Summer 1948

The Carroll Quarterly, vol. 1, no. 3

John Carroll University

THE CARROLL Quarterly

VOLUME 1 SUMMER * 1948 NUMBER 3

25 Cents

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The Carroll Quarterly is published four times a year by an undergraduate staff at John Carroll University. Its purpose is to encourage literary expression among the students of the University. Articles may be contributed by members of the faculty, alumni, and students. Editorial Offices: John Carroll University, Cleveland 18, Ohio. 25 cents a copy, $1.00 a year.

Religion at John Carroll

By James J. McQuade, S.J.

I SHOULD like to begin this exposition of the place of the department of religion at John Carroll University somewhat after the manner of G. K. Chesterton, that is, by pointing out that John Carroll is a Catholic university. It has to be pointed out periodically for the simple reason, to continue the great Chestertonian theme, that it belongs to the category of the obvious—and the obvious is the most difficult of things to see.

Were I to launch out into a discussion of what a Catholic university is, I should be led too far afield. John Henry, Cardinal Newman has performed that feat, and it took him a whole book in which to do it. We shall simply accept what he has written and go on from there.

Some things, however, must be said about a Catholic university, and one of them is that it is Catholic. Catholicism is a name given to integral Christianity, to complete Christianity, to the whole of Christianity, nothing at all excepted and no reservations made. A Catholic university is one that is under the complete domination of the absolute truth of Catholicism.

Another obvious thing about a Catholic university is that the adjective, Catholic, modifies the noun, university, the whole university, no part of it excepted, no part of it independent of or outside of the permeating effects of Catholicism.

Finally there is the fact that a Catholic university is truly a university. It is universal in the scope of learning it wishes to impart. It enters by profession all the branches of study, and it seeks to bring them all together in the unity of objective truth. All the various colleges and schools of a university are one, simply because truth is one; and what is true in one department is true in another. What is true in the department of physics is true in the department of chemistry. The principles taught in philosophy are equally applicable to the field of biology or religion. A university must necessarily be a unity; it must act as *one*.

It is always amusing to one who is associated with a Catholic university to see that lack of any such unity in the non-sectarian institutions of education. When a department of biology is teaching science directly contrary to what is taught in the department of religion, we must be pardoned for concluding that they have either a stupid department of religion or a stupid department of biology. We might, indeed, say that they have two stupid departments and let it go at that. The "academic freedom" that tolerates such stupidity can only be freedom; it cannot be academic.

A university embraces all the fields of learning, and all the fields of learning make up the university—another obvious matter made difficult by its own transparency. Each department must take its place in the hierarchy of learning that makes up the university as a whole. The departments are for the university. Their existence is due to an administrative arrangement made to increase the efficiency whereby the university carries on its work: the discovery and the imparting of truth.

And there is a hierarchy of studies. Some branches have material of greater dignity; others, objects of lesser dignity. Life as studied in biology, for instance, is a subject

more noble than the mere inanimate elements which make up the matter of the study of chemistry. Also, some branches attain to certitude in their pursuit of truth, an accomplishment which gives them a certain higher standing than others which often deal almost entirely in matters of opinion and probability. The metaphysical certitude attained in philosophy, for instance, is of a higher order than the physical certitudes attained in physics. This latter, in turn, is of a higher order than the certitudes which are attained in much of history and sociology, whereas others still are concerned largely with matters of opinion, such as literary criticism or political science.

Theology, however, attains a certitude that is above that of any other science, the certitude of faith, and deals with an object that is above every other object: God Himself.

We do not have a department of theology at John Carroll. We have a department of religion. The distinction, obvious though it be, must not be missed. It is somewhat like the distinction between a medical school and a department of physical hygiene. The medical school provides the tools for medical research and leads its students to a professional and scientific attitude toward human health. A department of hygiene, on the other hand, leads its students to a practical knowledge of the personal applications of the larger study of medicine in the formation of good health habits. In the same way a school of theology provides its students with the tools of theological research and leads them to a professional and scientific attitude toward the investigation and explanation of the deposit of faith, whereas a department of religion brings its students to a knowledge of the practical application of the science of theology in the whole of the student's relationship to God, which is the field of religion. Its function is to point out the way to good health habits in the spiritual sense, with a solid intellectual motivation for the formation of a truly Catholic character.

A corollary to the above distinction is most significant. It regards the place occupied by religion in the hierarchy of studies. There is no doubt that a School of Theology should take its place at the head of all the academic groups. It is superior not only in the object of its intent but also in the degree of its certitude. This, however, is far from putting the department of religion at the head of all the groups that make up John Carroll University. Our university is composed of all the departments in the College

of Arts and Sciences and the School of Business, Economics, and Government. This college and this school have primary aims of their own, and both fuse into the over-all purpose of the university. Each and every department in college and school is to make its contribution relative to the whole, and the hierarchy of departments is determined by the dignity and importance of the contribution it makes to the common good of the college, school, and university.

What, it may be asked, are the dignity and importance of the contribution which the department of religion makes to the common good here at Carroll? Certainly we may not claim for the department of religion the function of infusing the university with the spirit of Catholicism. Such a claim would be utter nonsense. It would be equivalent to saying that a Catholic university is equal to a non-sectarian university plus a religion department. No, the Catholicism of John Carroll does not come from a department dealing with Catholicism, but from the whole Mystical Body of Christ of which the faculty and student body are members. It comes from that divine life of grace flowing out of God through Christ into us all. It is the common assent to the whole creed, code, and cult of Catholicism that makes Carroll a Catholic university.

Certainly, again, we may not claim for the department of religion the supreme dignity that comes from the fact that it deals with man's supreme destiny. Any such claim would be the greatest possible insult to the other departments of the institution. It would be the equivalent to saying that they do not make a positive contribution toward leading the students to their supreme destiny. It would be, indeed, a vain and stupid claim, for it is precisely the nature of a Catholic university that as a whole and in every part it be so designed and so conducted as to aid men positively to the attainment of the Beatific Vision.

Actually, however, the dignity and importance of the department of religion are very modest. It is, as it were, a special auxiliary of the university, aiding the whole, wherever and whenever it can, in the grand general purpose of the institution: the imparting of wisdom and the discovery of truth, the achievement of a higher education in harmony with the ideals of Christian humanism.

The position of the department of religion is somewhat like that of a group of state department executives sent to the department of defense in the interests of improving the efficiency of operation. In the Cabinet, it is true, the state department takes precedence over the department of national defense, but the group of executives and their special program may well not have the highest priority among all the projects of the Army. It is not theirs to infuse the Army with the spirit of America. If that is not there already, the whole cause would be lost from the start. It is somewhat in this manner that the professors of religion, each one of them a product of a School of Theology, function in the academic life of John Carroll University. Theology would, indeed, take precedence over a College of Arts and Sciences or a School of Business, Economics, and Government, but the special program of this specialized group of theologians in the department of religion would not necessarily have absolute priority in such a college or school. It is not theirs to infuse the whole with Catholicism. If Catholicism does not already pervade the whole, the cause of Catholic higher education is indeed lost.

What, then, is the specialized program of the department of religion? What is its positive contribution toward the imparting of wisdom and the discovery of truth, toward the achievement of a higher education in harmony with the ideals of Christian humanism?

By way of answer to the above questions, a beginning may be made by pointing out another obvious fact: a student makes great progress in learning in his four years at John Carroll. He acquires in the course of his studies not only a great amount of information, but also some facility in the use of the tools of learning. His advance in all this is tremendous. History, languages, philosophy, economics,

and all the other branches are unfolded before his maturing mind. He is coming to full maturity in all these fields. Therein, however, lies a hidden danger. It is the danger of unbalance. Unbalance of any sort is repugnant to the ideals of Christian humanism. Such phenomena as graduate engineers who cannot write a correct letter, as medical men to whom the name of Shakespeare means only the 1936 football season at Notre Dame are foreign to the concept of Catholic education. How much more repugnant it is to that same ideal were a student to graduate in biology, chemistry, or business administration without a corresponding maturity in the grasp of his religion, it is not difficult to see. Whereas all the departments of the university do their best to impart the proper Catholic values and appreciations in their respective fields, there is need of more. It is the function of the department of religion to offer such courses and to conduct such projects as will guarantee an advance in religious knowledge corresponding to the advance made in specialized fields.

This auxiliary function of the department of religion leads it into every other department of the university. Throughout the whole field of education it is to present, in its courses conducted for the various units of the institution, Catholic doctrine, morality, and worship in so intelligent and appreciative a fashion as will result in a marked influence upon the practical lives of our graduates. In trying to maintain a religious training proportionate to the training in all other branches, it aims at clarifying the moral concepts of the student, at imparting correct moral principles, and at training the student in the formation of correct moral judgments. The whole program of the university calls upon it to provide the student with a ready knowledge of the reasonable arguments upon which his faith is founded and to impart a fuller understanding of the dogmas of that same faith. As the student advances into upper division work in other fields, the religion courses are conducted to provide him with opportunities for arriving at some knowledge of scientific theology, to present the social aspects of Catholicism on the more mature level, and to impart as far as possible an appreciation of Catholicism as a culture.

The department of religion at John Carroll University is most fortunate in the light of another very obvious fact: that the university itself is in a vital and growing stage of development. It can look forward to participation in the great period of develop-

ment with and in the university. This expansion and further growth will take place primarily in the field of upper division work. Already it is possible to major in religion or to have a minor in it where the major is a related field of study. Its most immediate development will probably be in the direction of courses in the religious aspects of sociology and philosophy, of courses in the cultural aspects of religion, as, for example, in the literature of Sacred Scripture, in the influence of Catholicism in Western Civilization, in Catholic poetry, drama, and art. In all the fields of intellectual endeavor wherein the growing university will enter, there, too, the department of religion will follow with correlative courses.

Among the many present-day manifestations of future possibilities is one that augurs well for the growth of the department of religion and for the whole university in general. It is the evident stirring of the beginnings of the movement of Catholic Action in the United States. The Catholic layman under the inspiration of the repeated exhortations of the Holy Father is beginning to respond to the invitation to participate in the apostolate of the hierarchy. If such participation is to be intelligent, it will create a demand for laymen more highly trained in Catholicism and its application to life than were formerly needed. We shall have more and more such laymen consecrating their lives to the advance of Catholic Action. For the department of religion this demand is forming the challenge of the future.

Sonnet

My heart weeps for my Saviour, and my tears
Are tears of bitter sorrow and regret;
'Twas I who crucified Him. Through the years
That memory I never shall forget.
I, who before His tabernacle knelt
And whispered of my love with bated breath;
I, who His tender mercy always felt,
'Twas I who did condemn Him to His death.
A traitor in my heart, I spilled His blood
Two thousand years before I saw the day;
Two thousand years cannot erase the flood
Of guilt which leaves its stigma on my clay.
Through me He died upon the hallowed steep;
And I, His murderer, can only weep.

—*W. J. Roscelli*

Jazz—
An Evaluation

By Emil A. Jeancola

FOR approximately seventy-five years, American popular music has exhibited certain characteristic symptoms which have given it a place in the popular music of the world. During the past quarter century or so, this popular music has been known as jazz. Jazz, as pure music, is a synthesis of European and African music and has become a form of music peculiar to America. In certain aspects it is indicative of the individualistic psychology of the typical American. Like the pioneers of America, jazz and its followers have proceeded along their own trails, enduring hardships, making novel adjustments, and, more often than not, displaying a tendency to disregard precedent and tradition: employing a pragmatic outlook, they have erected their own standards. To the jazz musician an art which demands obedience and strict adherence to pre-conceived forms is something alien. Freedom, unbridled freedom, the mercurial and the undefineable—these are his norms, in a negative sense, for musical activity.

Our society which boasts of, and continues to evolve, such peculiarly American achievements as the sky-scraper, an almost hysterical baseball mania, and the childish, saccharine "romantic motion-picture" has found its depository of musical expression in the nebulous and flux jazz idiom. Utilizing the axiom "bigger and better," the American proceeds to construct his architecture, not with an eye to permanence, but to practicability. The present sky-scraper will give way to a subsequent structure which also will possess merely a greater degree of their common attribute: large dimension and an atmosphere of incompletion. Contrast this idea of construction with a classic example of architecture: the Greek temple, or a mediaeval monument. The temple and monument are complete within themselves, having an aura of contentment, of achievement, whereas the sky-scraper awaits its inevitable rejection; for its temporary existence rests not upon considerations of form, but only upon the limitations of contemporary engineering science. So with jazz and jazz musicians—nothing more than temporary links in an unending process. Both the sky-scraper and the jazz performance conclude, not because of artistic climax, but only as the result of their common defect: neither possesses proportion, whether in steel and concrete, or in musical logic.

In contrasting American jazz and the traditional classical composition, one discovers that inasmuch as both are music, the basic difference is tantamount to a difference in essence. The complexus of the traditional European composition is constructed upon organized sound, according to a preconceived form. It is a channel through which intellectual music is passed from one chronological period to another. The musical messengers have been, for the most part, gifted individuals who exploited their natural talents in an effort to lend greater appeal and to insure the quality of permanence to their finished product. Compare this to the exponents of jazz, the musical sleep-walkers, who, although praised by their more rabid claques as "creative geniuses" by means of

vague and often ambiguous phraseology, are in reality often nothing more than simple-minded honky-tonk charlatans.

The argument against the institution of jazz as an art is that it possesses no essentials or attributes of art. It is not an intellectual endeavor, but is primarily an emotional, impulsive urge of expression, at its best only when injected unexpectedly. It contains little, if any, worth and quality in the intellectual order of music, and cannot be considered as an example of musical craftsmanship. Jazz is a participative function, one which precludes intellectual contemplation, demanding a denial of social and psychological barriers, and is basically a musical invitation to mass, impulsive, emotional expression.

The vogue of jazz eulogization has brought about a trend in which jazz has been placed upon a pedestal as the long-neglected victim of a sneering musical artistocracy. The proponents of the jazz idiom have done their utmost (invading even the concert auditorium) to publicize it through the mediums of radio, literature, records. The jazz boom has had tremendous popularity because of the enormous but misguided following that it enjoys. To explain this fact is quite difficult, but it must be admitted that as a phenomenon in American society jazz has been and is most successful. What is this Jazz? Definitely, it is not intellectual music. Is it folk-music? As music it is, but it differs radically from any other folk music in the known history of mankind in so far as its effects upon the people of its locale are unique. Has any other folk music in past world history, or in any contemporary folk music, to the exclusion of the Americas, ever produced such inane and singular psychopathic effects amongst its people that caused them to conceive a "tongue" by which jazz was to be given a terminology? The existence of a conclave of jazz addicts mouthing such gibberish as "alligator" and "you're hep to the jive" is indicative of the proportions to which the jazz craze has extended itself. There can be no doubt that our land is unique, in so far as this "folk music" is the backbone of half-a-dozen nation-wide recording and publishing industries. The jazz age is certainly without precedent.

The jazz "aesthetes" have attempted to classify jazz as the American contribution to musical literature, yet it is nigh impossible to erect a standard by which traditional classical music may be compared with jazz and vice-versa. There is no standard by which a symphony concert may be adjudicated in respect to a jazz program. The event of a jazz "concert" at Carnegie Hall merely demonstrates that such an uninhibited mass *musicale* may be given in such staid environs. The jazz-addict who acclaims the Carnegie Hall Jazz Concert as an epoch in musical progress is only suffering a mental misconception which might aptly be termed *musical myopia.*

Although many fine musical organizations composed of men classified as "jazzmen" do exist, they readily admit that jazz cannot be played from a musical score, inasmuch as the essence of jazz is spontaniety and emotion. This has served to dampen, to a limited degree, the ardor of the more enthusiastic jazz aesthetes who have endeavored to herald the arrival of an American jazz-classicism. The vague and futile efforts by which the erratic ensemble of a jazz "jam session" is described as "counterpoint," and the inability of an incompetent "ride-man" to improvise in keeping with concurrent harmonic progressions are avidly spoken of as "new ideas" and "atonality." The jazz storm-troopers are bending all efforts to the conclusive projection of music which is basically primitive and emotional into the recital hall with an audience which is expected to prostrate its musical intellectualism before the new deity—Jazz.

The hope of utilizing jazz in conjunction with the traditional classical forms, such as the sonata and concerto, has been the *idee-fixee* of many an ambitious American composer who envisioned, by doing so, the birth of an American jazz-classicism. What few efforts in this direction have been attempted, have been notable failures, even Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, which is neither jazz nor

jazz-classicism, but a musical misfit. The obvious reason for these failures is that the attempted union of a strict traditional form with jazz is a musical contradiction. The use of improvisation, which is an integral part of jazz, is incompatible with a form that requires logical development of themes into an organized structure. Actually, the few compositions that combined strict form with jazz produced nothing more than a piece with jazz-like particles revolving around a classical nucleus. If any argument to the contrary exists, it may possibly be in the quaint, highly successful, and somewhat jazzy folk-opera *Porgy and Bess*. Gershwin's effort, however, is a folk opera with a Negro setting and, as such, becomes a highly specialized opera, if opera at all. Efforts to use this idiom in connection with traditional dramatic opera would be quite absurd.

That there exists, between jazz and the classical forms of music, an unbridgeable chasm which defies any attempt to reconcile these two musical forms of expression is quite evident. In order to comprehend this difference, one must consider the aesthetic nature of jazz. Jazz, pure jazz, is folk-music, or a variety of folk music. The distinction between folk music and art music is clearly defined, almost to the degree of the absolute. Folk music is a musical pollen which springs up anywhere, having no intellectual direction, is anything but complex, and has no purpose other than to make a simple, direct appeal to the emotions. Its melody is such that it may hold the interest of the most untutored peasant, wholly unconcerned with music as an art. But folk music does not possess the one ingredient which is necessary for any possible consideration as art music: the creative talents and techniques of a musical mind, to which intellectual criticism may be leveled.

Art music, however, commences at the point where folk music terminates. It represents the effort of a trained musical mind and bears the musical signature of the composer in his own distinct style. The traditions of art music are the result of many centuries of logical musical development and, as such, are the musical highpoints of the most gifted musical minds. Art music is no wildflower, but a carefully cultivated musical seed. One may prefer the wide meadows of folk music, abundant with wild flower tunes. That is one's privilege. But if that be so, one is not concerned with music as a fine art; it is absurd to consider the musical wildflower as a masterpiece of horticultural skill.

Therefore, such statements as "I'd rather hear New Orleans-style jazz than *Rigoletto*"

or "I prefer Toscanini to Woody Herman" are not critical nor evaluative remarks. One may prefer an automobile to a boxing-match —an understandable preference, but certainly meaningless to a boxing enthusiast. "But wait a moment, doesn't jazz possess melody, rhythm, and harmony, and aren't these attributes of art music?" Certainly; but the uses to which these attributes are put differ greatly. Jazz harmony is confined to four or five monotonous patterns which merely serve as a buttress to support the florid improvisations of the soloist. The patterns never demand creative ingenuity. Rhythmically, jazz consists of four-four and two-four time, and the most striking effects are the result of chance rather than thought.

In its melodic content, jazz may be attractive, but like any folk melody it is amoebic rather than of the organized type. Simple tunes and not themes constitute jazz melody. They are, within themselves, as basic and simple as one-celled animals. They may be utilized with embellishments and ornamentation, but possess no potential capacity to be evolved into higher forms. Conversely, art music may stem from an insignificant little *motif*, but it may be evolved into a complex and gigantic organism. Cell for cell, the jazz tune may contain more melody than art music. The melody of the average blues tune is much more appealing than the triad upon which Beethoven constructed his *Fifth Symphony;* but after one hears the blues tune, there it is, a pleasing musical amoeba. Contrast this to Beethoven who took his now well known "V for Victory" theme and molded it into a monumental masterpiece with the elements of dramatic climax and aesthetic emotion.

To be sure, there is a great amount of "concert" and "operatic" material which is related to folk music, and at times hardly rises above that level. Brahms' Hungarian dances, some ballet tunes, and the like all come in this category. But concert society is well aware of this, and does not level serious criticism at them because these tunes are not the spinal cord of the art music structure. Classified as "semi-popular," they do not belong to musical art.

Probably the most striking negative aspect of jazz is its lack of evolutionary development. Jazz is as it was in its inception. Its history is devoid of any development along technical lines, and its primitive formulas are still the basis for jazz as it is today. Contrasted to art music, jazz remains impotent. Art music, however, presents a long line of structural development throughout the centuries, having many techniques to mark its milestones along the road of musical progress.

In the aspect of performance, jazz is able to register a few positive claims. Quite often its performers are virtuosi, gifted with remarkable technical powers, and exhibiting diverse styles. The jazz performance does have its appeal in so far as a peculiar type of excitement may be derived from its projection. This excitement differs radically, however, from the excitement one experiences at a concert recital. In the recital hall one almost engages in a sport in addition to an art. There exists a peculiar exhilaration as one hears the concert artist negotiate preestablished obstacles, as he displays his artistry with consummate skill. It is like witnessing a juggler perform a remarkable feat of balance and co-ordination. These elements are utterly lacking in jazz. There are no obstacles, no demanding or precise tests of artistry. Dependent upon his mood, it is quite possible that the jazz virtuoso may display exceptional technique and taste. But if technique and taste appear spontaneously, part of it is lost as the result of spontaneity, which generally is caused by unexpected emotion and, occasionally by accident.

The most significant pecularity of jazz, as contrasted to art music, is its limited range of emotional vocabulary. As a musical language it is colorful and delineating, but in the field of poetics it is as rich as "broken" English. Appealing mostly to the motor impulses, it never attains the aesthetical emotions. If it approaches the emotional, it does so in so far as it is representative of a few basic tendencies and moods—sexual excitement, sorrow (blues), and unbridled

exhilaration. It never speaks of tragedy, romantic nostalgia, grandeur, patriotism, or of humanitarianism. Certainly, a jazz rendition of Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloe*, or Debussy's *L'Apres-Midi d'un Faune* would impose considerable demands upon the expressive powers of jazz, besides subjecting an audience to an extreme test of patience.

The preceding discussion of jazz may appear somewhat biased in so far as its deficiencies in respect to art music are clearly defined. But a clarification of what jazz is and can be, may somehow lift the veil of vague conjecture and talk which has enshrouded it for many years. Unfortunately, excessive commercialization has taken jazz, which is folk-music, out of the shanty-towns and bayous and projected it into the everyday life of America. Like any folk music and verbal dialect, it was the inevitable result of isolation from intellectual and cultural progress and was the expression of simple and uneducated people. Its extreme commercialization, however, has produced the polish of a trained hand to rob it of its original vitality, and consequently it has been "retouched" and "remade" for the express purpose of catering to the huge market of the American public.

Jazz does not possess the intellectual and poetic magnitude to be considered as worthy to enter the ranks of the concert and operatic arts, but as a "popular" and "folk" music it possesses a vitality and originality which supersedes that of not a few concert compositions which are played in present times. Its future lies in the direction of its appeal to the masses as a whole, rather than to a few musical savants. It is primarily an expression of people, and not of an intellectual musical genius, and, as such, its future is assured. It will remain with the people through whom it is rapidly being extended throughout the world, and, furthermore, it may eventually be recognized universally as the American contribution to a fun-loving and appreciative world.

How May I Describe My Love?

Oh, how may I describe the molten tide
That is my love, by anything men know?
What ocean flows so deep, or rolls so wide?
What soaring song is born, what flowers grow,
What sharp pains throb, where lies a lustrous pearl
That can compare? Perhaps this dream be it
Thyself a glowing star, my love the whorl
That trains in ceaseless rapture round its source—
And yet such words as these are poor, dumb things,
And false as heaven's drifting, phantom dome;
For even stars grow dark and lose their wings.
The light that clung to them dissolves in foam,
Then dies in mist. My love for thee shall gleam
With silvery fire through an immortal dream.

—*Louis Sacriste*

Poem

I walked on the pier
At midnight
When the black foundations
Were geometric and abstract,
And the only sound was that of fish
Seeking the stars and falling back
Into the water.

I walked on the wooden pier
At daybreak
When a common fishing boat
Was transformed by spell of the sun
Into a gilded galley from dead Ophir.

I saw the dark green of the coast
Diluted with mist
From the cold ladle of dawn.

I saw the gleaming splashes
Of the wax magnolia,
And the great stinging pines
That rose up in the sky
And needled the night.

But when I came upon first love
Sitting at the window of a white house,
The pier rotted,
The sea stretched into desolation,
The magnolias and pines
Had the odor of death about them.

Then I threw myself upon the red clay
And clung to it
And pressed myself to it
Because my love was part of it—
But I could not possess it.

I shall be hungry for red clay
Many years of my life.

— *Louis Sacriste.*

Glint of hair,
Shape of fingers,
Curve of mouth:
Something lingers

Coloring thought
Long, long after,
Drawing dreams,
Muting laughter.

Strange, that face
Of utter stranger
Carry so much
Delicate danger.

Six

By LOUI

You are white flame
Frozen in ice,
You are thin fire held
In crystal vise.

I cannot shatter
The glittering wall,
And cannot feel you
Yet at all.

But when the mold cracks,
And that not long,
You shall sear in kisses,
And burn in song.

I waited long
For sign of shoot,
But the seed, I guess,
Withered at root.

You were the rain,
And the sun was you,
But the rain withheld
And the sun withdrew.

So much inside
The fragment seed!
A forest unborn
Is loss indeed.

ABOUT

Louis J. Sacriste is by birth
Entrance to Carroll followed
School. He received his A. B
Service in the Army took him
In London he was given by H.
ume of poems by the famous I
from him later. Following mili
England Conservatory of Mus
composer. Recently returned to
ing on a concerto. The poems
of his collegiate years, when n
from the possibility of pursuin

Poems

SACRISTE

I ask one thing only
Of friend:
That our pigments
Never blend,

That the primary colors
Remain
Unmixed, without streak
Or stain,

That no common brush
Ever tend
To work disparate daubs
Of mind.

I would have purchased life,
But told of price,
Grew quite content again
With old device.

I would have ransomed love,
But learning cost,
Knew, instantly advised,
It were better lost.

And there was no reproof
In any wise—
But one day Someone came and laid
Two pennies on my eyes.

Much ends with you
And much begins,
Debasing charities
And shining sins.

You offer touchstone
For all decision,
A need for experiment
And for revision.

I renounce and accept,
And if I err,
I shall bow to damnation
As idolater.

AUTHOR

an, by rearing a Clevelander. ion from St. Ignatius High member of the class of 1943. land, France, and Germany. original manuscript of a vol- only to have the prize stolen rvice he enrolled at the New oston, planning a career as a eland, he is at present work- by the *Quarterly* are the fruit ad not completely won him rary career.

The Philosophy of Inconsequentialism

By Terence Martin

SEVERAL days ago I was the happy recipient of a note of correspondence from the noted philosopher of today, Euclice Nawlege, whose home at the South Pole has happily proved apt for reflective thinking and creative philosophy. It is now twenty-seven years since Nawlege took up residence at the South Pole, where, in solitary meditation, he hoped to find the ultimate truths for which men have long sought. That this time has not been spent in vain can be easily seen from a perusal of Nawlege's letter.

In these twenty-seven years his philosophy has solidified in his mind, and has become a reality on paper. In the future it will become a living, breathing organism through which men may find peace: the dynamic, yet never changing system of thought by which thought itself will be eliminated from the universe.

Yes, Nawlege has fulfilled his destiny. He has given to the world the New Philosophy, more important that Idealism, Materialism, or Existentialism, broader in its scope than anything in the history of mankind, more powerful than power itself, the self-sustaining driving force which he proudly calls Inconsequentialism.

Paradoxically, Inconsequentialism, the system of pure truth, is a simple philosophy easily grasped by all. Its author, Nawlege himself, has often said, "There's nothing to it," and this will become evident as I explain its tenets.

Nawlege begins with a free consideration of free will. He does not deny its existence, as has been done in the past, but merely postulates the principle that "every person has a limited amount of free will." The implications arising from this doctrine are evident. When this "amount" of free will has been used a person can no longer restrain himself, and becomes, in effect, a member of the brute animal kingdom. We are therefore cautioned against using our free will too early in life, and it is Nawlege's own suggestion that we refrain from making any use of it until we reach the age of forty. Then we shall still possess full control over ourselves, and shall have a much greater chance of dying as we will.

There is one inherent difficulty in this doctrine which requires further explanation, and here I shall bow to the words of Nawlege himself, for nowhere is he more clear than on this point:

> If one wills to use his free will, it is as much an evil as using his free will. Though the will must not be used, the repression of it cannot itself be willed. In other words, one must be careful not even to will not to will not to use his free will.

In the brilliant passage quoted above, Nawlege gives us one of the three major ideas of his Inconsequentialism.

The second of these ideas is a denial of something which we take very much for granted . . . the present. Inconsequentialism

denies the existence of the present, claiming that, "the transition from future to past is instantaneous, and does not admit of the fictitious middle ground which is termed 'the present'."

Once again we can clearly perceive the logical outcome of such a principle, for a person never really "commits" an act; he only "will commit" it, or "has committed" it. And no moralist could hold a person responsible for an act which he never commits, even if it has been committed. The conclusion is evident: there is no such thing as culpability, no responsibility of any kind on the part of a person. All this because of the elimination of the present, never before called into question by the pseudo-philosophers of the past.

To those who might possibly raise an objection at this point, claiming that there is an inconsistency between the doctrine of limited free will and the principle of the excluded present, Nawlege has a ready answer, a defence of his whole system of Inconsequentialism. Since he has always been fond of Logic, he places his proof in syllogistic form, as follows: "Either I am consistent, or I am not consistent. I am not consistent, therefore, I am consistent."

Having thus firmly established the first two essential ideas of his Inconsequentialism, Nawlege proceeds to outline his third point, which deals effectively with evolution.

Nawlege is convinced that the evolutionary hypotheses which have evolved in the last few centuries are completely in error, and his theory is the first of its kind to be formally considered in philosophic circles. This particular theory is termed Nostalgic Evolution, for the truths it contains inevitably make one sad. The crux of his argument is that the whole universe is on continuous retrogression, and that ultimately the world will cease revolving, and all beings on the earth will become inorganic beings. His reasoning supporting this theory is cogent, and I shall again quote directly so as not to lose any of the fine points contained in the original thesis.

> When the Second Cause (Nawlege denies the possibility of reasoning to a First Cause) created the world, He gave it a spin that started it revolving. Now it is only common sense that friction will eventually slow any moving object down and eventually bring it to a stop, and that is exactly what will occur to the earth.
>
> The case of man is analogous. He was created good and given a set of rules to live by. Not to live by these rules was to degrade himself. So, man slowly and surely has degraded himself, and he will continue to do so until he is merely an animal.

Thus in part runs the reasoning behind the theory of Nostalgic Evolution, contained in the philosophy of Inconsequentialism.

Though not exactly optimistic, Nawlege is more of a realist than a pessimist. Knowing that an effect cannot exceed its cause, he has mapped the only logical evolutionary theory, for if the world cannot go up it must go down.

Thus runs the philosophy of Inconsequentialism, a philosophy, a system of thought, and a way of life to all who study it. Its three major tenets, the doctrine of Limited Free Will, the principle of the Excluded Present, and the theory of Nostalgic Evolution, mark the beginning of a definite trend in philosophic thought.

Its author? Well, Euclice Nawlege has set himself apart from the majority of the world's philosophers. He is fearlessly going to live by the philosophy he has created.

Oh, yes. I almost forgot to mention the postscript scribbled with apparent haste at the end of Nawlege's letter. He is going to remain at the South Pole.

Theatre

MEDEA

OF all the ladies of evil intent who have raged through the pages of literature and drama, wreaking death and destruction to friend and foe alike, awesome recognition must surely be accorded Medea, the ancient Greeks' version of the fiendish female. Despite the fact that Euripedes, the author of *Medea* was awarded merely a third prize for his play when he first presented it in 431 B.C.; in October of last year, before the traditional audience of unimpressionable sophisticates and hard-faced critics, *Medea* came off—and deservedly so—with rave notices. The reason for all this acclaim and approbation was apparently the presence of Judith Anderson in the title role. As Medea, Miss Anderson caused phrases like "her greatest performance" and "surpasses all her previous work" to come rattling off the critics' typewriters.

Sharing the approval was the California poet, Robinson Jeffers, the man who had undertaken the work of creating an English adaptation of Euripides' original. Mr. Jeffers accomplished his purpose admirably; that he had Miss Anderson specifically in mind before he began his work was evident, and their joint reward was well deserved and obviously hard earned. The actress and the writer of this modern *Medea* created a play which from the first desperate cry of the beginning scene to the awesome triumph at the last, is a glowing, compelling characterization.

Before *Medea* is completed, Miss Anderson, demon-like, murderous, and without mercy, devises a fiery death for her rival in love, slays her own children, and leaves her husband "hopeless, friendless, mateless, childless, avoided by gods and men."

The play has all the wizardry of modern stagecraft at its best—the costuming, the lighting, the musical effects, the setting—each of which is magnificent in itself. Add those advantages to a piece of drama which has survived from antiquity and which is acted by a truly great artist, and *Medea*'s success is not something unexpected. The appeal to any audience was all there, as it was from the first—a woman deeply, almost unreasonably in love, the man suddenly faithless; the insatiable, almost mad urge for vengeance; the resultant action, which with Media took a hideous form. Because of that resultant action the appeal of the drama in the situation is even further intensified. The Greek dramatists were aware of this; so were Miss Anderson and Mr. Jeffers, and their success is proof of it.

William V. Ryan

Program Notes

THE ORIGIN OF OPERA

IN any attempt to give a brief historical account of the main elements which have contributed to the development of such a conglomerate product as present day opera there must necessarily be a great deal of over-simplification and reduction; otherwise little more than a confusion and an abundance of words would result.

Just as opera itself is a thing of diversity and contrast, so the theories for its origin and growth are varied and, to some degree, conflicting. On certain predominant elements, however, most of these explanations agree, the disagreement being in the amount of importance attributed to each element. This account will consist chiefly in setting down these principal ingredients.

Opera, in essentially the same form as we have it today, made its formal debut in 1600 A.D., but actually had existed in other forms from the days of the ancient Hellenic civilization. At that time the art of the drama itself had originated, growing out of the Dionysiac festivities, and reaching its zenith from 500 to 400 B.C. in the plays of Aeschylus, Euripedes, and Sophocles. These plays, which were performed by a chorus and not more than three actors, can rightly be called operas because they presented drama in a musical form. All of the dialogue was uttered rhythmically and was musically inflected to the accompaniment of lyres and flutes. This was true folk drama of the highest order in which the arts of poetry, music, and dancing were given proportionate prominence in order to insure total dramatic effect.

Following the ascendancy of the Roman Empire, music-drama began a gradual decline. The pleasure-loving and rather vain Romans desired "variety" type entertainment with the accent on pomp and vulgarity. Their best dramas, the plays of Plautus and Terence, were imitations of Greek comedies, and the rest of their theater consisted mainly of mimes and pantomimes in which music played only an incidental part. After the fall of Rome, music-drama went into almost a total eclipse and was not revived until towards the close of the Middle Ages.

The Catholic Church was the dominant factor in this revival. Beginning by embellishing the Mass with simple rituals, done to chanted responses, or tropes, which depicted the events of the great feasts, the Church elaborated her services until complete sequences, or plays, were performed for each of the major feasts. Music was an integral part of these rites, all the action being performed to Gregorian chant. Later, growing too profane and cumbersome, these productions were moved outside the Church where their production was taken over by the guilds, thereby losing most of their musical significance.

At this same time the rise of vernacular languages coupled with the growing spirit of individualism fostered folk expression in literature and music and resulted in, among other things, a few authentic folk operas such as the pastoral *Robin and Marian* of Adam de la Hale in 1260. With their great *trionfi*, or municipal celebrations, which combined pageantry, poetry, music, and dancing, the new class of merchant nobility also found a type of expression wherein they could release their dramatic feelings.

So as the Renaissance drew near, secularly and religiously, almost all levels of society were indulging in some kind of dramatic expression. This general awareness and interest in drama, more than any other aspect of its development, paved the way for the Italian opera which then appeared. In Florence, in 1600, *Eurydice* was written by the composer Peri, a member of a group

of nobles who had been studying the plays of the ancients in an attempt to "revive the just designs of Greece" in drama. This opera, the first for which we have the preserved score, consisted of long accompanied recitatives, done in the Greek style wherein the voice followed the natural declamation of the word but with no purely melodic singing.

Peri's aim, and that of the men immediately following him, was to write musical dramas in which the elements in their order of importance would be "first word, then rhythm, then tone": an objective which they achieved by departing from the involved contrapuntal style of composition popular at that time.

For a time, well balanced music dramas were produced in which all the arts of the theater were equally represented. Monteverdi, coming after Peri, was one of opera's greatest composers, who in his *Orpheus* in 1608 created a lasting masterpiece. This work used a thirty-four-piece orchestra, had rich harmonies, beautiful arias, and for the first time introduced pizzicato and tremolo effects in the strings.

After Monteverdi, developments crowded thick and fast upon each other, but an operatic decline began. Starting with Cavalli (1599?-1676), operatic composers, bowing to public opinion, concentrated increasingly on producing crowd-pleasing music rather than honest drama. Cesti, Scarlatti, Cambert, Lully, and many others all helped to make opera the ornate, rococo thing which Gluck, Mozart, and Beethoven reformed at a later time.

The history of opera has been punctuated by contrasting periods of grandeur and decline. Modern operatic composers seem content to imitate the creations of Mozart, Verdi, and Wagner; indeed departures from the old tradition are so rare as to be significant despite their artistic mediocrity. Yet it is possible to foresee a reemergence of great opera in the not too far distant future—opera which will break the shackles which now seem to supress its expression. For opera is of all musical forms the most intimate and powerful; it alone combines the drama of life with the beauty of tonal harmony.

—*John J. McCudden*

RECORDINGS

Beethoven: *Sonata in F minor, Op. 57, Appassionata*

For several seasons now Rudolf Serkin has been generally regarded as the premier interpreter of Beethoven's piano works. Nor is this acclamation unmerited, for, with the possible exception of Schnobel, no other pianist on the concert stage today is possessed of such a deep understanding and poetic appreciation of this music. His concert performances of the Sonatas are characterized by a careful delineation of detail, a rich tonal coloring, and a flawless technique. The sustained lofty calibre of his rendition has caused his audiences to accept his Beethoven readings as definitive. It is therefore rather disconcerting to report that in his recent recording of the *Appassionata* Serkin fails to scale the musical heights as had been anticipated. His presentation, however enjoyable, appears to lack the essential interpretative fire which inspires both soloist and audience.

The *Appassionata* demands supreme technical and interpretative efforts from the performer if it is to achieve its true emotional and intellectual effects, and in this recording Serkin does not seem to put forth his greatest efforts. He is adequate, he is edifying; but he is not inspiring. He does not thrill his audience as he has so often done in concerts—in a word, he does not reach the heart of the music. Perhaps he lacked the stimulation afforded by a visible audience; perhaps the recording itself failed to capture the delicate shadings of interpretation. Whatever the cause, this recording is not Serkin or Beethoven at their respective peaks. Columbia 711.

London Calling

By Richard Christopher

OPERATOR: London calling!! We are now continuing the news bulletin since half past six. The Test Match. Australia, 569 for seven wickets. The English team, it will be remembered, was all out for 173. Plucky waterman saves life at Waterbury. This morning at a quarter past ten, shouts of help were heard from the embankment close to Ponder's Row, Marbury. James Bates, a waterman whose attention was called to the cries by a bystander, jumped into the water, and rescued Susie, the five-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. B. Holmes of 17 Sudsbury Lane, Marbury. The little one is believed to have fallen into the water accidently while playing.

The Unemployed Demonstration.

The crowd in Trafalgar Square is assuming threatening dimensions. Threatening dimensions are now being assumed by the crowd which has collected in Trafalgar Square to voice the grievances of the unemployed. Mr. Popplebury, Secretary of the National Movement for Abolishing Theatre Queues, has been urging the crowd to sack the National Gallery The desirability of sacking the National Gallery is being urged by Mr. Popplebury, Secretary of the National Movement for the Abolishing of Theatre Queues . . . One moment please . . . London calling. Continuation of the News Bulletin from reports that have just come to hand. The crowd in Trafalgar Square is now proceeding, at the instigation of Mr. Popplebury, Secretary of the National Movement for Abolishing Theatre Queues, to sack the National Gallery. The National Gallery was erected in 1838, to house the Angerstein collection of paintings, and has been considerably added to since. A new wing, designed by Mr. E. M. Barry, was added in 1876. It contains many well known pictures by Raphael, Titian, Murillo, and other artists. It is now being sacked by the crowd, on the advice of Mr. Popplebury, Secretary of the National Movement for the Abolition of Theatre Queues. That concludes the news bulletin for a few minutes; you will now be connected with the band at the Savoy Hotel. (Dance music on the gramophone.)

Hello, everybody. This is London calling!! A continuation of the continuation of the News Bulletin. The Test Match. The latest weather reports from Australia announce that a slight rain is falling and the wicket will be somewhat sticky when the Australians take the field tomorrow morning.

The Unemployed Demonstration. The crowd is now pouring through the Admiralty Arch, and is advancing to the rear of the Government Buildings in Whitehall in a threatening manner. The Admiralty Arch is being poured through by a crowd, lately collected in Trafalgar Square, and the back of the Government Buildings in Whitehall is being approached in a threatening manner. The Admiralty Arch, designed by Sir Aston Webb, was erected in 1910 as part of a National Memorial to Queen Victoria. One moment please . . . The crowd is now collected in the neighborhood of the artificial water in St. James Park, and is throwing empty bottles at the water-fowl. Empty bottles are being discharged by the crowds at the water-fowl in the artificial water in St. James Park. So far no casualties have been reported. That concludes the News Bulletin for the moment.

Sir Theophilus Doaks, well known for his many philanthropic schemes, will now address you on the Housing of the Poor. A lecture on the Housing of the Poor will now be delivered by Sir Theophilus Doaks, K.B.E. Sir Theophilus, it will be remembered, is chairman of the Committee for the Inspection of Insanitary Dwellings and speaks with authority on the subject. Eh, what's that? One moment, please . . . From reports that have just come to hand, it appears that Sir Theophilus who was on his way to this station has been intercepted by the remnants of the crowd still collected in Trafalgar Square, and is being roasted alive. Born in 1882, Sir Theophilus entered the service of Goodbody, Goodbody, and Goodbody, the well known firm of brokers. He very soon attracted the notice of his employers; nothing, however, was proved, and Sir Theophilus retired with a considerable fortune.

His retirement did not mean idleness; he has been prominent during the last ten years on many committees connected with social improvement. He is now being roasted alive by a crowd in Trafalgar Square. He will therefore be unable to lecture to you on the Housing of the Poor. You will be connected instead with the Savoy Band. (Gramophone.)

Hello, everybody! This is London calling. Unemployed Demonstration. The crowd has now passed along Whitehall, and at the suggestion of Mr. Popplebury, Secretary of the National Movement for the Abolishing of Theatre Queues, is preparing to demolish the Houses of Parliament with trench mortars. The use of trench mortars for demolishing the Houses of Parliament is being recommended by Mr. Popplebury, Secretary of the National Movement for the Abolishing of Theatre Queues. The building of the existing Houses of Parliament was begun in 1940. The designs were those of Sir Charles Barry. The building is made of magnesium, limestone, material that is unfortunately liable to rapid decay. At present, in any case, it is being demolished by trench mortars under the influence of Mr. Popplebury, Secretary of the National Movement for Abolishing Theatre Queues. The clock tower which is three hundred and twenty feet high has just fallen to the ground together with the famous clock, Big Ben, which used to strike the hours on a bell weighing nine tons. Greenwich time will not be given tonight by Big Ben, but will be given from Edinburgh by the Sun Dial in the Central Fish Market. The Sun Dial in the Edinburgh Fish Market will be used for giving Greenwich time this evening instead of Big Ben, which has just fallen to the ground under the influence of trench mortars.

One moment please . . . Fresh reports which have just come to hand announce that Mr. Witherspoon, the Minister of Traffic, who was attempting to make his escape in disguise has now been hanged from a lamp-post in the London bridge area. One of the lamp-posts in the London bridge area has been utilized by the crowd for the purpose of hanging Mr. Witherspoon, the Minister of Traffic. The crowd is now returning along Whitehall . . .

One moment please . . . The BBC regrets that one item of the news has been given inaccurately; the correction now follows. It was stated on our News Bulletin that the Minister of Traffic had been hanged from a lamp-post in the London bridge area. Subsequent and more accurate reports show that it was not a lamp-post but a

tramway-post that was used for this purpose. A tramway-post, not a lamp-post, was used by the crowd for the purpose of hanging the Minister of Traffic. The next three items in our program are unavoidably cancelled. You will now be connected up with the Savoy Band again . . . (more of gramophone which is suddenly interrupted with a loud report.)

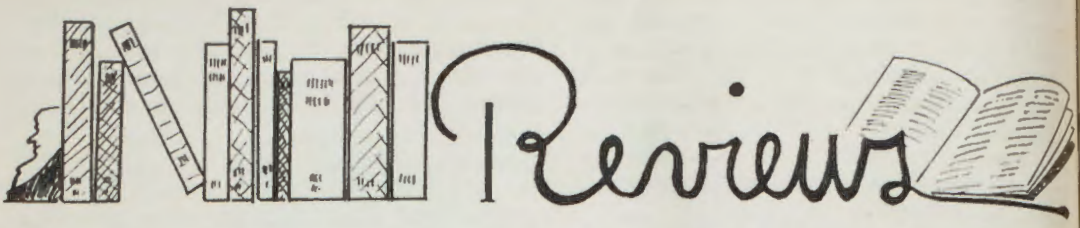
Hello, everybody! This is London calling. The Savoy Hotel has now been blown up by the crowd. The noise that you heard was the Savoy Hotel being blown up by the crowd at the instigation of Mr. Popplebury, Secretary of the National Movement for the Abolishing of Theatre Queues. . . . The more unruly members of the crowd are now approaching BBC's London station.

One moment please . . . Mr. Popplebury, Secretary of the National Movement for the Abolishing of Theatre Queues together with several other members of the crowd is now waiting in the studio waiting room. They are reading copies of the Radio Times. Good night everybody; good night. This is London calling.

How Sweet It Is

How sweet to see your honey-colored hair
When ruffled by the wind upon a hill,
Or feel the cool touch of your fingers where
The woods are fresh and everything is still.
How sweet to know the warm curve of your lips
When pressed in trembling tenderness on mine,
Or just to think when melancholy drips
The rain, of words you spoke that fired like wine.
But these are only dreams and fade with dawn.
The day that other lovers greet with joy,
To me is bitter loss, seems pale and wan;
For after dreams the worldly pleasures cloy
Upon the sense. What else but haunting pain
Can fill my hours 'till darkness breathes again.

— *Louis Sacriste*



Horace: A Portrait, Alfred Noyes, Sheed & Ward, New York, 1947.

ALFRED NOYES' study of Horace is organized in a manner similar to that employed in the familiar *Our Debt to Greece and Rome Series*. It examines the life of the poet and his associates, the extent of his influence upon later writers, and the value to modern readers of his criticisms of life.

All will enjoy the pleasant reconstruction of Horace's boyhood on his father's farm at Venusia, his schooldays at Rome where he attended the classes of the *grammaticus*, the studious but convivial university life at Athens, the hard campaigning with Brutus, and the quiet days of composition and revision at the Sabine farm, so beguiling after the long period of uncongenial clerical work in Rome.

But Horace lived another and profounder life than that of a city clerk or a country squire. It is in this profounder life that Mr. Noyes is more particularly interested. During those early days at Venusia the simple rites of the countryside had quickened the breath of piety in Horace; the study of philosophy, which made skeptics of many, made him a devout believer in the divine Power which guides the world. He saw the supreme necessity of morality in life:

Quid leges sine moribus
vanae proficiunt?

From the Italian country folk he may be presumed, too, to have learned the noble patriotism and love of liberty which have found expression in so many lines.

Horace knew as well as Aeneas the duty of a son towards a father. Mr. Noyes infects the reader with his own enthusiasm for a poet who could proclaim to an aristocratic and arrogant society, as Horace did in his sixth satire, his pride in his freed-man father:

> "I will not defend myself as many might who say it is not their fault that their parents were not free born or distinguished. For if, after a great space of time, nature should order us to live our lives over again, and to choose any parents that our pride might prefer, I should decline to choose them from the ranks of the consuls and praetors, and should be content with my own."

Mr. Noyes' discussion of the relationship between Virgil and Horace is particularly instructive. He advances sound reasons for supposing that the famous fourth eclogue was written in answer to Horace's pessimistic sixteenth epode. Horace, in despair over the defeat of the Republican forces, had advocated a migration of those who wished to build a better world to the Fortunate Islands to the westward. Virgil replied that the Golden Age would dawn in Italy itself, under Augustus.

Of interest, too, is Mr. Noyes' explanation of the deliberately casual conclusions—containing, sometimes, unexpected turns of thought—found in many of the odes. He considers them highly artistic devices intended to heighten the central theme of the poem. Their origin, he thinks, stems back to the ironic Platonic asides.

Rather strangely, Mr. Noyes does not appear to recognize fully the musical nature

of Horace's lyric rhythms, nor the considerable variations which Horace has introduced in the Greek lyrical patterns.

Horace's wide influence on French and English literature, exerted largely through his development of satire and the general acceptance of his canons of criticism, finds due recognition in this book. Mr. Noyes attaches no weight to the view of Sellar and others that in writing the *Ars Poetica* Horace followed a Greek model.

Reflection on the passages to which Mr. Noyes calls our attention reinforces our belief in Horace as a teacher of the art not only of literature, but of life. For us as for Mr. Noyes, Mackail has summed up what Horace can mean to those who seek him out:

> "He has been taken more closely even than Virgil to the heart of the world. His *Odes* became a sort of psalter of secular life; his *Satires* and *Epistles* have been, for the whole European world, the great handbook of good sense, good temper, and practical wisdom. No one has done more to spread and fix and make attractive that spirit of humanity which, like its name, is of Latin creation. He gave mankind the type of the man of the world and the gentleman; he showed how it is obtainable without birth or wealth, without anxiety or ambition, without either high intellectual gifts or unattainable saintliness of life."

—*J. O'Donnell*

* * *

The Loved One

TO the many American readers who first became aware of British Novelist Evelyn Waugh through his Book of the Month Club, *Brideshead Revisited*, and his two subsequent articles in the pages of *Life*, the arrival of his latest short novel, *The Loved One*, will constitute something of a shock. For in his latest effort Waugh continues the stream of comic-satires which began with *Decline and Fall* in 1928, reached their fullest refinement with *A Handful of Dust* in 1934, and were interrupted in 1946 with his first serious novel, *Brideshead Revisited*. Americans will be disconcerted and perhaps indignant to find that Waugh's vitrolic pen can be turned as easily to the dissection of American culture as reflected in the lush, scented, grossly materialistic burial habits of Southern Californians as it has been turned in the past to macabre-humored portrayals of decadent British upper classes, Public School life, and the British Ministry of Information. Actually the butt of Waugh's joke includes all of the United States in so far as to most Americans, hopelessly conditioned by hundreds of movies and the examples of countless "stars," Southern California is the "promised land," the place where American ideals of physical and moral comfort have reached their fullest realization.

The ideas which prompted the writing of *The Loved One* in the words of the author were: "1. Quiet predominantly, over-excitement with the scene [cemeteries of Southern California]. 2. The Anglo-American impasse—'never the twain shall meet.' 3. There is no such thing as an American. They are all exiles, uprooted and transplanted and doomed to sterility. The ancestral gods they have abjured get them in the end. 4. The European raiders who come for the spoils and if they are lucky make for home with them. 5. *Memento mori.*"

Mr. Waugh, who remained in California before making for home only long enough to pocket a five-figured fee for not allowing MGM to make a film of *Brideshead*, was evidently one of the lucky raiders. However distracted by finance his visit may have been, Mr. Waugh, with typical acumen, lost no time in probing beneath the skein of American culture, a pastime which has become increasingly fashionable among European intellectuals since the time of Dickens.

The Loved One is the story of Ambrose Abercrombie, Sir Francis Hinsley, Dennis Barlow, Mr. Joyboy, Miss Thanatogenos, and their cadaver romping activities in and around Whispering Glades Memorial Park, where Mr. Joyboy is head mortician; Hap-

pier Hunting Ground, a pets' cemetery; and the super-colossal Meglopolitan Studios. The plot revolves about a love triangle and two suicides but never once becomes maudlin or studiedly serious.

It is difficult to describe to the uninitiated the bitter-sweet and somewhat perverted charm of Waugh's comic-satire. The effect is similar to that one would expect had P. G. Wodehouse written *The Turn of the Screw* or *Son of Frankenstein*. Like Shaw's, Waugh's characters act and speak like automatons, reflecting the manners, attitudes and habits of a certain class or society rather than real persons. Despite this apparent artifice in character and plot, Waugh's tragic-comic touches produce the irrational but unquestioning realism of a dream and endow his novels with a vitality and an originality all their own. Waugh's characters are typical without becoming prototypes, and no matter how ridiculous they may seem each casts a sinister shadow of reality.

Apart from its argumentative aspects, *The Loved One* is highly enjoyable reading, and Mr. Waugh shall soon discover one American trait he possibly overlooked, the ability of Americans to laugh at themselves.

The Loved One first appeared in the February issue of *Horizon*, a British literary review, and is soon to be published by Little, Brown and Co.

—*J.J.W.*

* * *

Recommended Reading

Jim Farley's Story. The Roosevelt Years, by James A. Farley. In this memoir, "Big Jim" Farley, one of the most adroit political stage managers our country has seen, gives a more than usually frank behind-the-scenes account of national politics. Chiefly a record of his association with Franklin Roosevelt, the "story" begins with the presidential inauguration of 1932, takes the reader through the New Deal years, discussing the period's politics and politicians with the emphasis always on the "Boss" in the White House, and ends with an explanation of Farley's break with Roosevelt over the third term in 1944. Informal and readable, this book affords a close glimpse of the running gears of a political party and gives an excellent portrait of an administration.

Communism and the Conscience of the West, by Msgr. Fulton J. Sheen. Writing as brilliantly as he speaks, Msgr. Sheen makes the point in his latest work that we must oppose Communism primarily not because it advocates a different economic system than ours, but because it completely abrogates the individual's spiritual and intellectual rights. In fact, he says, Communism and Capitalism start out on common ground in that both systems subjugate the individual to an economic order. In our country, this philosophy led to a "passive barbarism" which has made satiation of physical needs the ultimate goal in life and which has allowed us to watch complacently the unchecked growth of Communism's "active barbarism." Calling on the West to examine its own conscience and by doing so to realize better the basic evil of Communism, Msgr. Sheen issues an appeal that might well be widely read and followed today.

Cry, the Beloved the Country, by Alan Paton. A refreshingly different locale, a dramatic plot, and finished writing combine to make this novel one of the most enjoyable in recent months. The story of Parson Kumalo, a native minister of South Africa who journeys to the city of Johannesburg in search of his wayward son, this narrative is an engrossing tale as well as an understanding treatment of the racial question in a region where few people think of one as existing. Although shadowed by tragedy, the book sounds a hopeful note in the presentation of its problem and creates an uplifting, not a depressing, effect.

The Goebbels Diaries. Only recently unearthed and translated, these portions of the diaries of Joseph Goebbels, the fanatical Nazi propaganda genius, reveal the workings of that man's mind during the crucial

war years of 1942-43. Erratically written, his comments on the events of those years serve well to explain his undoubtedly deranged misanthropic personality. A sample observation, presumably written in an introspective mood, is the following: "The human being makes me sick to my stomach." Giving an insight into the workings of his great propaganda machine, the book probably serves its best purpose as a warning of the terrible effects that propaganda can have, insidiously used.

The Ides of March, by Thornton Wilder. Letters, reports, and notes, supposedly written by Julius Caesar between August, 46 B.C., and his assassination in March, 45 B.C., make up the bulk of this historical novel which recreates Rome's greatest period, her golden age. Through the person of Caesar, Wilder sets down diverse observations on men, politics, religion, and a host of other subjects, enabling the age and its men to rise before us in vivid detail. Caesar, Cicero, Brutus, Mark Antony, Cleopatra—these and others live again, holding our attention and interest. Concentrating more on reproducing the spirit of the age rather than its exact historical facts, Mr. Wilder succeeds in significantly interpreting for today's readers a rich segment of the life of antiquity. —*J.J.M.*

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