reading or to put on the guest-room table.

*Genevieve Porterfield*

## A GUIDE TO THE LITERATURE OF THE SOUTHWEST, XXXII



**T**HIS BIBLIOGRAPHY, a service of the University of New Mexico's Research Bureau on Latin America and Cultural Relations in the Southwest, the School of Inter-American Affairs, the Department of Sociology, and the *New Mexico Quarterly Review*, attempts to list, with such thoroughness as time and resources permit, current materials dealing with the Southwest. The Southwest, as here defined, includes all of New Mexico and Arizona, and parts of Texas, Utah, Oklahoma, Colorado, Nevada and California.

The symbol (F) designates fiction; (J) is used to indicate materials on the juvenile level.

In order to conserve space and avoid needless repetition, recurring items of a general nature will be listed only once a year, and for the same reason items from periodicals that are indexed in *The Readers Guide to Periodical Literature*, *The Education Index*, and the *International Index* have been eliminated. The listing of thesis titles, generously provided by the librarians of the area, because of space limitations will be distributed throughout the forthcoming issues.

Included in this issue are mainly those titles which were published or came to our attention between September 1 and December 1, 1949.

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1949, and the Cowie Galleries, Los Angeles, December 1949. Last year he was elected National Academician, graphic class. He is at present guest teacher for the Spring term at the Minneapolis School of Art.

The twelve wood engravings in this issue, reproduced for the first time, were especially done for the *NMQ*.

Carl Zigrosser, curator of prints and drawings in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, since 1941, worked with F. Keppel & Co., N. Y., 1912-17; did research at the United Engineering Societies Libraries, 1917-18; and directed the Weyhe Gallery, N. Y., 1919-1940. He has been twice a Guggenheim fellow, 1939, 1940, and was awarded the medal of the Philadel-

phia Watercolor Club, 1946. He has edited *Twelve Prints of Contemporary American Artists*, 1919, *Lithographs by Lautrec*, 1946, and is the author of *Fine Prints, Old and New*, 1937, *Six Centuries of Fine Prints*, 1937, *The Artist in America*, 1942, *Kaethe Kollwitz*, 1946, *Book of Fine Prints*, 1948, and *Caroline Durieux* (Foreword), 1949.

Replying to inquiries, the Editor wishes to state that the order of appearance of our guest artists does not follow a preconceived editorial plan. We do hope to have represented in the Quarterly, in a scheme of variety of ages and techniques, the significant personalities of New Mexico.

 **POET SIGNATURE.**  
IV. Byron Vazakas was born in New York City, where his father, a linguist, scholar, and writer, had a school of his own. He has published a volume of poetry, *Transfigured Night*, with an introduction by Wil-

liam Carlos Williams, Macmillan, 1946, and since 1940 has contributed to anthologies, *American Writing*, 1944, *Accent*, 1946, *Cross Section*, 1947, *Focus 4*, 1947, and to magazines, *Kenyon*, *Sewanee*, *Partisan*, *Poetry* and others. Mr. Vazakas writes: "I believe that the United States is pre-eminent in poetry today in spite of much neglect and lack of support of its artists."


**ARTICLES.** Alfred Kazin, former literary editor of *The New Republic*, thirty-four years old, has already made a high mark as critic and free-lance writer. Since 1934 he has published hundreds of pieces in leading American and European periodicals. He has taught at the College of the City of New York, Black Mountain, New School, Queens, and the Salzburg Seminar in American Civilization. Twice he was awarded Guggenheim fellowships, 1940 and 1947, and during the war held a Rockefeller fellowship for the study of popular education movements in the British Army and trade unions. In 1949 he received the Award for Literature of the National Institute of Arts and Letters. His *On Native Grounds*, 1942, was an important contribution to the better understanding of American literature. "American Naturalism," from a lecture delivered at the University of Rochester in January 1949, is related to his interest in the "native roots" of our modern fiction. At present he is working on *A Walker in the City*, to be published by Harcourt,

Brace. He will teach this summer at the University of Minnesota.

The work of Frank Waters covers two decades since the publication of his first novel, when he was twenty-eight years old. He has since written eight full length novels, three non-fiction books (see for a complete bibliography, *NMQR*, Autumn 1949), and many magazine and newspaper articles. He covered the first Inter-American Indian Conference in Mexico for King Features Syndicate. Two of his novels, co-authored with Houston Branch, have been made into motion pictures by Universal-International and Paramount. A native of Colorado Springs, Mr. Waters is the grandson of Joseph Dozier, one of the early settlers, a contractor and builder of most of the schools and downtown buildings of the time, including the first unit of Colorado College, which Mr. Waters later attended, studying engineering. Although writing has been his avowed profession since youth, Mr. Waters has worked as engineer for Southern California Telephone Company in the Imperial Valley, Las Vegas, Nev., and Los Angeles, and during the war joined the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs at Washington. He recently completed a book, *The Four Corners*, a comprehensive study of the Indian country where the states of Utah, Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico converge.

Since 1935 Mary Freeman has been working intermittently on her recently completed manuscript, *D. H. Lawrence: A Basic Study*. Hers

has been mainly an ideologic approach to the Lawrencian problems. The article "D. H. Lawrence. Preview of a Basic Study" is based on the first chapter of the longer work. A graduate of the University of Louisville, she is married to Dr. Ellis Freeman, a psychologist. They have twin sons born in 1935 and live at Sarasota, Fla., where Dr. Freeman has designed and erected his home and an apartment building. Mrs. Freeman has begun an extensive critical study of Arthur Koestler.

 **STORIES.** Fray Angelico Chavez entered the Franciscan Order at Cincinnati in 1929, when nineteen years old, and was ordained to the priesthood in Santa Fe. Born in Wagon Mound, N. M., of one of the oldest Spanish families in the State, he has been stationed for years in Peña Blanca parish, which includes the Indian pueblos of Cochiti, San Felipe and Santo Domingo. Father Chavez has done wide research in the history of the region, and published many erudite articles. During the late war he served three years as Army Chaplain, ministering in the invasions of Guam and Leyte with the 77th (Statue of Liberty) Infantry Division. A man of refined artistic sensibility, he touches literature and human relations with the grace that comes from peace with himself and the world. As the monks of old, he decorated the little church in Peña Blanca with fine frescos. Published in magazines and books, his poetry, *Clothed With the Sun*, 1937, *Eleven*

*Lady-Lyrics*, 1945, *The Single Rose*, 1948, and stories, *New Mexico Triptych*, 1940, reveal the world of the soul struggling for expression. "The Black Ewe," based on data gathered from scattered historical sources, is a tale where folklore and reality are lifted to the larger poetic dimension that Fray Angelico's eye always sees.

Among the short story writers of today Frank Brookhouser has distinguished himself by a gift for concise, picture-making dialogue adapted to character and situation, and a compassion for human frailty which, through adroit turns of expression and action, saves itself from sentimentality. "The Grave Digger and Biggie Doone" is typical. Born in Ford City, Pa., in 1912, he has worked since he was seventeen years old as a newspaperman on small town and metropolitan dailies. For the past four years he has been writing a local column and reviews for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Some forty magazines have published more than 150 of his stories since the first one was accepted in 1939 by *Story*. Reprints have appeared in Whit Burnett's *Time to Be Young*, 1945, the O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories of 1946 and 1948, Martha Foley's *The Best American Short Stories of 1949*, and half dozen European countries. In 1947 Alan Swallow brought out a collection, *Request for Sherwood Anderson and Other Stories*.

 **NMQ POETRY SELECTIONS.** Witter Bynner, Phi Beta




Kappa poet, Harvard, 1911, California, 1919, Amherst, 1931, lecturer, editor, collector of Chinese paintings and jades, leading figure in the Santa Fe art colony, has published sixteen books of poetry and prose. He is now travelling in the Mediterranean countries and preparing a book on D. H. Lawrence.

David Ignatow lives in New York. He edited *Analytic*, a literary magazine, and was contributing editor to *Literary Arts*, *American Scene*, 1935-39. Since 1947 he has published verse in a number of magazines, and a book, *Poems*, Decker Press, 1948.

The author of a novel, *Pavement*, 1929, and short stories, Louis Second, Topfield, Mass., played on Harvard polo team, founded and directs the Children's Summer School for exceptional underprivileged children, and has been on the Board of Directors of the New England U. S. O. His poetry has appeared in magazines and a New Directions anthology.

Miles White, Leavenworth, Kans., was the author of "Poet Signature, II" in *NMQR*, Autumn 1949.

Another new poet from John Dillon Husband's Tulane University writing courses (we printed Charles Ramon's first poem in our Winter issue), Carol Reed Shockey, twenty-two, is in charge of the newspaper morgue of *Times Picayune* in New Orleans. "To Be" is her first published poem.

 **BOOKS AND COMMENT.** Thelma Campbell Nason, teacher of Spanish at UNM, has done graduate study in Spain and, Mex-

ico, and has contributed series of articles and book reviews to various periodicals including *El Paso Herald Post*, *World Outlook* and the *Chicago Sun*. She was formerly book review editor for *NMQR*.

Rudolph Kieve, a practicing psychiatrist in Santa Fe, born 1911 in Heidelberg, Germany, studied medicine in Heidelberg, Berlin, Florence and Turin, came to the U. S. in 1936, and has lived in New Mexico ever since. He has published poems and travel pieces in Swiss and German periodicals and is the author of a novel, *The Sorcerers*, 1949, reviewed elsewhere in this issue.

Florence Hawley, Ph.D. Chicago, 1934, of the Anthropology Department, UNM, has published ten books and monographs, and over forty articles in learned journals in the field of ethnology and social anthropology.

Edwin Honig, our Poetry Editor, teaches English at Harvard. A biographical sketch of him was given in our Summer 1949 issue.

Archie J. Bahm, Ph.D. Michigan, 1933, of the Philosophy Department, UNM, has published numerous articles on philosophical subjects in various periodicals and for the *Dictionary of Philosophy*. He was contributing editor of *Philosophic Abstracts*, and has been recently appointed associate editor of *The Humanist*. In 1936 he taught at the National University of Mexico, and in 1939 conducted a field course in "The Social Life and Culture of Mexico."

A biographical sketch of ERNA

FERGUSON, well-known Albuquerque writer, was given in our last issue, to which she contributed the lead article.

Our "Guide to the Literature of the Southwest" is now being compiled by Genevieve Porterfield, Reference Librarian at UNM since 1946. Miss Porterfield is a graduate of the Library School of Carnegie Institute of Technology, Chicago (B.A.), and Columbia (M.A.), and has had eighteen years experience as a librarian in various institutions.

**CONTRIBUTING EDITORS.** Lyle Saunders, associated with the Quarterly since 1942 as compiler of "A Guide to the Literature of the Southwest," and Elizabeth Poe, our New York representative, have been appointed contributing editors of the NMQ. Miss Poe is a native New Mexican who has worked as reporter on the *Baltimore Sun*, publicity writer for the Soil Conservation Service, editor of the *Rio Grande Writer*, and teacher of English at New Mexico A. & M. College. She is now editorial researcher in the National Affairs section of *Time* magazine.

**TWENTIETH YEAR.** This Spring issue starts our twentieth year of uninterrupted publication. Nineteen years is a long time for a quality review to live. Support is easily found for popular literature, but editors and publishers of the other kind of literature find it hard going. Only faith in the enterprise and the conviction that America


needs to hear the small voices of "now" that grow large in the "afterwards," keep us at it.

We had announced that together with this issue we would give a complete Index of the nineteen volumes so far published, and also information on our back issues. The labor involved was larger than we anticipated. The Index is nearing completion and will be published in a separate brochure to be sent to subscribers on request. Otherwise its bulk would take too large a space in one of our issues.

**CHANGE OF TITLE.** Readers will observe that we have dropped the word "Review." The original title of our magazine was *The New Mexico Quarterly* from 1931 to 1941. In 1941 when merging with *The New Mexico Business Review*, the title was changed to *The New Mexico Quarterly Review* in order, we assume, to preserve something of the name of both magazines. *New Mexico Quarterly*, the title we have adopted now, would seem more fitting, for the substantive "quarterly" means, according to Webster, "a periodical work published once a quarter, or four times a year." The addition of the word "review" is a little redundant.

**SOUTHWEST COUNCIL ON EDUCATION OF SPANISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE.** This organization, whose aims are to help in the solution of the educational problems of the Spanish-speaking people of the

Southwest region, held its Fourth Regional Conference, January 23-25 at the UNM. The universities of Texas, Denver, and the New Mexico Department of Education at Santa Fe were hosts to the first three conferences. The 1951 conference will be held at Los Angeles. The Council is mainly supported by a grant from the General Education Board, and has contributed a socio-economic survey of the Spanish-speaking people of Texas, and several publications in the field.


 **THE MARY AUSTIN PAPERS.** A few days ago the Editor called on Mrs. Thomas Wood Stevens and in the Mary Austin Room of the Laboratory of Anthropology at Santa Fe saw, neatly classified and filed in a four-section steel cabinet, the rich fund of literary papers willed by Mary Austin (1868-1934) to the Indian Arts Fund. Until 1944 the papers reposed in the vaults of the Laboratory. It was Mrs. Stevens, life-long friend of the author, who most unselfishly undertook for five years the task of ordering page by page this material, with only small financial help received at the end of the project from the Indian Arts Fund. The papers were in a confused state with missing or loose folios. After an exacting task of dating and identifying, the job is finally done.

The collection consists of Mary Austin's published and unpublished manuscripts and literary curios gathered by her. To Mrs. Calla Hay we owe the first general description

of this treasure of Mary Austiniana in an interesting interview with Mrs. Stevens published in the February 26, 1950, issue of the *Santa Fe New Mexican*. Among the unpublished materials there are articles and speeches listed on 150 cards, a book (*Love Is Not Enough*), 22 short stories, several plays and scenarios, poetry, and essays on religion. Mrs. Hay writes: ". . . the collection provides an entrancing study of how an author works . . . scripts that were written and rewritten, sometimes more than one version being saved, sometimes only the corrections showing with the original writing."

Mary Austin is a capital figure in the cultural development of New Mexico, not only because of the intrinsic worth of her writings, but also because from "The Beloved House" in Santa Fe, frequented by almost everyone of worth who came to our state, irradiated much artistic and civic initiative.

The NMQ hopes to publish in the near future a critical essay on the contents of the Mary Austin manuscript collection.


 **LANDSCAPE.** Scheduled to appear this Spring in Santa Fe is a new quarterly, *Landscape*, devoted to various aspects of the human geography of the Southwest, and edited by Mr. John B. Jackson, well-known writer. A few of the subjects suggested in the prospectus are farming methods and farm layouts; house, town and village patterns; types of roads; methods of using the natural resources—together with their effect

on the human landscape; certain aspects of ethnology and archaeology; in short, all that is part of man's relationship to his environment.

"The magazine will attempt to appeal to the educated layman interested in the contemporary as well as in the historic and prehistoric Southwest . . . technical papers devoid of speculation and without literary merit . . . will not be suitable. . . . It is hoped that interest in *Landscape* will not be confined to professional scientists. . . . Human geography is not a science; there can be no final judgment passed on any phase of it. It is a way of observing and understanding the world around us. . . ."

*Landscape* will be printed by the Valliant Company in Albuquerque and will carry line drawings when necessary for illustrating the text.

The NMQ wishes well to Mr. Jackson and associates in their promising venture. The address of the new magazine is 553 Canyon Road, Santa Fe.

 SANTOS. In 1931, the first time the Editor came to New Mexico, a *santo* could be purchased for a very few dollars in any of the curio shops or through bargaining with individuals who had them in their homes. In later years the interest in this manifestation of the artistry and religious faith of the New Mexican villagers has grown so that it is hard to find *santos* any more, and when found, one has to pay handsome prices for them.

There are several causes for this revaluation of the *santos*: the ac-


tivities of the Spanish Arts Society in the early days of the Santa Fe art colony; the creation of the Taylor Museum at Colorado Springs, in 1936, through the initial purchase of the Applegate Collection, later substantially enriched with other accessions made possible by the munificence of the Museum founder, Mrs. Alice Bemis Taylor; the extraordinary exhibit put together a few years ago by the Taylor Museum, and displayed in several of the leading museums of this country; the strengthening by donations of the New Mexico institutional collections, such as those of the Museum of New Mexico at Santa Fe, the Harwood Foundation at Taos (gifts of Mrs. Harwood, Mrs. Luhan) and others.

But even more than to these factors, it is to the students and connoisseurs of this unique popular art that credit is due. Their studies have made us appreciate more fully the spontaneity and charm of these pieces as the outlet of the simple faith of an isolated people rooted to the soil and using its elements to express and practice their religion. Almost every house in northern New Mexico has *santos* adorning the walls. The *santos* have been a constant inspiration of painters. From the general term *santos* (saints) one distinguishes in New Mexico the *bultos* (three-dimensional carved pieces or sculptures), *retablos* (paintings on wood—usually on small boards or tablets), and *re-redos* (a series of *retablos* framed together to form altar backgrounds).

Now comes wider recognition. The National Gallery of Art at Washington has announced its desire of acquiring *santos*. As reported, chiefly responsible for this interest is the Pasadena artist E. Boyd, who wrote a book on *santos*. He called the attention of Erwin O. Christensen, curator of the Index of American Design, who in turn selected examples of *bultos* and *retablos* from the Index and convinced the Board of the advisability of accepting gifts of *santos* for the permanent collection of the Gallery. Soon, therefore, these humble *santos*, crudely wrought by the toiling hands of the villagers of New Mexico, will live together under the same roof, ("*ni envidiosos ni envidiados*"—neither envying nor envied) with the universal masterpieces of more sophisticated craftsmen.

After this note was set in type we have read a thirteen-page essay by E. Boyd on "The Literature of Santos" in the Spring 1950 issue of *Southwest Review*. Miss Boyd gives a much needed bibliography and valuable critical comments on the history, production and cultural meaning of the *santos*. The bibliography is excellent and covers all significant printed items. There is besides an important book in manuscript, *Spanish Colonial Arts*, profusely illustrated with photographs of rare examples, left by Frank Applegate and Mary Austin to the now inactive Spanish Arts Society of Santa Fe—a manuscript which should be printed; and the New Mexico Writers Project files, housed in the Museum of New Mex-

ico, also contain some unpublished material referring to *santos*.

 "LITTLE JO." The world premiere of the opera in a Prologue and two acts, "Little Jo," by J. D. Robb, was given on January 18, 1950, at the Albuquerque Little Theater. The text, based on Robert Bright's novel, *The Life and Death of Little Jo*, published by Doubleday in 1944, is a simple story of villagers in the mountains of Northern New Mexico. It portrays their personal and communal life in a poetic tone.

The musical score of Mr. Robb utilized twenty-four authentic New Mexican folk songs, most of them collected by the composer. Working these into a modern thematic arrangement, the opera cannot be said to be a "regional derivative," but rather an individual interpretation of a piece of life, as it affects the sensibility of the musician.

"Little Jo" was an ambitious undertaking. A cast of eleven principals, a chorus of fourteen, a dance group of eight, and an orchestra of fifteen players, all people of this region, rehearsed for almost three months. The stage settings were designed by Lloyd Goff and executed by Ted Schuyler, and the costumes designed by Robert Klein. The stage direction of Kathryn O'Connor, musical direction of Kurt Frederick, choral direction of Joseph Grant, and choreographic and dancing direction of Dorothy Miller, were extraordinarily well coordinated. James O'Connor was technical director of the production.

In general, the reaction of the public was enthusiastic, as evidenced by the fact that well over 1600 saw the four performances, every seat being sold and many people being turned away—an attendance record for the Albuquerque Little Theater. The critics for the most part were also enthusiastic. Some found fault with the opera for its lack of suspense and lack of rapid pace. Such criticism is debatable, for "Little Jo" was never intended to be a smart, fast-moving play, but rather a strange chapter from life. The moods of the people with whom the opera deals are not fast-moving and their keynote not one of unnatural suspense, but rather the "natural unexpectedness of life." The music, it seems to us, was aptly conservative in adapting itself to the leisurely rhythm of life in those isolated villages.

The *NMQ* extends warm congratulations to the many persons who gave their generous effort to the staging of the first New Mexico opera—a milestone in our cultural history.


**HAND PRINTING.** As one in the San Vicente Foundation series (see our note in the Winter 1949 issue, *NMQR*), Dorothy N. Stewart of Santa Fe has published a hand-made book, *Hamlet—A Visual Presentation*. The book consists of thirty-four large pages block-printed in colors, with several figures on each block depicting the scenes of the play. The fonts used for the quotations from "Hamlet" were obtained by Miss Stewart from a nineteenth century printing shop in Española.


The imported Japan paper prewar stock was acquired from Pantheon Books as a leftover from one of its publications. Printing was done on an Old Washington hand press. The silk screen cover was executed by Louie Ewing, and the binding was done by Patty Hare. With all these ingredients, plus patience, intelligence, good taste, and the creative joy of "doing," has come a book of exceptional beauty. Miss Stewart did all the drawings, and the whole production was accomplished, step by step, in her studio. She priced the book at \$25 and limited the edition to 100 copies.

This feat of Miss Stewart brings to mind fine hand-printing, which has been for years a facet of cultural activity in this rich little world of New Mexico. There are the Rydal Press; the Writers' Editions of Santa Fe directed by Haniel Long; *The Laughing Horse*, hand-set and printed in Taos by Spud Johnson on a press he still keeps in the back of his living room, as a memento of the Lawrence days; the various hand-press editions of art books on hand-made paper by Gustave Baumann of Santa Fe, *Chips and Shavings*, 1929 (100 copies), *Frijoles Canyon Pictographs*, 1939 (400 copies), and *Sketch Booklet*, 1949; the excellent job done by Joseph O'Kane Foster on his little Rancho Press, handsetting and printing on varicolored papers his own work, *The Great Montezuma*, 1940, which was exhibited in the "Five Hundred Years of Fine Printing" at the San Francisco World Fair; the volumes of verse of J. C.

Crews and others from The Motive Shop of Ranchos de Taos; the Southwest Editions which has just put out *San Cristobal Petroglyphs* by Agnes C. Sims; and surely many more which have escaped our notice.

Though of a different nature, it would be pertinent to mention here the hand-written textbook of art and commercial lettering by Ralph Douglass, just published in offset by Watson-Cuptill, and dedicated to the memory of Mr. Douglass' son, Donald Ralph Douglass, who was killed in the Battle of the Bulge. The work is done with great artistry and care.

 "LET'S LIVE A LITTLE" is the title of a new musical comedy by Leonard Pacheco of Belen, N. M., recently played to a packed house in Pasadena Sexson Auditorium. Young Mr. Pacheco is a music and voice major at the Pasadena City College. Its Student Christian Association produced the play, which includes thirteen songs with words and music by Mr. Pacheco, and a solo he composed for himself. Mr. Pacheco was bass soloist for "The Messiah" at Grace and Wilshire Presbyterian churches in Los Angeles with a joint chorus of 150 voices, and last fall had small parts in two operas by the San Francisco Opera Company at the Shrine Auditorium of Los Angeles.

 **GEORGE FITZPATRICK.** One of the most useful citizens in New Mexico is George Fitzpatrick. He had been reporter on


the *Erie Dispatch Herald* for three years before he came to New Mexico in 1927 to work for seven more years on the *Albuquerque Tribune*. In 1934 he became editor of the monthly *New Mexico Magazine*. Another man less experienced and less resourceful than George Fitzpatrick would have slept on the job, for the *New Mexico Magazine* was at the time a semi-official paper. Instead, he has built a magazine, still receiving support from the State Land Office, Department of Game and Fish, Highway Department and other more or less official sources of reporting and advertising, but editorially and financially independent. Its circulation of more than twelve thousand reaches every state in the Union and several foreign countries.

That, the organization of the annual E. H. Shaffer awards in journalism for New Mexico newspapermen and women, and his numerous articles on New Mexico subjects would have been enough to justify a career. But George Fitzpatrick has also been an active anthologist. Beginning with *Poems of New Mexico*, 1936, he followed with *New Mexico Home Plan Book*, 1940-46, *This Is New Mexico*, 1948, and finally *Pictorial New Mexico*, December 1949. The materials for these books, mostly reproduced from the magazine files, give a comprehensive account of our poets, artists, builders, writers, the land and its people—altogether an important contribution to the knowledge of the Sunshine State. His books "circulate" too. Of *This Is New Mexico*,

5,000 copies have been sold. And *Pictorial New Mexico* is doing quite well, according to reports.

### SPANISH FOLKLORE.


Marjorie F. Tully and Juan B. Rael have published *An Annotated Bibliography of Spanish Folklore in New Mexico and Southern Colorado*, UNM Press, 1950, \$1.00, 124 pages listing the published books and articles dealing with the subject. This is the first bibliography of its kind available to the students of this phase of Southwestern folklore. We understand that the authors will follow their admirable labor by preparing a supplement with folklore references in the general literature of the Southwest, and also, if possible, the large amount of material existing in manuscript form. For instance, the Mary Austin collection of papers, mentioned elsewhere in this section, has interesting manuscript materials, now accessible for research.

 PROPOSED MUSEUMS IN ALBUQUERQUE. The gift by Mrs. Julia Bottger Gallegos of a site for the proposed Historical Museum has just been announced. The land is located in Old Town and comprises approximately three city lots. It was at one time occupied by an old army barracks which was headquarters for General Philip Sheridan.

Long range plans of the Museum Committee of Albuquerque and the Old Albuquerque Historical Society call for three units: a historical and

art museum, a natural history and science museum, and an industrial museum. Tentative proposals have been made for a first museum unit to house objects and records already collected by the Old Albuquerque Historical Society, or materials in the possession of individuals who are willing to donate them. The new building will also provide sufficient space for exhibitions of contemporary art with a special section devoted to Indian arts and crafts.

The Historical Society has made arrangements to receive donations of articles, which will be carefully stored in a warehouse until the Museum is built. Those persons interested in adding to the Society's collections should contact Morris L. Kight, 606 North 12th Street, Albuquerque, telephone 3-2353.

 THOUGHT AND LITERATURE OF THE AMERICAS. With the establishment in 1948 of the Organization of American States—which is effectively helping to make the Pan American policy truly multilateral—a few significant activities in the cultural field have been undertaken. The Quarterly points with praise to one: the publication of the series of anthologies "Thought and Literature of the Americas" under the direction of the Division of Philosophy, Letters and Sciences of the Department of Cultural Affairs of the Pan American Union.

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SCPERs, in Mexico City, these attractive volumes are within the reach of any purse. The five titles so far published in the section "Escritores de América," under the general editorship of Ermilo Abreu Gómez, Mexican author, range in price from thirty-five cents to one dollar. They comprise selections from the works of Justo Sierra, Carlos Arturo Torres, Machado de Assis, Justo Arosemena and the *modernista* poets, with introductions, notes and bibliographies by distinguished critics.


First in the series "Pensamiento de América" is a volume of 374 pages (\$1.75), *La filosofía latinoamericana contemporánea*. This anthology, edited by the Argentine philosopher Aníbal Sánchez Reulet, with an introductory study of the life and work of each author, includes texts of twelve of the notable modern thinkers in Hispanic America.

A third series "La filosofía en América" is represented by monographs of Dr. Sánchez Reulet in honor of two great masters: *John Dewey, en sus noventa años*, and *Centenario de Varona*.

The Quarterly commends this series to the schools in our region where Spanish is taught, and to the many citizens who know the language. The Quarterly also hopes that the Pan American Union may eventually decide to prepare careful translations of these texts in English so that they may become standard teaching material in the schools of our country.

 **SPANISH TRANSLATION.** Under the title "Ayuda-Bosquejo del Sudoeste," a Spanish translation of "Relief—A Southwest Sketch," by Thomas Bledsoe, published in the Autumn 1949 issue of *NMQR*, appeared in the section "México en la Cultura," April 2, 1950, Sunday issue of the daily newspaper *Novedades* of Mexico. Preceding the text, there was a biographical note on Bledsoe. The translation was done by A. Cardona Lynch and G. Baqueiro Foster. Beltrán, one of the leading young artists of Mexico, contributed a fine drawing as illustration of the story.

 **SYMPOSIUM ON WRITING.** The *Western Review* has published in its Spring 1950 issue a symposium on "The Teaching and Study of Writing," by Allen Tate, Lionel Trilling, Eudora Welty, Walter Van Tilburg Clark, Malcolm Cowley and Wallace Stegner, together with an editorial "A University Writing Program," by Ray B. West, Jr. These pages contain much of interest for those concerned with improving the quality of our literary production.

 **COVER DESIGN.** The cover design of this issue, from an original wood engraving by Howard Cook, reproduced elsewhere in smaller size, is a symbol of the "Sun and Rays Over Mesa."

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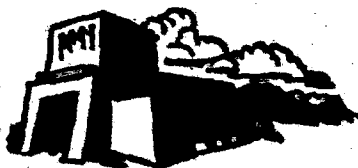
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