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A Scene from Faust -- C. G. Bell

The woes of Aristotelians confronted with Goethe's Faust need not trouble us; for what would you expect when a standard based on Greek tragedy is brought to bear on a work which neither Aristotle nor the Greeks could have conceived as existing. What these people mostly want is to find out how Faust can be a tragic hero, and of course they decide he can't (though it's doubtful in their terms whether Othello, Lear or Hamlet can be either); for one thing the drama insists on pursuing him beyond the grave and getting him (for no reason even the Christian can see, there being no repentance, no pardon) into heaven, his happy home. So Aristotelians feel if that last scene had only been omitted, all that operatic ascent to the skies, we would at least have a death-close, a man who has thought to rule himself and the world, falling in blindness and age to the grave dug (Sophoclean irony at any rate) where he commanded a land-draining, ambition-assuaging dike. But they would still have an amorphous, strange composition at best, a pathetic allegory, preaching the futility of hybris; but without unity of space, time, or action, dignity or catharsis, a hodge-podge unsatisfying on any ground the Poetics might afford.

The hostility of Platonists is harder to allow, not because Goethe could have been envisaged from any point where Plato or his contemporaries stood, but just because Plato doesn't lay down rules for poetry, only aims and directions, and Goethe's Faust, like Dante's Comedy, though in a different way, is a significant work, not an imitation but a moulting of the wings toward some truth or other, some apprehension of ultimate things.

Of course, there's a problem what we mean when we talk about Platonists. There is a tradition of thinkers from Pico and Bruno through Goethe and Hegel, Platonists in a sense, though literal and classical followers find them perverse. The heart of the difficulty is the location of the reasonable. For the classic mind it lies ultimately in the one, the changeless, the rational and ideal which is the essence of God and man; and whatever there is of impulse, multiplicity, matter, is invalidated, pushed aside as some inexplicable, trivial, or fallen necessity. Thus the realm of mind is cleared, by abstraction from that very muddle in which mind and world are involved. Whereas Hegel and Goethe and most modern "Idealists" have incorporated matter, time, multiplicity, and the passions, into the substance of God, mind and reason, leaving a world-embracing spirit, a one-many at war with itself, refining itself under the aspect of contradiction and tension through what Whitman called "all terrible balks and ebullitions" -- a development forced on later philosophy by the scientific submission to "brute fact," by that Western acceptance of process and variety as the inescapable stuff of experience in which even Platonizing theory must build.

Certainly on the basis of this division of classical and post-romantic, Goethe is one of the most flagrant romantic offenders -- or to turn the better side, one of the boldest moderns. And the wonder of the Faust (which a classical critic might call its formless defect) is that the organic principles of ambivalence, tension and paradox, of growth and denial where failure and success, good and evil round on each other in a vortex in which every action is cloven, aspiration with its dual aspects benign and sinister, and its time-mammocking consequences, of which the other face of ruin and debacle is the

heaven-ascent of active spirit (man errs as long as he strives; but by that erring and striving is also saved) -- these organic principles are not only the shaping soul of the thought as reflected in the action, but of poetic form, of the style, whose defects -- the half-emergence of puzzling pattern and meaning in a texture of sketches turned out over a period of fifty years by a poet growing in character as in his conscious design of the work -- are virtues of a new and vital order: this is a work in which, as in Hegel's history, something shapes more profoundly than the individual making will.

But is this an art-work, this container through which forces beneath the conscious level surge and battle, like winds in a tropical disturbance? The answer must be given in the terms of organization in which such conflicting and unplanned winds round to the vortex of a hurricane, self-perpetuating, bearing in the center its clear and windless heaven-observing eye. The Faust is a symbolic case-history, a nautilus shell in whose concretions the temporal and hence timeless life of a soul (not the least significant soul of the West) is recorded, or if not recorded, hinted at, sketched in the accidents which would discredit a classical construction, but are here of the essence of spirit's operations in the world. And in what other realm can spirit operate? As Faust translated St. John: In the beginning was the Act; not that mystical faith-word, the Word; not the Platonic rational potentiality of Thought; nor the Renaissance prime-mover of Power; but the temporal and factual, the uncaused, immanent Deed.

But if the primacy of the Act means anything, it means that the Faust is less to be theorized over than exhibited in its embodied particularity. So instead of writing an essay on the play, it might be better to translate a scene. Not that translation is really possible. This work has been put into English more often than any other, and most of the productions are utterly unreadable. There is something in the polarity of translation -- to copy the original and create a poem -- which is contradictory and insoluble. Yet the impossible still beckons; the whoreson progeny must be acknowledged. It is astonishing how easily we put up with bungles we ourselves have made. As Touchstone says: "An ill-favoured thing, sir, but mine own."

So I translate a scene, one which (as often with the monad details of art) seems to carry the dialectic of the whole. For me it is also the richest scene -- I mean the opening of Part II, one of the supreme moments of world literature, where Faust lies in a meadow, recovering from his most destructive involvement, his love for Gretchen.

There is a fundamental opposition that runs through the whole Faust; it could be called that of fire and water, of the daemonic and eunomic, of classical and romantic, Werther and Wilhelm Meister, Enlightenment versus Storm-and-Stress (though each wording alters the antithesis). It is ultimately a question whether the Faustian desire must burn through the texture of relationships and prove suicidal (as in so many myths of Icarian and Satanic aspiring), or whether the flame can be contained, as it were, in a vital structure, buttressed against itself, to effect a dynamic harmony, working for the good.

Goethe has defined the polarity in an earlier scene where Faust trying to halt the inevitable, withdraws from Gretchen and is found musing in "Forest

and Cavern." Addressing the world-spirit, he says: "Along with this ecstasy which brings me nearer to the gods, you gave me a sinister companion from whom I cannot separate myself, . . . though with a breath he turns your gifts to nothing . . . He fans a wild fire in my heart for that beautiful image. So I rush from desire to satisfaction, and in satisfaction I yearn for desire." It would be too simple to say that Goethe in his long life shifts from suicidal to constructive Faustianism, though that might be a first level of the analysis. Rather the two poles are perpetually sustained and woven into more intricate configurations; so that Faust's final achievement of a free land brought out of the ocean (a work of fire) is also punctuated with terror (the burning of the pious old couple); it is final only in the sense of being terminal; like Faust's other efforts it is also a dire miscarriage, a sign of the blindness in which he dies. And even the lyrical ascent to the sky is less an ultimate judgment on Faust's success, than a mythical spelling out of what has been immanent from the first, the transcendental aspect of every temporal sequence of desire, involvement, destruction, with the reconstitution of desire.

In no scene are these animomies as delicately and enigmatically woven as in the present one. Here as always, if one would ask: does the Faustian catch, or merely catch at, reach for, or actually reach? -- the answer would be: both in one; both in one. The two are aspects of a single act. And if we ask: does this fever the heart to wilder aspiration, or subdue it to a wisdom in which it limits itself to achievable goals? -- we must answer, Neither or both. The recognition that we live our life in the refracted color ("Im farbigen Abglanz haben wir das Leben") does not deter a maturer Faust from rising to the new day of more incommensurate longings. Has he not even been told by the comforting small spirits of nature (though they themselves hide from the dawn): "The noble soul that understands and seizes may accomplish all things" ?

Faust, Part II, Scene 1.

A Pleasant Landscape. Faust stretched on a flowery bank, tired, restless, seeking sleep. Twilight. Spirits hover around him, graceful little forms.

Ariel (Song accompanied by Aeolian harps):

When spring in petals
Floats down like rain
And children of the fertile
Ground gather the green
Blessing, magnanimous spirits
Of earth, the elves, in pity
Help as they can
Good or evil,
All in pain.

You whose airy circles weave this head,
Perform your elfin healing, touch the heart
And calm its raging fever; forbid remorse,
Draw out the bitter darts, and let him wake
Clean of terror; let the past be past.

Night is measured by four silences;
Fill all of them with service:
First let him sleep pillowed on coolness;
And the dew that bathes him bring from Lethe
Quiet forgetfulness; and the cramped tendons
Ease as he slumbers on to the dawning;
Last is the noblest: let him awake
And come again into the sacred light.

Chorus (singly, then by pairs and groups, alternating and together):

Serenade: When the wind blows
 In the green fields,
 Twilight falls
 In perfumed veils;
 And his heart like a child
 Is rocked in peace,
 And the tired eyes close
 And the day's gold gates.

Notturmo: Now night has fallen,
 Star on star
 Holds the watches,
 Far and near;
 Waters mirror
 The sky's fire,
 And the moon sheds sleep
 On the world's floor.

Mattutino:

Quenched are the hours
Of grief and glee;
The heart is whole,
Greet the new day.
Hills and valleys
Bush into shade
And the ripe wheat works
In waves like the sea.

Reveil:

To gain your wishes
Trust the light.
Sleep is a chrysalis;
Cast it off.
All things yield
To the great soul
That knows its purpose
And lays hold.

(A terrible tumult announces the coming of the sun)

Ears of spirits hear it, hear it.
Thunder of daybreak and hearing fear it:
Storm of the hours, the earth's rim shattered,
Jarring of rock gates and the wheels' clatter;
Apollo's day-bright wagon comes;
Always in tumult light is born.
It drums, it trumpets; deafened, blind,
Spirits creep in flower-crowns;
Unhearables should not be heard.
Deeper, deeper, in leaves, in rocks;
Close to your ears; the day breaks!

Faust:

The pulse of life is quickened, stirred to greet
The mild ethereal gray. And earth that was steadfast
Through the long dark, breathes with awakened power,
And clothes itself in light and us in air,
And wakes as always longings in the heart,
Soul-reachings for the goals and heights of being.

The world is wrapped in the gray shimmer of dawn;
The woods are full of voices, living songs;
In the low places veils of mist are poured,
That take the light of heaven and are pearl;
And twigs and branches from the vaporous gorges
Where they have slept unseen rise and aspire,
All fresh, all green; colors come from the gray,
Where leaf and flower are trembling with the dew;
And Eden is around me; all is Eden.

I lift my eyes to the hills. The highest peaks,
Already crowned with light announce the coming.
They drink the day before us, the great brightness
For which we lower creatures wait in longing.

And now the uplands and the last green pastures
 Receive the glory; and step by step descending
 Down the long sequence of the folded ranges,
 The presence comes; it strikes, it strikes; and blinded,
 I turn away, my eyes pierced with anguish.

It is always so. Whenever restless longing
 Has found a basis for its highest wish,
 And the portals of its promise are flung open,
 Then from the reach of those eternal vistas
 Break prodigies of flame; we stand confounded.
 We thought to kindle our life's torch a little;
 A sea of fire enfolds us, a fiery ocean.
 Is it love or hate? It wraps us in its burning
 Incredible waves of ecstasy and wounding;
 And we are glad to take to the earth again
 To wear the shelter of some childish veil.

And so I turn my back upon the sun.
 The waterfall that roars down the rock chasm
 Now fills the orbit of my sight with wonder.
 From fall to fall it breaks in a thousand streams,
 Each broken in its turn to a thousand thousand,
 With spray blown in the air, cool fountains of spray,
 At whose white peak and crown, vaulting the storm,
 A rainbow shows and fades, always reborn,
 The hovering spirit of the downward shower.
 I see it now; it images our striving --
 Itself an image, born of the sun and water: --
 We do not live in the light but the broken color.

The eternal silence of these infinite spaces frightens me.

But that silence is not complete; for it at least emphasizes the sound of man's own voice.

I see in truth, that the same words are applied on the same occasions, and that every time two men see a body change its place, they both express their view of this same fact by the same word, both saying that it has moved . . . and from this conformity of application we derive a strong conviction of a conformity of ideas. But this is not absolutely or finally convincing, though there is enough to support a bet on the affirmative

Pascal's mention of a bet in this passage is most revealing. It is a hint that he considers betting to have a greater and more general significance than his famous application of the Wager. Betting is, in fact, the one great logic of the practical: it is the marriage of mathematical and intuitive thought (Pensées 1-4).

There are three primary characteristics of the bet. First, it involves an immediate decision, an action; second, some stake is dependent on that action; and third, the final disposition of the stake is decided with utter certainty on whether the decision corresponds, not with what may, might, or should be, but with what is. At first blush we may seem to be saying no more than that decisions should be objective; which we all know anyhow, though we may not always give the fact proper consideration. It should be emphasized, then, that the reason that Pascal uses the Wager, and the reason that we concern ourselves with betting in general, is that under a bet a decision not only should be objective, but must be objective. Men commonly attempt to make truth correspond to their decisions; and if there is no reckoning, they may seem to be successful. If they enter into a bet, however, it is eminently clear that there will come a reckoning, and that they are likely to suffer a very real sub-

jective loss if they do not follow, and immediately, the most objective course of judgment. Perhaps the best example of the sudden, objective necessity of a bet, contrasted with the rash statements more normal to our kind, is betting by children. The activities of children are notoriously revealing of the affairs of men.

"My father is eight feet tall." "No he's not." "Yes he is." "No he's not, we can measure him." "He is too. Okay, and we could measure him, but he's at work." "I'll bet you a dollar he isn't, and we'll find out when he comes home." "I don't want to bet." "Yah! You're afraid because he isn't!"

If the stake is accepted, the first child must, in making a judgment, renounce everything but truth; and he knows, in the face of the sudden risk of a dollar, that his father is not even seven feet tall. The bet has instantly and expertly exposed the true situation. Now, as we have said, the minds of men are not always so clear. Some have asserted their father's height to be eight feet for so long a time, without the impartial challenge of the bet, that it proves something of a shock to them when in the face of the bet, they find that they had better not accept it. Many, indeed will go on and take the bet and never know what has happened till they are forced to pay. Unless, of course, their father works in a circus; which brings us to our next consideration.

In order to bet properly, the judgment must decide the relative probability of the two possible resolutions of the bet. Secondly, it must judge the relative values of the stake and what might be won. If the ratio of stake to possible winnings exceeds the ratio of probable loss to probable gain, it is a good bet; if they are even, even; if the ratio falls short, a bad bet. This is a mathematical necessity. And so, it is entirely possible to bet well by betting against a probable truth, and to bet badly by betting for it; unless truth itself is the stake.

Someone may protest, about here, that betting may be all very well, but it benefits our judgment not at all; since it is unadorned judgment that must determine the odds, and the values of the stakes, and it is from these that the necessities of the bet follow. Certainly; but the first principles of mathematics must also be determined by the judgment alone, and yet there is a solid loftiness in, if you will excuse my example, Euclid I.47 that far surpasses anything that direct judgment could ever accomplish. An even closer analogue is formal logic. Though it is doubtful that the syllogism itself has ever solved anything, this is due more to the nature of its traditional subject matter than to any inborn ineffectualness; and most assuredly, the study of logic, and the habit of logical analysis in thinking, are a tremendous advantage in the more academic endeavors. The subject matter of the bet is not limiting, however. Not only does the habit of analysis of practical questions

in terms of betting yield assurance and lucidity to judgment; but the bet itself offers solutions to a multitude of problems. It is, like logic, a desirable habit of thought; an intellectual virtue. Only it is of vastly greater importance than logic, for it concerns itself with practice. (Perhaps we overstep in making such sharp and separate delineations of logic and betting; for as we have said, betting is the great logic of the practical. There is an easily observable gap, however, between the usual applications of syllogisms and those of bets.) The efficient translation of available fact into probability of unavailable fact, is a habit which lends a wisdom far surpassing that of men who play the slot machines, drive automobiles, mishandle themselves in business, politics, war, and social relations, and don't know why they should go to church if they don't believe in God. Until we have acquired this virtue, we at least know that we had better go for advice to the bookie rather than the philosopher.

The tiresome voice of dissenters may here be heard again; for we have only given examples where the use of the bet, though most helpful, is somewhat mean. Can it be applied to greater problems? How, for example, can it help us in the greatest of all: according to what principle are we to regulate our lives? Religious persons, as Pascal points out, cannot come under our consideration here, for their judgment is not their own. Atheists and agnostics can; so let us see which has made the better bet. Remember both want only to live by truth.

Agnostic to atheist: "How can you possibly say you don't believe in God, when it is utterly beyond your earthly comprehension to know whether He exists or not, unless to know He does by revelation? Of the two positions, even if God does not exist, I can understand only that of the Christian; for he at least finds peace in what he asserts, even if he lacks knowledge. But you, you lack both, since you surely can find no peace in your position, and you can never have knowledge that it is correct. Utter folly."

Atheist replies: "On the contrary. We both want to live in accord with whatever truths govern the universe. We have sold our souls to truth. But you have forfeited soul, truth, and all; for although you know that one of two positions is true, you follow none. I admit I do not know that my opinion is a right one, but it is an opinion based on what I, in full consideration, consider the probability. I have taken my integrity and wagered it on a probability, and so I have some chance -- the best chance I can give myself -- of attaining what I most desire: that is, to regulate my existence according to the true being of the universe: what is. When I approach this by a probably right opinion -- for probably always means no more than in my considered opinion; there is, finally, no probability to truth -- if the opinion is incorrect, I lose my objective; but if, as is probable, it is right, why then everything is fulfilled, for right opinion is as true as knowledge. If I thought it more likely there was a God, why that is the course I would follow; but in either case, I subject all other inducements to truth. You, however, say that you have knowledge -- which certainly excels opinion -- that you do not know which opinion is correct; and that this knowledge governs your actions. Certainly, you do have this knowledge, as do I, and as knowledge it does excel opinion; but it is not knowledge of what the universe is, and cannot therefore govern your actions in the light of what it is. You are governed only by the fact that you do not know how you should govern yourself. While I, having examined the evidence, live in the gratifying realization that my desire is probably, and in any case possibly, fulfilled; you have

missed utterly your one chance to consummate the great desire -- harmony with the universal principle. You have foolishly given up your opportunity to wager, because you could not be sure of winning. If you only knew clearly what the wager entails, you would see you have lost all."

The atheist has spoken, strangely enough, both at length, and truly. Any good philosophy concerns itself primarily with truth and action; truth for the sake of action. If there is to be action, and (as is always the case) there is yet no knowledge, why, the philosopher does much better to act on probable truth --and even for the agnostic, there will always be one opinion that is more probable than the rest, once he is made to realize he must wager. Even if the chance is fifty-one in one hundred, truth and action themselves are at stake, and will be forfeited if the bet is refused; and the odds are in fact seldom nearly so fine. A fortiori the philosopher must choose. Thus probability becomes something like knowledge. That we must act makes opinion necessary; and its resulting usefulness in action is absolute justification of its assertion as truth, uncertain though that assertion may be.

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The Wager of Pascal.

Pascal reveals that philosophy itself is not a good bet. We have just been talking within her framework, and so have accepted truth as of a certain prime importance. But remember, a good bet is not necessarily on a probable truth; and so philosophy is unnaturally restricted.

Pascal's Wager is widely vilified simply on the grounds that it is, indeed, a bet. This criticism seems to have no other source than a general moral disapprobation of betting; to speak of God in terms of a wager is mean, a blasphemous familiarity, and a reduction of His glory. Such wrinkling of intellectual noses has been responsible for occasional apologists, who say, in the accepted fashion of things, that Pascal did not mean at all what he said; and that he merely used the bet as a device, not seriously asserting it as a valid method of decision. These same critics, we conjecture, would not hesitate in the least to accept the more academic Thomistic examinations of God; or if not accept them, at least laud them as astute and unimpeachable failures. But how is Pascal's method morally different? Both men simply use the reason; the one theoretically, the other practically. We disagree with both critic and apologist. Pascal meant what he said, and he used a method quite as respectable as the logic of metaphysics. His method was, in fact, greatly superior in affairs of practice; and what is belief but a practice? The method is, we are willing to bet, valid. Let us now go on to examine its application in Pascal's Wager.

First let us consider the bet itself. Disregarding stakes for the moment, what does the bet concern? As stated, it concerns belief or disbelief in God. Pascal adds qualifications later; for belief is not always to be had for the asking. If we wish to believe, and find we cannot, we can at least make a complete attempt, by attending the instruction of the church, taking mass, etc.; for the Wager is the only significant action of our lives, and must be followed through to the end. Pascal's Wager, then, is not a basis for actual belief in God, but for an attempt at belief. The real bet is whether we are to try -- to try unceasingly, and with all our efforts --

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to believe in God. Pascal asserts, with sound reason, that such an attempt will always prove successful.

It is with the stakes that Pascal would make that attempt mandatory. If we do not have knowledge that God does not exist -- and we do not -- then no matter how likely we consider His non-existence, Pascal will overwhelm us with the stakes, and bring us to the church. Much of the discussion, which eventually is to lead to our submersion, is about death; and it is frightening talk. We must not, however, allow Pascal to lead us into the illusion that death is itself one of the stakes. He says in 194:

Death, which threatens us every moment, must infallibly place us within a few years under the dreadful necessity of being for ever either annihilated or unhappy Let us reflect on this, and then say whether it is not beyond doubt that there is no good in this life but in the hope of another.

Pascal here and elsewhere implicitly identifies death and eternal damnation as being, if not identical, anyhow equal in value; and hence equal in terms of wagering. It is just this identification that lends Pascal his greatest psychological impact, if we let it. We may be led to think that if God is, we are presented a possibility of either eternal salvation, or a fate as bad as death -- damnation. Our looming fear of death will then frighten us promptly into the arms of the church. But damnation is not the same as death. The difference between eternal salvation and eternal damnation contains the whole force of the Wager; and it is not a subtle difference. But it is pink on rosy pink compared with the lightless prospect of annihilation -- especially as presented by Pascal. And the likelihood of annihilation, we cannot overemphasize, is in no way whatsoever affected by Pascal's Wager. No matter how we wager, or if we wager at all: if there is not a God, annihilation for all; if there is, death for none.

But while Pascal has not been able to sneak the psychological value of damnation by us on the coat-tails of death, the more rational aspects of the Wager remain. First, Pascal insists that we must bet. The infamously unoptional fact of birth begins the chain of necessity, and in a new role, the meat-axe of annihilation ends it. It is widely recognized that human death reduces all human values to the finest ash. Then our only hope is in God. But if God is, then our eternal salvation or damnation depends on whether we believe in Him or not. Since nothing concerns us anyhow unless He is, we have everything to gain by trying utterly to believe in Him, and nothing to lose. The odds themselves bring on the necessity of the Wager. Only a madman or a blind fool would refuse to bet when, due to death, he has nothing whatsoever to lose; especially since he can take no other significant action during life. In the first wash of the tidal wave of this argument, we can only repeat the words of Blake: "The eye sees more than the heart knows." Or from another aspect, Pascal himself: "The heart has its reasons, which reason does not know." We can no more than gasp out that the heart leads the mind, or at least does not let the mind lead it; and that the only good existentialists are dead ones; and that since man lives by the heart, and it is only the mind that continuously fears, then the heart, and the man, need not make the deadening Wager. But though this outburst satisfies the heart, for the mind it is all too easily submerged. And we find, in our calmer moments, that Pascal himself has suggested an alternative much closer

to probability: "This (Wager) is demonstrable; and if men are capable of any truths, this is one." We have met demonstrable truths before, and yet would have bet unhesitatingly against many of them. And with time, we find that, even on the basis of reason, we may reject Pascal's Wager.

Pascal is much too quick to assert that the possibilities he names are the only ones. He must show us why we might not just as well put our hope on a natural soul; or an all-forgiving God, who pardons unbelievers, or perhaps even punishes those who have believed with insufficient reason; or even abandon hope to hope on hope itself. The Romans, Paul noted, had an altar to the unknown god. It is similarly unclear what the alternatives to annihilation might be; and in his attempt to establish the pre-eminence of the Christian religion, or even religion at all, among the unknown alternatives, we might bet Pascal has finally sunk from view forever in his own flood.

David Jones

A Descent Into The Maelstrom

It is a simple fact that St. John's College does not exist to train Professional actors, directors, stage technicians, and other practitioners of the dramatic arts. Nevertheless, any given production, whether it be by students of the liberal arts in Annapolis or by the professionals of the New York stage, must, because it is presented without excuse for public consumption, be judged without excuse on its merits as a production. In this light, about all one can say of the recent offering of the King William Players is that the music was lovely.

It seemed that this time, at long last and after more or less public political and artistic troubles, the KWP was attempting something that it could reasonably be expected to execute with some degree of success. None of the problems of elaborate production, large casts, and difficult and demanding roles that have plagued the KWP in the past seemed to be present here. And yet Don Juan in Hell, for all its simplicity, failed much more completely -- indeed, almost totally -- than some of the spectacles of other years. I think the reasons are much more fundamental than the usual excuses of little time and less talent.

The prime trouble seemed to be that Mr. Settle, who directed, apparently could not quite make up his mind whether to present just a reading of a full-fledged play. The result was that, although for the most part his actors were seated on stools and reading from scripts, at times -- often, most disconcerting times -- they would emerge from their cocoons and come forth as actors, speaking rather than reading, posturing and gesturing as though they had been doing this all along. The audience, who, as the players read, were forced to provide all the usual externals of the stage from their own imaginations, were suddenly called upon to forsake those pictures of Hell itself, Don Juan, the Old Lady, the Statue, and the Devil that they had laboriously conjured forth with the aid of Shaw's words and forced to pay attention to the same pictures suddenly visually presented, as fruits of Mr. Settle's imagination. Neither method is wrong, and either demand is a valid one for the director to make of his audience, but to make them both, to constantly force his watchers to swing from one form of aesthetic appreciation to another, can only result in confusion and failure.

The actors were little more successful in their efforts than Mr. Settle was in his. Mr. Griffin, bringing at times some real life and humor to the play and displaying, if nothing else, gusto, seemed to find it necessary to telegraph every truly funny or dramatic line well in advance, and delivered some of them so heavily that their effect was totally lost. I invite his attention to the recording of the New York production, that he may see that underplaying can be a very potent dramatic weapon indeed. Mr. Dews and Miss Hetkin were more or less adequate as the Statue and the Young Woman. Mr. Tilles, especially in the second act, was most effective, I think because

he was called upon to perambulate less than the others and was thus permitted to build an illusion by means of his voice alone. Miss Hsu appeared briefly in the beginning of the evening, and I in all honesty can only say that I noted her presence. Miss Schloss narrated, and did what she was called upon to do with no visible embarrassment.

The technical problems of the KWP are much too well known to be dwelt on here. Some interesting lighting effects were obtained at the cost of many strange noises from the upper regions, and really seemed to do nothing except provide some contrasts of color on the stage. The sound effects, done by Messers. Alexander and Ronquist were in excellent taste, and extremely well done.

The production was an interesting experiment, and, I hope, will not discourage others in the notably tradition-bound Players. And, bad as it was, at least we had a play this year -- for that, if nothing more, I think we owe Mr. Settle and his companions a warm round of applause.

E. H. Mini

Our sullen voyages run aground,
As wine spilled from the bleeding urn,
Upon the rocks, the barren heart,
The seed sown in a stony ground.

As children with their games of joy
Spin onward in relentless course,
Our hearts, it's solid form accrues
Those glacial layers of polar light.

Our world when young took joyous sail,
Imagination like a sparkling stone
Set flame to images of faith.

But now the seas of innocence are run,
The ashes in the quiet vessel
Smoulder once or twice and perish.

-- by Joel Herman

On Going to War -- by Joel Herman

Only the storms

I but vaguely acknowledge,

The hearts in hungry words

In blasphemous discontent.

I must leave

This country of green sounds

And exquisitely

Disturbed feelings,

And go to

The land of malfortune

Where impunity

Is only air

And hunger seeks

The breasts of blood.

I heard only

The testimony of guns at my trial,

And the chains

That held me made noises like death.

[Faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]

Child's Death at Birth -- by Joel Herman

Night springs from the curving arc,
The formless flesh of child is born.
Luxurious breasts of swollen love
Transfigure the forgotten thorn.

Love encircles even Death
Though Death configures love's delight.
Passion, envy, lovely child
Confounded in the bitter night.

The pitiless eye of circumstance
Devouring a mother's tear,
The scowling wind, the bleeding moon,
The indifferent hand upon the thigh
Make secret council to expire
That lovely bursting out of flame.

Hobbes -- by T. Yoon

The universe being a vast absurdity,
Deafening, discordant sound,
I cannot not close my eyes.
Credo quia absurdum est.

My last appetite moves
Toward His domain smoothly.
Heavy appetite would have fallen,
Because of gravity.

O altitudo!

Light going --- by T. Yoon

Where are you going, my fair butterfly?
You leave me unhappy shadow. Though my black
Night was intolerable, you'll find no place brighter.

Your diligent efforts discovered lack
Of light in me? You entered this darkness,
Exploring was before you. You swim through the
Vast flow free from all conscious.

Pass the pathless flow! Jubilee cannot be missed.
Though you disdain my dark, a moon's glory shines
Upon my luckless night. A moon still bright.

I look for you, I endeavor; you leave
Me unhappy shadow.

[Faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]

The Thief of Youth -- by T. Yoon

The thief of youth has stolen
My dream of spring in its calm,
Scorned my being fruitless.

Time urges, "On!"
But my fruits aren't ripe;
Are my deeds far from His will?

Space too is a fleeting thing.
For my talent is bound by Him,
And cannot not lose.

Let time be slow and postpone, and yet
My late fruit follows it not.
Endeavored, my effort useless, too.
Youth -- less fruits with it --
Was compelled to jump ahead again.

Please forgive me, my mother.

[Faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page]

Nightbeach -- by Jerry Costello

Light lingers, yet night is met

In fingers flying an icy night;

Sparse grass crying...windspice.

Great engulfing spay seamed chasm

Inhaling spasm, it gulps of spasm;

Gleaming grasstems reel.

Bristling peers this vented crock

And I amok to clutch and shred the vestment

of black,

Dreading paltry lack of reach,

falter and turn back,

Then weep,

praying light will bring you...

The Key -- by Henry Braun

Fetters of steel were never forged
So strong that they could bind
A secret deep in safety from
The onslaught of the Mind.

Yet chains from artful Nature's forge
Have bound the Truths in dark
Shrines shrouded so to indicate
That man has missed the mark.

But keys there are to all that's locked;
As in all else, in this.
The Key will ope the Chamber where
Dark Death sweet Life doth kiss.

Well-guarded is the Treasure-house,
Well-guarded is the Key
That lies within the veiled pale
Awaiting you and me.

Loosen the power of Intellect
To search, disrobe and pry
In Self's dark cypt, sight-source unto
Unfailing Mind's keen eye.

For this is All and All is this --
No more can mortal know --
Man is a Lock, Mind is the Key,
The Treasure is the Soul.

[Faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]

A Natural Tree, To Be Sat In

Stretch up the sinews of your hands,
And grasp the bough;
Shout the convulsive, flickering commands
To calves and thighs
And back and arm, from unremembered lives
A million times reborn:
Pull up, suspend!
Feel the sure bend
Of slick green muscle oiled with amber sap
Replying, thew to unfamiliar thew.
And there, far out,
Thick, in the small dark leaves that hang,
Listen, with the ear that owns a mind,
Hear the tree murmur: Brother?
Brother, I am blind.

David Jones

Nightsong -- E. H. Mini

Moonlight. Yellow paint on still streets. No sound.
My feet, brittle as bricks,
Ring like stars falling.
Light from sleeping houses
Loud on the sidewalks.

I should be sleeping now.
But there are more important things to do.
I cannot dream of starlight.
The moon does not shine on stormy seas.
And I must make the most of calm to see.

This town sleeps well, and I walk among its dreams
Soft-fotted, not to waken but to share
And be gone by morning.

Few come to watch the dawn.
All things wake in thunderclapping day
And walk their time on earth in sunlight.
Not I. I take my pleasure unobserved.
Intruder in the sleeping country...
Homer, dweller in darkness, would not approve.

The night is an end to question, so question not my walking.
The day is an end to singing, so question not my song.
For the night is warm as a woman's arms,
Stars are bright like a woman's eyes,
Moons will glow like the dying fire
And I am one with darkness.

The light will drive me far from shadows.
No reminders needed now of weakness,
Walking being only for the strong.
Still town, dream your ancient dreams in silence,
Forget me,
Sleep.

The Lover -- by Jack de Raat

The lover leaves his tale untold,
That many a lass he might enfold
With arms entwining, hands caressing,
Lips upon her cheek impressing
 her with constancy he woos;
But 'lows no soul to know he sues
For many loves he's had and has
 and shall as well,
But never could if he would tell.