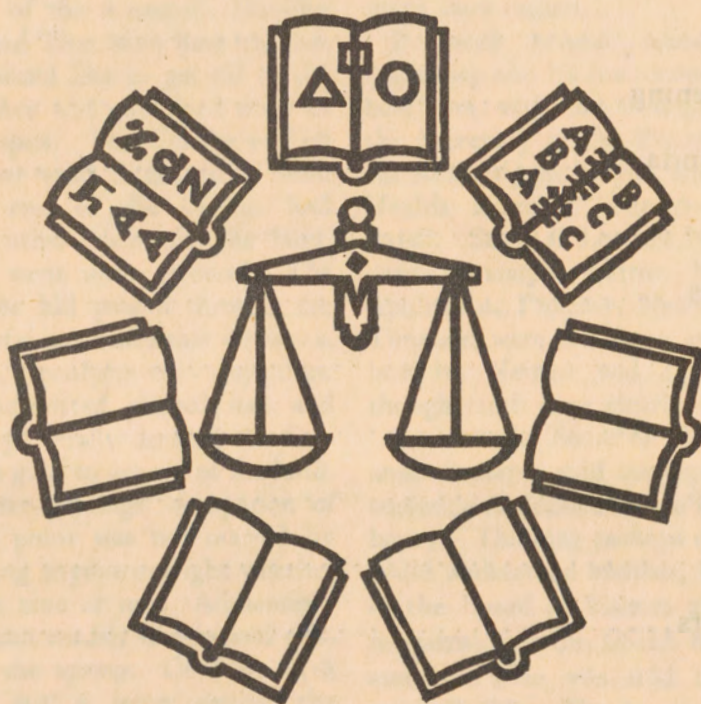


ST. JOHN'S TRIVIUM



Of Doom and Hopeby *Richard Kuehnemund*
(College Bites Housing Authority)an *editorial*
"The Dictator" Reviewed

DECEMBER, 1940

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TRIVIUM

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Editorials

Reason and Authority in the Modern World. It all started last November. The Director of the Annapolis Housing Authority asked That Man Barr whether the College would like to get rid of the now famous five and one third acres of the back campus. The College replied that he did not want to get rid of them because the rest of the College had athletic and other plans for the land.

The thing went under ground. The College on the hill passed through the winter in blissful ignorance that intrigues, machinations, conferences, objections were being committed, plotted, had, and made. "They" finally decided the College would be glad to get rid of the land. The long-winter-evenings' occupation of deciding this point was not marred by anyone's asking anyone outright whether anything was true or not. All seminar participants can readily understand this.

But came the spring. On May 15th the College got a letter saying the Housing Authority had ordered Mr. Stromeyer, its Chairman, to get the land from the College. The College asked the Board and the Board told him no. Quickly replied the Authority that he hoped the College would cooperate with him in getting the land turned over because if the College did not cooperate, the Authority would take it anyhow. This shows the similarity between the cooperative state and the corporative state and explains the Berlin-Moscow

treaty. The College decided to be liberal and hold on to the land unless Authority could show reason.

Followed several conferences. The Authority and his four cooperative members met with the College, the Dean, the Secretary of the Board of Visitors, the Admiral, the Mayor, and the County Health Director. The Authority reasoned. Seminar Leaders Nos. 1 and 2, used to simple matters like Plotinos, Apollonius, Ptolemy, Newton, Einstein, Timaeus, were unable to get their teeth into it. Neither was anyone else, although teeth were clearly shown.

June 10 the Board of Visitors met, examined maps, read correspondence, discussed, and decided not to hand over the booty. Thinking perhaps one Authority could understand another, the Chairman of the Board of Visitors asked the Administrator of the USHA how to understand it. He was told the idea was unintelligible. The Annapolis Authority tried to unscrew the matter by making the following proposition: The College owned about eight or nine acres of unimproved land. The Authority would take about five of these and in return would improve the remaining two or three and create another somehow in College Creek and thereby make an even swap with the College acre for acre. The College, having read St. Thomas and Calvin, knew that only one Being could create and

that He was inscrutable. This unscrewed everything.

On August 1st a little man walked in and presented the College with a paper full of legal language, which the *Evening Capital* reported had been filed "reluctantly" by the Authority in the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County. The same newspaper contained a story, "Rotary Club Opposes College Housing Site."

That Man Barr declined to make any press comment. Instead, Barr and Pooh-Bah went to Washington to see the USHA. Said Barr, the roof is coming off in Annapolis. It is bad for houses when the roof comes off. The College believes in houses and would like to see more in Annapolis. Said the USHA, everyone feels sad when he's having his land snatched. We do it all the time. It doesn't hurt if you get used to the idea. Come in next week and talk to our Public Relations man. He will make you feel better. Next week Barr and Pooh-Bah went to see Mr. Prins, who spelled it different from Machiavelli. Said Prins, if you fight, housing will suffer badly; but so will the College for opposing housing. Said the chorus from the College, oh, woeful woe, but you are not right. If you think a fight is not good and call off the dogs, I will not answer the misstatements which have appeared in the press; but unless better reasons are brought forward, I will have to open fire before the College answers the suit so the public will not misunderstand the College.

August 19th the ultimatum expired. Barr shot off a ten ton bomb to clear the air. The August 20th *Evening Sun* said, "Stromeyer Assails Barr in Housing Row." Picking up pieces of the ten ton bomb and combing the plaster out of his hair, the Authority said:

"I'm sick and tired of fooling around with an outfit like that. We've filed condemnation suits, and it is in the hands of the courts. We're going to continue regardless of who likes it or who doesn't. . . .

"Why, just a few minutes ago I got a telegram from Washington asking me to 'let up.' Just that—to 'let up.'"

"They're afraid this will get to Congress, and it may hurt chances of getting an appropriation. Well, we don't care whether it gets to Congress or not. We're just a little country town with a housing problem which we are trying to solve. We're not trying to handicap anybody. We have the interests of the city of Annapolis at heart, and if we hurt an institution that brings revenue into the city, then we'd be injuring the city. We are certainly not trying to do that."

The Authority picked up the following bomb fragment and made of it a scream bomb to be released on the 22nd. The fragment:

Barr: "I inquired in Washington whether there was any precedent anywhere in the United States for a municipal housing authority seizing part of a college campus, but I could not discover that such a precedent existed. I can well believe it."

Screamed the Authority's bomb:

"This man [Barr] won't give the two sides of the story. And I don't like it. He's never told the true story about it. He never told his board. He never told it in Washington.

"We of the Housing Authority are unanimous. We have the law on our side and when you have the law, there is no argument. . . .

"Then Mr. Barr talks about precedent. There is a precedent. When we took land from the Indians, we had no precedent. This is something new. Housing is something new in this country."

That Man Barr went to New York on business but stopped off to see the editors of *Time*. The editors were pleased. Said one, "Do you think it would be possible to get a picture of the Chairman?" Thus Cockney Barr released a scream bomb which whistled the "all clear" signal as it fell. Arriving at the Annapolis Chamber of Commerce dinner, at which he was to speak on St. John's

plans for the use of its land, That Man was approached by a newspaper man who said, I understand *Time* Magazine is going to run something on this fight. Said Barr, Really? Tell me some more.

"Yes, I saw Bill Stromeyer walking to the Post Office yesterday with a package under his arm. I said, 'What's that you've got there, Bill?' He said, 'It's my picture. *Time* wants it.' And he hurried on toward the Post Office."

It was Donald's Lucky Day. He was pedaling off to 1313 Thirteenth Street on Friday the 13th to deliver a package, and didn't know the package under his arm was a Time Bomb, although you could hear it ticking for blocks. *Time* came out, picture and all, with "Rape of a Campus," on September 2nd.

Time also mentioned the seven little Injuns who, according to the *Sun* of August 27th, had hit the war path for old St. John's College. It seems that Barr, accompanied by Pooh-Bah carrying a huge blueprint of the College campus, had appeared at the afore-mentioned Chamber of Commerce dinner. The blueprint was adorned with the figures of seven little red Indians. Some were standing and healthy. The ones on the five and a third acres were laid out cold. Barr apologized for the appearance of the blueprint. An assistant in the College Architect's office had wished to make the map historically accurate and Barr had not the heart to reprove him. The Chamber of Commerce liked the Indians.

Screamed Mr. Stromeyer, "We went to St. John's because it is tax-free property." The *Sun* reported:

"Then Mr. Stromeyer aimed at the purses of the business men. The campus, he said, was tax-free property. If the authority had to build elsewhere, taxable property would be used.

"That would raise taxes for them, he said, and already forty-seven per cent of the city's property was tax free. Then he made a suggestion:

"If you can get the county to do what the city is doing (\$40,000) for the Housing Authority, then we'll forget about St. John's. You're all representative citizens of Annapolis and there is a proposition. I'm shooting it right down your teeth."

Said the Chamber, What a word has passed your teeth! The Chamber instructed its counsel to intervene in the condemnation proceedings as a Friend of the Court with a brief opposing the condemnation. The same evening a mass meeting of citizens opposed the grab by a resolution.

Barr's phone rang early one morning. Said Mr. Prins, "How do you feel?" Said Barr, "I feel fine. How do you feel?" Said Prins, "I'm all right. I want to congratulate you on your public relations technique. When the College folds up, as Mr. Stromeyer assures me it is going to do any day now, I would like to offer you a good job as a public relations man." Said Barr, "I like my present job. I think I shall run for a third term."

Said Mr. Prins, There are too many citizens writing letters to us and to Congress and to the President under the impression we can do anything about it. Why not call them off? Said That Man Barr, I cannot control the opinions of my fellow-citizens. They think you could stop it.

Press release September 6th:

"The United States Housing Authority will not intervene in a dispute between the Annapolis Housing Authority and St. John's College.

"Nathan Straus, administrator of the USHA, said, '... There is nothing in the United States Housing Act which authorizes the USHA to dictate to a local housing authority either that a particular site should be used or that a particular site should not be used for a housing project.'"

Barr liked USHA's candor. USHA did not have power to intervene in the dispute. Barr wrote to the Comptroller General. If USHA could not intervene,

why was it lending money to AHA to enable AHA to prosecute its suit? Replied the Comptroller General, USHA did lend AHA six thousand dollars as an advance on its new project, but the Comptroller General did not have to give opinions to outsiders on what was lawful.

On September 1st Mr. Felix Morley fashioned a shrapnel bomb out of fragments of Mr. Stromeyer. Echoed the papers from coast to coast:

"TYRANNY IN ANNAPOLIS"

"ST. JOHNS-MARYLAND CONTROVERSY MAY RIVAL FAMOUS DARTMOUTH COLLEGE CASE"

"TAX-FREE LAND UNDER HEAVY FIRE OF HOUSING LEADERS"

"THREAT TO ALL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS SEEN"

September 14th Mr. Stromeyer offered to buy one and one third acres of the back campus. Queried That Man Barr, Does this mean the condemnation suit is being withdrawn? September 19th Mr. Stromeyer said, No, but it would be nice to make this a "friendly" condemnation suit. Then the Authority would just take one and one third acres instead of five and a third and everybody would be happy. The Authority would defend the nation by putting petty officers' quarters for the Naval Academy on the one and one third acres. Said the *Sun*, It is nice to know the Authority did not need the five and a third acres for a low cost housing project and could really put it elsewhere, because everybody had had the impression that the Authority needed the land.

That Man invited the Authority and his counsel to appear at the Board meeting on October 14th. The Board wanted to hear this new plan to defend the nation in all detail. The Authority and his Reason appeared, reasoned, authorized, shoved down teeth, an-

nounced, denounced, cajoled, confuted, imputed, and trotted down the hill. After having well and exactly seen, surveyed and considered the matter, the Board said no. Said the evening papers to the Board as the Board left the meeting:

"COLLEGE AND HOUSING GROUP NOW IN ACCORD"

"St. John's Sells 1½ Acres for National Defense Project, but Housing Project will be Moved, Stromeyer says"

"William F. Stromeyer, local housing authority chairman, said today the Authority had reached an agreement with St. John's College officials on the purchase price for 1½ acres of College land."

"Originally, the Authority sought 5½ acres of College land for a regular low rent housing project, filing a condemnation suit when the College refused to sell the land."

"In an attempt to end the dispute with the College, the Authority abandoned its plans for a regular housing project on College land and asked the College to sell 1½ acres for a national defense project for the Naval Academy's warrant officers."

"Stromeyer said Stringfellow Barr, College President, had agreed on the purchase price for the 1½ acres. Barr is making a full report today on the compromise proposal to the College's Board of Visitors and Governors."

"Representatives of the College and of the Housing Authority will hold a conference at 3 p.m. today to reach a final settlement."

Said That Man Barr, "None of these proposals was accepted, in whole or in part, either by me or by any other agent of the College." The Board was "amazed."

At last reports Mr. Stromeyer was leaving the prosecution of the Authority's suit to his Reason, and had accepted a post on the Local Draft Board where he will see to it that everyone else does his bit to Defend the Nation. The Authority likes the Nation. The College likes the Republic better than the Nation or the New Republic. The Republic knows the difference between cooperation and corporation.—POOH-BAH.

Of Doom and Hope

REGARDLESS of how profound the inner unrest and upheavals of an era may be, we shall never be able to detach the present completely from the past. Nowhere in history has there ever been an absolute breach. Thus, in order to evaluate the present we shall have to turn to the past, whether we deal with the story of individual lives or with the history of entire nations and civilizations.

But is there actually a national character or soul? Or are those terms romantic generalizations, not more than mental pictures of certain group characteristics in which a spectator's vague impressions are reflected? We speak of the psychic serenity of ancient Greece; of the soldierly spirit of Rome; of the keen, artistic genius of France; of the mystic Russian, and the tragic Nordic, soul; and, it seems, by right. For in every homogeneous group dwells the dormant "consensus omnium" ready to assert itself, to transform the individual irresistibly into a supra-individual part of the "soul" of the group. Such potential submergence in the soul of the congregation, in the spirit of the assembly or of the national "awakening" and rising, bears witness to it.

Part of this group-soul, in abeyance at ordinary times, remains however constantly active and self-conscious in the thinkers and spiritual leaders of the age, in whom the trends and tendencies of present and past converge, and to whom we must turn in order to see the "spirit of the age" most clearly reflected.

As guides to the enigmatic German soul, we may take to-day such figures as Oswald Spengler and Thomas Mann, Count Keyserling and Stefan George, with men like Schopenhauer and Nietzsche as leaders to the more recent

mental past; for they reflect for us, as in a symbol, the struggle of the truly tragic German soul with its perpetual vision of a greater tomorrow and its ever-present apprehensions of stagnation, of decline and doom.

The history of Germany, more than that of any other people, has indeed been one of trying tribulations, full of sharp contrasts, of rapid rises and precipitous declines. For centuries her soil has been the physical and spiritual battleground for many decisive issues. The traces of the Reformation and of its gruesome aftermath, the Thirty Years' War, as well as those of the rise against Napoleon and the spirit of Western revolutions, are indelibly engraved upon her mental physiognomy. For her, as a nation, more than for any other, the problem of Decline in all its implications has always touched upon her very being, that is, upon the tragic irony of life. No wonder that her thinkers have taken the issue to heart; that in the hours of danger they have searched their souls and raised their voices with stern reproofs and pleas.

Moreover, all great German art and thought are essentially auto-psychological in nature. From Luther, through Goethe, to Nietzsche and Spengler, their favorite theme has always been: what is German, and who am I? But Nietzsche's vexatious self-search finds its counterpart in the clarity of Spengler's dazzling precepts, from which all Nietzschean doubts seem banished as by magic. Thus Spengler arrives where Nietzsche might have wished to end had not his dream of Greece and the vision of the Superman stood in his way. For, out of the abyss of Nietzsche's *Götzendämmerung*-gloom, out of his total rejection

of German culture in the *Abendröte*-mood, there still rings Nietzsche's tragic lament of frustrated hope: "There is something about the Germans that could be Hellenic," i.e., humanly perfect. By way of a final and stupendous effort, since Greece appeared to him irretrievably lost to the stamina and temper of modern man he then makes his pre-Socratic Hellenism of Dionysian hue the basis of his vision of the superman, an attempt unique in magnitude, full of an heroic courage in the face of Fate which only Spengler's fortitude of heart could equal. Both Nietzsche and Spengler are fighters to the core, though for different ends. For, Spengler preaches fortitude in the face of the fulfilment of our final destiny which, to him, spells decline and doom; whereas Nietzsche strives to build anew over the shattered remnants of our decadent civilization into a most distant beyond. But *Amor Fati* in the face of hopelessness and doom keeps Nietzsche and Spengler on a common ethical plane. "Man is something that has to be surpassed," preaches Nietzsche, the prophet and idealist. Man has to fulfill his destiny courageously as a soldier makes his last stand for a hopeless cause, knowingly embracing his doom; that is the triumph of true inner greatness, teaches Spengler, the intuitive determinist and realist. He knows that the past is past and can not be reborn; for all living organisms, and individual cultures as such, have their inherent law of life, unalterable and unchangeable in course. For such is the irreversible oneness of Fate. Attempting to escape it, be it by flight into fancies or by ignoring its dread realities, is as cowardly as it is futile in Spengler's eyes. Fate fulfills itself, whether we wish it or not. We can accept it willingly and thus free ourselves inwardly of it, or be crushed in its course; there is

no other choice. We, the last stragglers of a belated culture, have the unique and terrible advantage of knowing our fate, of being able to go down with open eyes.

Thus Spengler's concept of decline is closely linked with his relativity of history as well as with his concept of Fate, because decline, historical completion, means an end, the final fulfilment of Fate.

In his essay on Pessimism Spengler undertakes to refute the common attack upon his philosophy of history as being one-sided, pessimistic and deterministic. Pessimism, he replies, means to have lost and forsaken all tasks and aims. But there are innumerable tasks yet before us, much as they may differ from those of our preceding generations. Art—yes, but in concrete and steel; poetry—yes, but by men of iron nerves and unfailing will and realism, avows the lover of the Gothic, of Goethe, Beethoven, Bach, and Brahms. Times without productive philosophy and art can yet be great. Better no new philosophy and art than shabby substitutes and pseudo-arts, Spengler exclaims. He sees but one type of decline that is truly suicidal: the decline of the will; of the will to action and the will to triumph against the forces of an adverse fate. That is certainly not of the tenor of Schopenhauer's "Futile and In Vain"; it is of the Faustic spirit of Nietzsche's "And Yet!"

Spengler's interpretation of history as a sequence (or simultaneity) of independent cultural organisms which rise, mature and decline, by force of their individual inherent life-law, leaves indeed little choice as to the course of our future fate. With Schopenhauer he denies that the "history of mankind" has any inherent logic at all; that it has either meaning or aim. The over-optimistic trust in mankind's unending progress is shal-

low, absurd, and utterly without historical foundation. Only the life-cycles of those organic entities called "cultures" have tangible historic aims, direction, meaning and fate.

By way of comparison with previous cultures, Spengler then proceeds to prognosticate at length the inevitable course of Western civilization whose tempo alone might vary from that of its forerunners in history. He claims for himself the inestimable merit of having opened our eyes for the first time to the proper perspective, and to the irrepeatability, of the facts of history, to their inner logical inevitableness. His ominous Orphic "*Urworte*" spell: time, direction, tactics, physiognomic tact, life, compulsion, and fate. The cogent oneness of all being and occurring is the form in which Fate reveals itself to human eyes. From such view all chance is banished, *Anagke*, (inmost necessity) prevails in his world. And why do individual cultures alone possess such fateful significance in history? Because, as living organisms, they possess an inner unity of purpose, aim and understanding, by virtue of their common vitality, initiative, and will.

For the interpretation of Spengler's concept of decline in all its implications such as we face them to-day we have to consider his theories of society and state.

We do not live in a crisis, Spengler asserted twenty years ago, but in the midst of a catastrophe of stupendous proportions. We have just entered the era of World Wars which will reshape the form of the world and are moving towards the *Imperium Mundi*, the last phase of white race world-domination. *Amor Fati*, henceforth, means not to shrink from reality, to embrace the tragic view of life. Optimism will be cowardice, and scepticism is our last attitude. Life

will be once more a struggle on a tremendous scale in which "peace is a wish and war is a fact." In this gigantic gamble between races and nations, with everything at stake, we have to learn again that true statesmanship, great politics, means the complete mastery of the "art of the possible."

Germany is the borderland between East and West, Asia and Europe. As such she has always held a peculiar cultural and political mission. Yet—and here we seem to hear Nietzsche once more—Germany's political thinking has been small so far, lacking in realism, full of ideologies and fear of reality. But in history sound instincts and the will of the strong decide. The Nordic political instinct is based on the will to property, to power through possession. Only ideologists dream of justice, eternal peace, and happiness of the greatest number. Political romanticism is a sign of weakness: Liberalism, Communism, and Pacifism, are alike sentimental. We have to abandon the theories of one hundred and fifty years if we wish to survive, for they have failed. For a century and a half society and state have been systematically undermined. Thus we have forgotten that both are based on a *natural* order; that they are the vital organs of the cultural organism and not mechanical contrivances, set up at random and kept going at will.

Decline of state authority is a symptom of the loss of the natural social instinct and moral stamina of Western man. This results with compelling necessity in social chaos and economic collapse, as all revolutions stem from it. The state—the "being-in-form" of a people, means strength, unity and leadership. The state—that is, "the inner order for an outer end"; and this end is

power. Its contrary spells formlessness, decline in every direction.

Human society, on the other hand, is based on the natural instinct for the inequality of men; for the natural order of inner rank and value, once freely acknowledged by all. Hence, social decline means the trend towards the destruction of the natural order of men. Nineteenth Century Liberalism already displays all the trends toward Nihilism. From the Bastille to Soviet Moscow is one straight way, whether we admit it or not, holds Spengler. The final goal was always anarchy, economic chaos and communism which, in turn, tend towards a one-man dictatorship as their only solution. For one hundred and fifty years political rationalism has been striving for liberation from the state with the aim of leveling down the old, natural order. Political democracy and parliamentarism mean the bankruptcy of strong state's authority and efficiency, disguised under the slogan of "the rule of the people." In reality, true statesmanship is lacking, political opportunism, dilettantism and economic selfishness prevail. Yet, without strong politics there is no sound economy. Thus parliamentarism promotes the decline of the state which once the army preserved. Even wars are being waged now for economic advantage, and the "peace treaties" continue this warfare with different means.

To this Spengler adds the "Revolution of Labor" of the last one hundred years. A political Bohème has arisen preaching class-hatred and equality with the view of reducing the natural order according to achievement and distinction to the level of the mob, with the "dictatorship of the proletariat" as its ultimate goal. A wage-bolshevism has been instituted with strikes as its weapon and with the

economic ruin of private initiative and property plainly in view. That is the sinister "Revolution from Below." Unemployment and inflation follow in its wake.

The literary form of this long-drawn process towards bolshevization is called "Naturalism," a movement whose "heroes" are the sick, the physically, mentally, and socially misfit; and the poor, exploited, and enslaved wage-earner; in short, the proletariat as the one and only truly human being. Such types have been made the new saints, pets and idols of a "fourth class" literature. Along with it, the old ethos of work has been undermined, for work is no longer valued as man's best pride and chief purpose in life. On the contrary, it is being branded a curse to be shunned and has been degraded to the level of a political barter commodity.

Adding to this the ominous signs of the "Colored Revolution" just looming over the horizon from Asia to Africa, we have the symptoms and dangers of the "Decline of the West" such as Spengler beholds them. Is there any way out?

The one and only hope for the rise of a new spirit, able to cope with the last phase of our approaching doom, Spengler sees in the triumph and spread of what he terms "Prussian Socialism." It is a spirit not nationally bound and can manifest itself on the Thames as on the Spree or on the Ohio River. In fact, England has known it quite well in the course of her agitated history. Moreover, it is a spirit ethical to the core, inherent in the genius of our race, and has nothing in common with ephemeral political aims and aspirations. Spengler, the Bavarian by choice, calls it "Prussian" in order to emphasize the region of its most striking manifestation. Basically, it is an ethos of the will and has

been alive in the best of our race throughout the course of Western history. As such, it has become an inalienable part of the German soul, Spengler asserts, and has manifested itself again and again at great historic moments. Its workings in the individual, Spengler attempts to define by quoting the soldier, Count Schlieffen: "To talk little; to achieve much; to be more than one appears to be." That, Spengler holds, is "Haltung": not an empty pose and gesture, but self-discipline; a sense of duty, of truly Christian humility, of honor and self-sacrifice; an inner freedom gained from willing devotion to a supra-personal cause. Such spirit, he avows, will be able to conquer the sinister forces of the present World Revolution. It embraces, in a way, the ideals of ancient Rome as well as Nietzsche's will-to-power, ethically bound.

Yet, in spite of their kinship in "soldierly" spirit, the difference between Nietzsche and Spengler in political creed is most pronounced. Nietzsche's strongly individualistic "every man first for himself" is strongly contrasted with the Prussian "Each for all, and all for one," to which Spengler adheres. For Nietzsche, the early advocate of a "United States of Europe," nationalism and imperialism are and remain grave dangers engendering narrowness of view and heart, hampering sound cultural advancement and intercourse. The state is, to him, a danger to the individual as much as a benefit. To Spengler, however, it means the social disciplining of the individual under guarantee of free initiative of property and person. To him, the state is the natural organ of ordered society, the one and only safeguard of cultural and material advancement. Nietzsche feels Greek, and Spengler feels Roman in political view. They

differ fundamentally as to the purpose, function, and goal of human society: Nietzsche strives, first of all, to promote the great individual at the expense of the mass. Spengler strives to further the concerns of the group through the medium of those naturally endowed for leadership. Thus Nietzsche, the "good cosmopolitan," hates everything about the Prussian spirit and state but its soldierliness. To Spengler, the "socialist," Prussianism is a spiritual source, a sound instinct and view of life; a last guarantee for the honorable future—and exit—of our race; the last promise of the final defeat of political and mental particularism. Kant's categorical imperative, Nietzsche's scorn for individual happiness, and Hegel's sound political realism, he sees blended in it. "Socialism," Spengler knows, "means something different in every land: the Prussian worker is the only born socialist, therefore he has been the fool of all others."

With such views at heart, Spengler envisages the ethico-socialistic state of the future along the lines of the Prussian tradition, with the will to conquer, to dominate, and—to die. Such a state, he holds, is Germany's last mission; her last and only inner possibility in a world fraught with all the dangers of decline and impending doom.

But why, one is tempted to ask, this ever-lasting quest for "Form?" Why this constant self-search of the German soul, unless it is perpetually aware of an inherent formlessness, of the dangers of chaos deep within itself? And further, why is this concept of Decline of such particular appeal among the Germans?

Even Luther spoke of the "ever-impending danger of relapse into chaos and barbarism" on the part of the German soul. Nietzsche speaks of this soul as having its "caves and hind-caves"; and

he remarks, as if by way of self-castigation: "The German is always of yesterday and of the day after tomorrow; he has, as yet, no today." Both Spengler and Nietzsche view the German soul as an eternally restless, romantic world-rover and spiritual particularist; a perpetual "protestant" and conscientious objector in the face of the rest of the world. Only the faith in its own mission, the undying vision of a new way of life, can save this soul from chaos and utter self-destruction. Faust is of such nature. We find this trust in the German calling in Spengler's Prussian Socialism as much as in Nietzsche's Zarathustra-vision, the acme of an eternal metabolism. This eternal becoming and self-transforming has made the German soul the mental sphinx of Europe, just as Russia has been, and is to-day, the Asiatic sphinx. This inner unrest and threat of "formlessness" has always engendered the dangers of self-destruction. How often in their lives did Frederick the Great, the Goethe of Werther and Faust, Kleist, Nietzsche, and the countless lesser "romanticists," think of suicide? Only a few great Germans have ever been men of definite "Form." Goethe searched for it all his life. This search for, and process of "forming" is the very core of his concept of "Bildung." We touch at this point at the tragic duality and inner discord of the Faustic soul. It is, once more, the romantic German genius in its eternal quest for genuine "culture," for "the land of Greece" as Nietzsche saw it in his dearest dreams. But there also is in it the insurmountable fear of finality; as "form" means completion, fulfilment and—death. For beyond completion there is no future hope, there is only decline. Nietzsche who perhaps has been the most subtle interpreter of the German soul since Goethe, because he was

the subtlest auto-psychologist, knew all the tragic lures and snares of Dionysian ecstasy and self-abandonment. Thus he longed, more desperately than any other German, for Apollonian "sophrosyne," self-restraint and perfection. The sound synthesis of both was the vision of Goethe's sublime humanity, an aim so hard to achieve among Germans. And yet, it is the one and only, though truly super-human, self-redemption of this enigmatic German soul.

Between the Nineteenth Century thinkers and the mental crisis of today stands also the lonely, venerable, and tragic figure of Spengler's great antagonist, Thomas Mann. To him, as their preceptor in aesthetic form and taste, the pre- and post-War generations of German youth perhaps owe a profounder feeling of indebtedness and gratitude than to any other recent German thinker. Mann has pondered deeply upon the German soul, upon the meaning and values of human culture, and upon the problems and symptoms of decline. For almost half a century, his heart has been a spiritual battleground, and he knows that the fight is not over. Thus he has become the last great German "Protestant" at the end of an era in the face of crises and catastrophe: a restless searcher and wanderer between the times, a Nietzschean supra-German of unfaltering conscience and courage; a Schopenhauer Wagnerite with a nostalgia for Mozart's delicate simplicity of soul. Thus he is to-day not only one of the most highly cultured Germans, but the protagonist *par excellence* of the very best that ever dwelt within the German soul. Knowing its "caves and hind-caves," its inner discords, deep within himself, he has pleaded and warned and presaged more and more emphatically at the threshold of decline and collapse. The milestone

of this inner strife and struggle, his "Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen," has become a landmark in the history of the struggle of the German mind; an emphatic and desperate protest against the dangers threatening from within and without. Through the subtle and artistic medium of Mann's aesthetic irony, Schopenhauer's sceptic pessimism has triumphed once more. Slowly but constantly, the scope of Mann's perspective has widened, from the psychic perplexities of the individual outsider, over the degeneration of whole families and social groups, to the decline of national culture and of an entire civilization. To be sure, the "being-so-and-not-otherwise" of a character, this fateful and perplexing aggregation of heterogeneous mental, psychic, and social components that makes for individuality, has always demanded his first thought. But with his scope, his conscience, his sense of duty and responsibility, have grown tremendously.

Yet, Thomas Mann, the great preserver, interpreter and advocate, of everything genuine and best in culture is, in a sense, not a "re-former." To be sure, Hans Castorp's generation, as others before him, atone for the inner disorderliness and *decadence* of a whole era by volunteering for war and dying a soldier's death. That is a way out, but it does not create a new type of man or envisage a new way of life. It was left to two others besides Spengler to seek and to preach a new German type in the hour of crisis and collapse: the world-rover, Count Keyserling, and the poet-prophet, Stefan George.

Of the thinkers discussed, only Spengler (with the exception of Thomas Mann) reaches directly into the portentous events of Germany's recent past. That connects him with Stefan George and

Keyserling. All three have forseen and witnessed the post-War psychic collapse and have recognized in it the bankruptcy of moral stamina as of something very spiritual, indeed: the German soul had lost its vision of itself, and this alone was able to make breakdown complete. What once was inner "Form" and spirit, had long since hardened into an empty pose, into mere pretense and scheme. The spirit of Kant, Frederick the Great, Fichte and Hegel, had waned. A force, once sublime, had turned into a farce, into dead conventionality. Thus the old German type was lost and a new one, as yet, unborn. Inner instability, the triumph of mere formlessness, bore witness to that.

No wonder that the German soul, as has always been its way, alternately turned recluse and went wandering abroad in order to recover itself. The representatives of those two ways are for us Stefan George and Keyserling. Have they been able to create the vision of a new German type? That the example of one single individual is able to accomplish so gigantic a task has been borne out in the past by the life and work of Goethe.

Yet, it seems clear to-day that neither the formative vision of Spengler, nor that of George or Keyserling, has sufficed to fulfill this demand, no matter how heroic their individual efforts have been: they only represent symptoms of a temporary situation and of a new *striving* for form. In each of them the inner restlessness of the age is clearly reflected. Thus, each of them marks a new steppingstone in the progress towards a new German vision, none its fulfilment.

The new German type, considering its psychological background in history, certainly is unthinkable as a mere Spengler-

ian fatalistic realist; nor merely as a perpetually restless rover between the ages and zones of this globe in the sense of Count Keyserling; nor as the over-individualistic, mystic recluse of the priest-like Stefan George who dedicates his soul to Eros and Kairos, beauty and solemnity. Spengler belittled man for the sake of dread historic facts. Keyserling's individualistic superiority expands and enhances man at the expense of historic reality. George's type, however, remains for ever a personal, and nothing but a personal, task to itself. Yet, he represents a mystic innerness

and solemn contemplativeness which we never would miss in the German type of the future because it is of the best and most sacred tradition of the German soul.

To be sure, Spengler, George, and Keyserling, represent three different, though equally essential, German sides and trends. The vision of each alone would never suffice. But the sum-total of their influence upon the German future seems of the utmost importance. For all three are searchers, pathfinders, and leaders on a weary way: on the return of this German soul to its own true self.—
RICHARD KUEHNEMUND.

A Letter Home

DEAR Family,

Here's a letter that I have been planning to write to you since I arrived at St. John's, a letter which I think will tell you in some vague fashion what I am doing, what the college is essentially like, and how it differs from anything I have ever come up against before.

From a physical standpoint the college is very beautiful, with buildings of colonial types, some of them dating back to the Revolution. We have a freshman dormitory which had its calling presumably prior to the Civil War, but many of us have wondered if it didn't see the light of day somewhere around the Norman Conquest, and if the conquest isn't still going on. The campus with its quaint structures is in Annapolis, but one might also say it is out of it, for Annapolis is so rambling that it is difficult to say when one is in it and when one is not. Little byways, passes, government buildings with colonial approximations and cupolas, the Navy,

Chesapeake Bay and above all, St. John's, make Annapolis what it is, a little colonial seaport town with a taste of classicism and a vintage of modern times thrown in.

But the great thing about our college seems to be the ideas, ideas such as never known back home. At home we do some thinking, mostly, as you remember, in the kitchen, where we could look next door and see Mrs. Archibald looking at us. If our thinking was about important things it was only a poor approximation to that type of thinking and the ideas we use here. And the ideas are deep, so much so, that we find it difficult sometimes to extricate ourselves from them; yet if we are able, we explore those depths to test and retest the validity of causes, natures and insights. I have learned more since I have been here than I ever thought would be the case. I find, however, that many of our kitchen variety notions are subjected to great assault and attack by men who appa-

rently have a different variety of notions. Of course an intellectual fight ensues, and only adds to the delight, and somehow makes the manipulation of the mind and the thrust and parry of the ideas a pleasurable pastime. And yet I sometimes feel that many of my friends use ideas just for that purpose, namely to engage in a sort of pleasurable pastime. Some of them have all the ideas at their command, and are able to use them quite well in a sort of artistic way. With them they jibe, with them they taunt, and with them they play, but the result seems to be, at times, an intellectual rope climbing. They get nowhere but up the rope or down. You might call them intellectual jitterbugs, mindful of their steps, and cognizant of their dance, hurling their partner to the left, and then to the right, up and down, and in all ways at once. Yet they are limited by the dance itself, and the ideas fail to lead them to anything else except another step or another dance. And so you might conclude that these intellectual jitterbugs fail to conform to the object of the curriculum, which seems to be to make the student an intelligent person. And being an intelligent person seems to include the idea of morality, and a moral person is one who doesn't restrict himself to leaping, gliding or tripping in a rhythmic fashion. Perhaps, as some of us have heard, we are a graceless people, and no matter what we try to do in a right way we shall always be doomed to failure, and morals will remain something to be discussed and played with, and not something to be practiced.

Seminar is considered the hinge of the curriculum. It is there that we get the opportunity to put the liberal arts into practice, in a discursive way of course. We again discuss morality, politics, God and all other things imagin-

able. Possibly the only thing we haven't discussed is the seminar itself. Some have defined a seminar as a place where no one knows what he is talking about. But I know that this is not correct, because it is apparent that some do know what they are talking about since they state so in such an emphatic manner. They call those, who do know what they are talking about and who can show the others what they are talking about, dialecticians. The others of course just make a noise like a dialectician.

One time in seminar some of us had the floor, two or three at once, and we were discussing nothing. Somebody said you couldn't talk about nothing if it were nothing, and hence had to refer to nothing as almost nothing. And I think it makes some sense to talk about nothing as almost nothing, for who can talk about nothing unless it be Mrs. Archibald next door.

Besides we get into conflicting philosophies, and some hold that there is only one philosophy and anyone who doesn't agree is wrong or crazy. These people are commonly referred to as Aristotelians. I'm not quite sure what an Aristotelian is, but someone mentioned that he is a person who is right at the top of his voice. And that may be true for there are a few in our seminar who are always shouting and if you ask them if they could be wrong they think you are asking an absurd question.

Then there are Platonists. A Platonist is a person who can be just as definite if he isn't. He answers everything with a shrug of his shoulders and mumbles under his breath something which sounds like "can't afford to be dogmatic." And you see right there, there is difference of opinion. Yet you remember that we decided, in the kitchen, that a difference of opinion in important matters was

likely to lead to serious consequences; for if everyone is entitled to his own opinion, and his own opinion is all that can be stated concerning something, then it seems that the only way to settle such a difference of opinion is to resort to force. And you remember we decided that force was a bad thing. But here, apparently, those who hold various opinions don't think much about it, and they don't use force, so all that remains is the difference of opinion.

But the toughest people to handle are the eclectics. They take a little bit here and a little bit there, pulling down an argument from this source, reverting to a contradictory statement from that source, and generally confusing themselves and their listeners so that no one knows which way to turn next. On Friday they are Pragmatists, Saturday, Epicureans, Sunday, they are Thomists, and on Monday they have to be Stoics.

My roommate and I are now living in Gov. Oogle's house pronounced Ogle; Gov. Oogle pronounced Ogle was one of the first governors of Maryland. I sleep in the governor's four poster bed. It's so large that if three people were in it none would be aware of the others' presence.

So you see what an interesting time I am having here at St. John's and what a few ideas can do to one. Sometimes however, I get too much, and at nights, I am told by my roommate, I sit up in

bed screaming: "Nothing, which is not nothing, but almost nothing, Platonists and Democrats, God, soul, Oogle, pronounced Ogle, Ogle, Oogle, Oogle, Ogle!! I can only attribute these unusual occurrences to my recent and sudden entrance into the world of ideas.

The only thing I have forgotten to mention is the Navy. Everyday seems to be Navy Day here, and I have developed such an affinity for the noble lads that row, row, row your boat has ceased to be a slogan. But when I find my interests tending towards the nautical, I return to the world of ideas, not nothing but almost nothing, or Gov. Ogle pronounced Oogle. And from out of such a maelstrom of ideas I can conclude either that this is the stuff worth living for, or that they insure one a certain and well directed demise.

But be that as it may I can't deny that those things we were inclined to think important are now inconsequential, and that people like Mrs. Archibald next door only air their prejudices and that intelligence as well as morality comes at a premium.

I must go now because I am late to sculpture class. We did a head of a lady last week. This was my first venture. The rest will come later.

Love,

Sidney.

—WILBUR JERGER, '44

Second Fiddle

MUSIC at St. John's is in a singularly embarrassing position. It is neither flesh nor fowl, not enough of a liberal art to be completely sponsored by the College, nor yet wholly enough a fine art to be quite dependent as an extra collegiate activity. Thus it is periodically advertised by the Administration, and the rest of the time is left to fend for itself as best it can. This same situation last year, that of an ambitious program being carried on with the scantest of support, led to the virtual "death" of music, and its reestablishment as a fine art subject for a small nucleus of students who were concerned enough to go farther than the mere stage of "passive" music.

This year with a new music director and a large freshman class, great things were expected of the music program. A very good concert series was arranged with such artists as Ralph Kirkpatrick and the Budapest String Quartet, Glee clubs were organized, and Bach cantatas anticipated, and a thoroughly musical campus was expected. At the end of October the subscriptions for the concert series were so discouraging, although they were above the execrable total of the year before, that the College felt compelled to urge the Student Body to attend the series, which was costing the College one thousand dollars a year. The Glee club had a remarkably small, although enthusiastic membership, and the whole musical situation appeared to be one well warranting an explanation by the College.

We are not morbid prophets of disaster. We are not belittling the efforts of the College. We are wholly for a good musical program here at St. Johns. But as an essentially undergraduate medium

of opinion, we are forced to criticise the tactics of the College. The problem that the latter is facing is one which every liberal arts college worthy of the name must confront, and the more aid we can offer towards its solution, or the more advice we can solicit from our readers, the better we feel this problem will be solved.

At present we feel that music here cannot be properly included as a semi-liberal, semi-fine art. It is true that music was originally one of the Quadrivium, and as such has an essential place in the curriculum here. But its essential place in the curriculum is not being given it. It is still definitely outside the New Program, save for a few books on music read in seminars. Even concerts here are in danger of having a greater proportion of subscribers from the Navy and the town of Annapolis than from the College. If the fact were realised that it is only the people who regard music as a fine art who subscribe to the concerts, then the situation might be less painful than it is at present, in which everybody is not only expected to see music's connection as a liberal art, but is asked to act on that connection. In the future, perhaps, when the Program is so arranged as to have a full-fledged music course, with the twenty-five Great Works as its backbone, the College's dream might be realised. But it is no use trying to create a music course the wrong way around. Far better to admit that the concerts are for the benefit of the community comprising Annapolis and the Academy, and that the Glee club is only for those who are really interested before they join, than to try to stimulate a labored responsibility among the Student Body that they should attend the

concerts, and should first join the Glee club, later learning to appreciate singing.

Until a music course integrated with the New Program is worked out and set in motion, the solution would appear to us to be an admission that music at St. John's is yet a fine art, and that it

should be upheld by a nucleus of keen musicians, a nucleus always open to expansion, but never in such a weak position as to have to boost themselves, and force the rest of the Student Body to feel both guilt and condescension when they participate in the program.—NERO.

The Blues

DESPITE harrow arguments to the contrary, the slavery in the South was as cruel a form of subjugation as any other instance of this sort in history. A "good nigger" was one who was resigned to his fate, a "buck nigger," one who either thought for himself or tried to escape from the perpetual stick held above his head. Field hands, to ease their pains and sorrows and relieve the monotony of their task, sang songs. They also used songs as a way of speaking with one another without having the overseer understand their implications. The overseers, in turn, felt assured when the slaves sang, for a singing slave was almost always considered a "good nigger."

It was out of such an oppression that the work songs of the slaves were born. And it was from these work songs that the blues grew—the blues, a music that was sad and hopeful—hopeful because things were so bad they could get no worse. The long hard road just *had* to finish somewhere.

As Bessie Smith sang:

"See that long lonesome road,
Lawd, you know it's got ta en'."

The optimistic element in the blues is also well characterized in these old traditional lines:

"Lawd, the sun's gonna shine
In my back doh' someday."

Blues very often expressed a craving for drink or women, but in their true, early form blues were not obscene and had no sexual implications. It is only in later years that the blues, some people call "risque" came into popularity. As a matter of fact, this aspect has overshadowed the blues to such an extent that, today, many people believe that they are merely a legitimate way of expressing a dirty ditty. But in this type of music, the timbre of the singer's voice and the way the lyrics are built, are as important as the actual meaning of the words. There are a few singers whose version of almost any song would have a blues quality.

Blues, as did all other forms of jazz, reached its height in New Orleans. Such men as Tony Jackson and "Jelly-Roll" Morton carried them through the honky-tonks and "houses" of Storyville, the low high-life center of the Crescent City. And outside, on the sidewalks of the delta town, there was sung another type, a more real blues than that of the tonks, the blues sung by beggars on the street. Among these street singers were "Blind Lemon" Lemon Jefferson and Blind Willie Johnson. "Blind Lemon," who has become a legendary figure, made many

records which today are rare items. He experimented with blues structure and also used a great variety of new subjects for his records, one of them being "Wartime Blues" recorded at the time the United States entered the World War. As for Blind Willie Johnson, from a point of view of folk music as well as that of jazz, his blues are unsurpassed. His very basic guitar and his primitive moans are only stirring at first, but upon "listening" closely, many previously unseen qualities may be discovered in his songs.

There was still another distinct type of blues, a type destined to gain greater public favor than any other. These blues were the ones sung by women. They had a greater general appeal and were not confined to a certain locality. Ma Rainey and Mamie Smith were the first known singers in this category. Both were famed among the Southern Negroes. They often travelled from village to village and were always exuberantly welcomed. Ma Rainey, who was probably the greatest blues singer of her time, frequently had her audience in tears. Tears that came because Ma and her listeners knew something—something that hurt and something that was exciting.

Ma Rainey greatly influenced Bessie Smith, who became the most popular of such singers. Bessie had a low, throaty voice and sang her blues mean and lowdown. Because of these qualities and her extreme sincerity, many connoisseurs consider her greater than Ma Rainey. Anyone who likes blues is emotionally affected by Bessie Smith. We have known some who, after listening to her records, cry; some who feel they

must go out and get drunk; and others who can't believe that anything can be so sincere. Her records have sold over five million copies and she has been surnamed, "Empress of the Blues." In 1936, Bessie was driving to Memphis to appear in a vaudeville show. Her automobile was in an accident and she was seriously hurt. Quick medical attention might have saved her, but the nearest hospital would not allow Negro patients. She died, and her death showed that there was still a very good reason to sing the blues—the original reason.

Today, singers are introducing a new interpretation of this style of music. A modern swing rhythm replaces the old blues feeling. However, the spirit is not altogether gone. Because of renewed interest in true blues, some old timers like Ida Cox are making records again.

Very interesting is Billie Holiday's record, "Strange Fruit," which was a revolt against injustice.

"Southern trees bear a strange fruit,
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root,
Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze,
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees."

RECOMMENDED

Jesse James—*Southern Casey Jones*—(Decca)
Blind Willie Johnson—*Dark Was the Night*—
(Vocalion)
Jelly-Roll Morton—*New Orleans Memories*—(general album)
Winin' Boy Blues—(Bluebird)
Bessie Smith—*Two Albums*—(Columbia)
Ida Cox—*Deep Sea Blues*—(Columbia)
Billie Holliday—*Billie's Blues*—(Vocalion)

Many good blues made recently by race artists are available at most music stores. Rare items may be ordered from the H. R. S. Music Shop in New York City.—AHMED ERTEGUN, '44.

The Awakening

FATHER died when I was ten.

I can't remember much of my childhood except for one or two incidents, but, father's death, or rather, his funeral, stands out vividly in my mind. It seems to me now, that this thing, this—I do not know how to describe it except by calling it an impression. Anyway, this impression was the start, the impetus, you might say, that made me alive. That sounds odd; making a child of ten alive, sensitive, impressionistic; but, it isn't. It is tragic to see an apathetic child; it stirs me more, makes me feel more despondent than seeing a grown hulk of a man, a human derelict, with dead eyes and decay oozing from him; for apathy is decay. For the child has yet to grow and is dead in the embryo; while the man has grown. Enough of this, though.

I can say that this is what woke me, for I have lived a good many years and can look back on them with a sense of perspective, from an objective plane almost. I cannot say from a purely objective plane; I've lived long enough to realize that men do not look at things entirely in the light of objectivity. They cannot. So what I say will in some ways be influenced by the life I have lived, the experiences and impressions that I have gone through, and which I have garnered up to now. However, there are certain sensations and images which I can recall from the time of the funeral, that are untouched, as far as I can discern, by the years and what they have held.

As I said before, my childhood, up till my tenth birthday, can offer me now no memories. It is an unavoidable gap; but, for some reason, mine was that way.

And it does not include any palpable memory of Father of any length.

That is another odd fact. I have no picture, that is, no full length portrait, so to speak, of Father. I can recall certain incidents; but they have no continuity. The picture is incomplete and will always be so. The several strokes of the brush that make up the image are spasmodic. And so, when I am presented with a picture of Father, an old daguerreotype, or an early photograph, I feel as if I had met such a person, had known such a person; but, no matter how hard I try, I cannot link the two together. I cannot imbue that photographic reproduction with any sense of life.

Perhaps I might have had some definite picture of Father if I had seen him sometime before the end. He was sick for a month before he died. That is, he was in a hospital that month. I don't know how long he was ill before that.

(I have heard about him from friends and relatives, though, in the course of time. He was always jolly; had laughing eyes and a mobile mouth with that upward twitch at the ends which designates many good natured people. He was always thinking of some new deviltry, and thought nothing of making himself perfectly ridiculous in order to provoke a laugh. Everyone loved him.)

I was taken to see him in the hospital, but, for some reason they would not allow me to visit him. I was left outside his door while Mother went into his room. I remember that door. Not that it was any different from any other patient's door along the corridor. It was just a plain, white door with a common brass knob and with a number on it. It opened noiselessly and closed the same

way. All the doors opened and closed the same way. All the people entered through those doors and exited from them—noiselessly. Everything was quiet; was mute. It was deadening. But the doors fascinated me and I watched them, a scared, wondering, little fellow with big eyes. Then, the door of father's room opened and Mother came out. And I caught a glimpse of a figure lying in bed.

A second time the same thing happened. I did not see him. Only this was under different circumstances. Father had been taken to his sister's home. Mother knew about this and she brought me there. But, his sister had already sent him to the hospital. I remember there were angry words between Mother and father's sister. I thought that I was the focal point of the argument, but, I see now that I was merely a minor issue. Mother was angry, as I see it now, because they had taken Father from the hospital and then shipped him back, as if he were a curiosity. Mother was quite right in being mad; for Father was in a critical condition. It was a Sunday when this incident occurred; and the following Wednesday, Father died.

So, you see, when the day of the funeral came and all were gathered, friends and kin, I neither considered myself one or the other but felt like an outsider, a stranger—or, to phrase it more aptly, an alien. One, who had no realization of who had actually died and what was actually happening, but, who simply saw the stark physical properties of the scene. And even these were somehow a bit askew, being unfamiliar.

And as such, I felt no emotion. That is, I did not feel like crying; nor, did I have that greater grief in which weeping

has no part. (How can a child feel the latter emotion, you are perhaps wondering? All that I can say is this: you would be amazed at the emotion of a child, as to deepness, in comparison with that of an adult, if the former's could be fully expressed. As it is, it is inarticulate.)

On the other hand, I was not happy; nor was I indifferent. I was permeated with a vague curiosity, a curiosity bordering on the metaphysical, which ran around in my head something like this: Dead? Father's dead.... I will not see Father anymore? *They* say so.... *Who* was my Father?... The man who every night came home just before supper. Who used to pick me up and against whose cheek, with its day's stubble, I would love to rub my own.... He is gone. *They* say so.... Then I will never again smell the faint aroma of cigars which tickled my nose....

You must realize that I am giving expression to these thoughts; that, perhaps, they were not as defined as I have made them; that, perhaps, they were not even in my mind and that, now, I am creating them. I will not argue with you on any of these points. Let it suffice that at ten they were there in an inarticulate state.

The ceremony took place in a long, narrow room. My seat was in the first row and I had to walk the length of the room in order to get to it. The coffin was at the head of the aisle and as I walked toward my chair, with my eyes on the coffin, I was struck with a vague similarity. The room seemed to me a second coffin, only on a larger scale. It was a large, plain box filled with little chairs and with moving dolls. And the cynosure was the raised toy box at the head of the larger box. It was funny.

I took my seat and found myself between Mother's sister, Aunt Esther, and my six year old brother, Lennie. Mother I did not see.

I looked at Aunt Esther. She was crying quietly; her eyes were red, and her fat face was streaked with the lines of her tears which were running unconcernedly off her face and onto her broad bosom. Her buttocks, bulging over her chair, pressed against my thigh, and, I moved away from her to the end of my chair. She sobbed spasmodically throughout the entire ceremony.

I tried to sit quietly on the end of my chair. I could not. I grew fidgety. Aunt Esther noticed my uneasiness and sought to soothe me. She drew me towards her. I resisted. Something caught her attention for a moment and she let me go. In that instant I nudged Lennie and whispered fiercely in his ear. "Change seats with me."

He shook his head; so I grabbed one of his fingers and pulled it backwards. He was going to yelp; but, I glared at him and muttered, "Sh!"

Aunt Esther noticed the struggle. She pulled me toward her and asked me what was wrong. I told her that I wanted Lennie's chair. She must have felt my antagonism for her and realized that Lennie would be more docile in her hands, for she leaned over, nearly smothering me with her bust, and whispered to Lennie. Then, she pulled Lennie out of his chair; and I wriggled out of her embrace and slid over to the vacant chair. I took a deep breath.

Of the ceremony itself, there is only one incident which stands out vividly in my mind. It was the unveiling of Father's face. I mean, of course, that anyone was now allowed to have one last, fleeting glance of his face before the lid

was battened down, so to speak, and no further mortal eye could gaze upon him.

I was intently watching those persons who were filing around the coffin when suddenly I heard Lennie's petulant voice crying, "I want to see Daddy. I want to see Daddy."

I had not realized it, but, the thought had never entered my head to go up to the coffin and look at Father. Why had I not thought of it? I became afraid. An abject terror seized me and I cringed in my chair.

Of what was I afraid? Of what is a child afraid when he awakes in the dark? He does not know. Nor did I. We can explain, perhaps, of what the child is afraid. But the child cannot. And I was a child of ten then.

In my fear I gripped Lennie's arm; and my fingernails must have bit into it, for he cried out.

I awoke then.

In a quavering voice I whispered to Lennie, "You mustn't go up there; you mustn't. There is nothing to see. Nothing to see, you hear, nothing to see. Daddy isn't there."

He looked at me with wondering eyes.

"Daddy isn't there?"

"No."

"You sure Daddy isn't there?"

"Yes."

"But Mamma is up there."

And he pointed to the coffin where Mother was now standing.

"Don't point."

That was the only thing I could think of, at the moment, in answer to what he had just said.

"Mamma is there. Let me go—"

"Mamma has to be there. She doesn't want you."

He subsided, then, but I still held his arm.

Mother was standing beside the coffin. I did not entirely believe Lennie, until I looked now and saw that he was right. She was there, and, as I looked at her, I knew that I had lied to Lennie. Mother did want us. I saw that in her eyes as she caught my glance. She made a slight gesture with her arms, imploring me to come to her.

I looked away quickly as if I had not seen her, and riveted my eyes on the blank wall ahead of me.

I was still afraid.

And as I sat gazing at the wall, I became aware of what I was in fear of. I was afraid of Aunt Esther and Mother and all the people in the room; Uncle Charlie, Uncle Harry and Uncle Sam; Aunt Mary, Aunt Sarah and Aunt Martha; even Lennie.

Lennie seemed to me the epitome of them all. He was curious. He wanted to see something; it did not matter what. He saw the adults parading around the coffin and his curiosity was piqued. Only his curiosity was ingenuous.

The adults seemed to me to be hypocritical. They knew what was there. They saw something; and they were feigning pity for it, and sympathy for Lennie and me. They were shamming, I said, for they do not know me. They have never met me, nor seen me except for today. Uncle Charlie and Aunt Esther only know me. And I have met Uncle Charlie only twice; and I have stayed at Aunt Esther's house for one week when I was eight. Yet they were looking at us with sympathy. They were crying. They were spilling their tears on Father's face. They—

For the first time that afternoon something stirred inside of me; a feeling for Father, one that was wrought only for him and that was free of all other as-

sociations. Of course, it was engendered by the past impressions; but the effect is still the effect even though brought about by the cause, and can stand by itself for such as it is.

I wanted to be alone, away from all these people with their prying, sympathetic eyes. I wanted peace and time to mull over in my child's mind this eternal question of death. I wanted solace, a personal kind, not the impersonal and seemingly diffident sort that was now being shown on all sides of me. And I wanted faith. Not faith in God; for that is too intangible for a child. But a faith, or should I say, a mooring, that I could cling to amid this bewilderment that was choking me.

And these very emotions I associated with Father. I felt that they were his feelings and that he was only waiting for the ritual to be gone through before his will would execute them.

As I think of that moment, now, of many years ago, I am amazed at the depth of these first stirrings. It seems fantastic that I, at the age of ten, when my little mind was, as yet, only in the stage of a foetus, should try, unconsciously to force open the womb prematurely and assume a bastardly growth. The more I think about it, the more I wonder at it. But my wonder assumes catastrophic proportions when I recall what followed.

For gradually gaining momentum, my emotion finally engulfed me. Tears were in my eyes, and, I felt as if I were choking, for my throat was tightening. And dimly I heard the closing words of the service

'Ashes to ashes, and dust to dust.' and an hysterical sob from Aunt Esther.

I was outside finally, and, as I breathed heavily of the late, afternoon, autumn

air, my head cleared. Everyone was bustling about trying to find a suitable carriage. Aunt Esther called me, but I pretended not to hear and wandered among the crowd. At the last minute, someone found me and put me in the first carriage. I replied sullenly to the few questions asked me, and sat huddled in the corner oblivious of everything. We stopped once for a bottle of spirits of ammonia, but, otherwise, the long ride to the cemetery was passed with hardly a word spoken. I dozed fitfully all the way. The *clop-clop* of the horses' hooves was soothing.

It was evening when we reached the cemetery. The wind was biting; and the people had gathered in small groups to keep warm. I was cold. I was shivering. I walked briskly along the path among the tombstones. A small pebble lodged in my shoe and I stopped to take it out. Ahead of me was a mound of loose dirt. I hopped over to it and sat down; untied my shoelaces, pulled off my shoe, and took the pebble out and threw it at a stone angel a few paces away. I missed. I tried again with one of the pebbles lying at my feet. This time I hit squarely on the face.

"What are you doing, sonny?"

I turned around; and, I saw a man in a worn, leather jacket, in baggy trousers, and with clay stained shoes leaning on a shovel.

"Oh, nothing. Just taking a pebble out of my shoe."

I quickly slipped my shoe on and bent over it to tie the laces.

"Maybe you were, son, maybe you were. But I wouldn't throw pebbles at the tombstones if I were you. That's blasphemy."

I did not know what "blasphemy" meant, but, the intonation given the word, hushed, awe filling and tinged with

a nameless fear, made me feel guilty of some great offense, and brought me back to the moment from which I had momentarily escaped.

"I didn't mean anything. Really, I didn't."

"I know you didn't, son. You don't know what these stones mean. They are the mute signs of the living to the dead that death has not wholly separated them. Now, if your father died—"

He stopped; looked at me oddly and then at something behind me.

"I'm sorry, son."

He picked up his shovel and walked away.

I got up and clambered up the mound of dirt to see what he had looked at. There, below me, was the pit. It seemed very deep from the top of the mound. I kicked some dirt and watched it dribble down the side of the mound and bound off into space; all the while trying to think what that old man was sorry about.

The others were now close by. I jumped off the mound.

The pall bearers with the coffin were coming up the pathway.

They were at the grave.

They laid the coffin on slings stretched across the pit and slowly lowered the black box until it came to rest at the bottom.

I found my way to Mother's side. I slipped my hand into hers. It was warm and my cold fingers began to throb with the warmth. Lennie was beside her, snuggling against her thigh.

Mother did not move a muscle during this last ceremony. Except for one quick movement near the end, I thought she was one of the carved stone figures that were all about us.

As the first spade full of dirt landed with a thud on the coffin, her hand tightened over mine.

Then, we were home.

I refused to eat any supper, but went to my room, undressed, got into my pyjamas and climbed into bed.

I cried. For no accountable reason, I burst into tears. I was ashamed and buried my head in the pillow. I heard someone coming into the room. I stifled my sobs and pretended to be asleep.

"Are you awake?"

It was Mother.

I did not answer but breathed deeply.

"He's asleep."

That was Aunt Esther.

"Thank God for that," I heard Mother say. "It has been a trying day. I am thankful it is over. The children behaved splendidly. But they need rest. I, too. My nerves are frayed to their last shreds. I still cannot forget *his* face. I did not realize that the disease, what a horrible thing it is! had ravaged him so. His face was so guant; his eyes were sunk into his very sockets. But that look on his face, in his eyes, that look of agony, of heart rendering pain, my God! I could hardly control myself. He must have died in the middle of his worst attack."—H. W. S.

IMPROPAGANDA

PRESIDENT Lincoln was a great man. The people made the Republican Party so he could get elected. President Willkie is a great man. He made the Republican Party so he could get elected.

In Lincoln's day the people went to the Polls and voted in Booths. Modern science and invention now bring the Polls to the people. Caesar had his Brutus, Lincoln had his Booth, and George III did not profit by their example. If that be reason, make the most of it.

Now the word of God came unto

Jonah saying, ARISE, GO TO NINEVEH AND CRY AGAINST IT; FOR THEY DEPART FROM THE AMERICAN WAY. But Jonah rose up to flee from God and took ship into the Tennessee Valley. But God sent out a great wind upon the Tennessee Valley and there was a mighty tempest so that Jonah's ship was like to be broken. Then the mariners were afraid and they cast forth the wares that were in the ship to lighten it unto them. But Jonah was gone down into the innermost parts of the ship and he lay fast asleep. So the mariners cast lots that they might know for whose cause the wind swept the valley, and the lot fell upon Jonah, and they saw that Jonah was their Jonah. So they took him up and cast him into the water. And Jonah was like to have drowned.

But God prepared a great Fish to pick up Jonah. And Jonah spent some days with Fish. Then God spake unto Fish and he vomited Jonah out upon the land.

So Jonah arose and went unto Nineveh and preached unto it of the American Way and said, Yet forty days to save Nineveh; yet forty days and Nineveh shall perish.

And the people of Nineveh believed God and they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil which he said he would do unto them and he did it not.

But it displeased Jonah exceedingly and he was angry, that God did not any evil unto Nineveh. And Jonah went out of the city and sat on the East Side and there made him a booth and sat under it till he might see what would become of the city.

And God prepared a network to grow up over Jonah that it might be a shade over his head. And Jonah was exceeding

glad because of the network covering his booth. But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day and it smote the network that it withered. And the sun beat upon the head of Jonah that he fainted and requested that he might die and said, I do well to be angry. And God said, Thou hast had regard for the network for which thou hast not labored, neither madest it grow; which came up

in a night and perished in a night. That is the American Way.

Then the people of Nineveh cast lots upon Jonah; and the Republican Party went the American way. And Jonah Willkie prospered according to the manner of his people; and the people erected a monument unto Jonah and his booth and called it Jonah Willkie's Booth.—ERASMUS.

Books

TO CARTHAGE THEN I CAME

Love in the Western World. By Denis de Rougemont. Translated by Montgomery Belgion. Harcourt, Brace and Co. \$3.00.

If the history of the West during the past nine hundred years may be seen as a tragic sequence having its embodiments on various planes of action, then, just as the present war is proving to be a catastrophe or turning-point, where the literal, allegorical, and moral planes of action intersect, so the conception of *Love in the Western World* marks a major, even if not yet widespread, recognition on the allegorical and moral plane.

De Rougemont is primarily a moralist and a theologian writing in the guise of an historian: the subject of his history is the birth, growth, consummation, and degradation of the myth of passionate love; he is a theologian because he views the myth as the secularization of a heresy about the relation between the world and man's love of God; and, because he is a theologian, he must become a moralist, admonishing us to discover a casuistry of act, virtue, and thought in order to encircle, regulate, and lift up that which

has become a second nature in most of us. Or to shift to the image in the *Phaedrus*, that of the charioteer trying to guide a chariot drawn by two headstrong horses, black and white; whereas the Socrates in that dialogue placed his rhetorical emphasis on the dangers of letting the black horse get out of control, De Rougemont is concerned to show what happens when the white horse takes the lead in running away with the chariot, and how both the irrational and the supra-rational brute are swayed by something which is essentially the same, and that the movement of both must be curbed by the rational charioteer.

It is a truism to ask, in comparing the modern West with any other civilization, why is it that passionate love plays a much more important role in our conception of human living than in that of a Greek, Indian, or Chinese. The Greeks, for example, looked upon passionate love as a kind of temporary madness, and usually more of a calamity than a blessing: the tragedies of Aeschylus and Sophocles and the comedies of Aristophanes ignore romantic love, and even Euripides, who comes the nearest of any to being like a modern dramatist,

associates it with an inhuman plan of revenge in the *Medea* and with incest in the *Hippolytus*. Even Plato, who is supposedly the real teacher of the doctrine of love to the West, talks of love as a frenzy and, if to be desired, still a gift from the gods rather than an ordinary human passion. Yet today what publishing house would be doing business if there were no novels about romantic fornication; and we need hardly remind ourselves what the chief stock-in-trade of the movies is. Most of us feel that romantic love is the normal and desirable, or at least the vulgar but necessary, consummation of human experience,—women are perhaps more frank about this than men, yet the men usually have a sneaking feeling that the women are right. This everyday demand for passionate love, like bread and circuses, is the general phenomenon, whose causes *Love in the Western World* is investigating.

But perhaps more leading and suggestive, for any causal inquiry, than the mere widespreadness of the belief that falling in love is the one event which manages to compensate for the rest of the dull round of human destiny are two other 'appearances,' namely, the unimportance, or even irrelevance, of the person loved in comparison with the experience of passionate love itself. The first phenomenon, namely, that intensity of experience rather than a duly ordered relation to another human being is the important thing, will probably be more readily admitted than the second; indeed, for example, in the *Heart's Intermittences* sections of *Remembrance of Things Past*, Proust hardly does more than to argue, though with great subtlety and skill, that it would not matter with whom you fell in love or what you did about it, if only Time would let you stay in love

forever. But as regards the second alleged 'appearance,' if the reader will look scrupulously into his own mind, he will probably find that his thoughts of love are bound up with thoughts of death or surrogates for death. And if we turn to the mythopoetic arts, we find that from the Tristram romances, through *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Le Cid*, and *Phèdre*, down to *Le Rouge et le Noir*, *Madame Bovary*, *Wuthering Heights*, *Anna Karenina*, *Rosmersholm*, or even Garbo's *Camille*, love is not only linked to death but somehow achieves its consummation in death alone. And we have all read in the newspapers of the boy and girl who committed suicide after going to see *Mayerling*. D. H. Lawrence remarked upon the necessity of the mutual involvement of romantic love and death as a sign of a sickness inherent in the nature of romantic love, but he did not prolong discursively his flash of insight.

For De Rougemont the Tristram and Iseult story is the eminent case of the myth of romantic love. He finds the two phenomena noted above present in a disguised form: the emphasis upon the intensity rather than the humanity of love may be detected in the episode of the love-potion, Tristram's marriage with the second Iseult, and even in the singleness of Tristram's passion, if intensity of feeling is increased by the oneness of the object; and the preoccupation with death, apart from the ending of the story, in the various obstructions which Tristram and Iseult willfully and deliberately set between themselves and the consummation of their love. Now, granted those two phenomena, by what hypotheses can they be saved?

De Rougemont argues that the Tristram story is essentially a myth about the kind of love the Troubadours were writing songs about in Provence of

the twelfth century, and furthermore that troubadour love-poetry bears the same relationship to the Catharist (Albigensian) heresy as does surrealism today to Freudian psychoanalysis. The Catharist heresy was the way in which a Manichaean doctrine of mystical love corrupted Christian love during the twelfth century. According to the Catharist heresy, the world was not made by God but by an evil daemon; as the world was wholly evil God would never suffer Himself to become incarnate in it, that is to say, Christ was not "very God of very God" and the second Person of the Trinity was much inferior to the First; and as man was a part of the world, he could only be saved through the cultivation of a mystical desire for God whereby he would escape completely from the world through death and lose his own substantiality, his very being, in oneness of essence with God. Yet as man is still within the world and God is infinitely distant, the spiritual preparation for this mystical desire would be a love which does not accept the beloved person as he or she is but employs him only as a pretext for intensity of passion, a love which is hopeless rather than happy and which looks forward to being transfigured by death. Thus the most perfect secular image of the Catharist desire for God is an adulterous love which obeys the code of chivalry and purifies itself in death.

In opposition to this doctrine, the Catholic Church taught that the world was made by God, Who became incarnate in it, that man could, by the gift of grace, attain to a spiritual communion with God, and that as a part of the world wherein God had been incarnate, man should express his love of God through the "love of his neighbor." Thus the

secular image of communion with God is found in the sacrament of marriage.

De Rougemont names the Catharist love *eros* and identifies it with the love defined by Socrates in the *Symposium*, which climbs from beautiful bodies to beautiful souls and to beautiful institutions and occupations, and thence to the contemplation of beauty itself. This Platonic love, says De Rougemont, dies to the world on the ground that the world is wholly evil, and, without charity, leaves its neighbor to shift for himself. Yet if we are to be exact historically, it is the Plotinic rather than the Platonic conception of love which turns you away from the love of your neighbor; in the *Republic*, it is surely as much through love as by legal compulsion that the philosopher goes back down into the cave in order to serve the state.

Thus the doctrine of romantic love, a disguised passion for a mystical death, is the great heresy to which the West succumbed in spite of its true virtue, which lies in the exercise of Christian charity. De Rougemont surveys the past five hundred years in the West as manifesting the gradual breakdown of the Tristram myth, which, although arising from the Catharist heresy, served to set up limits to pure passion and to hold it in check. "Romantic love," as prevalent today, is an unconscious longing for death, at a stage of arrested development.

Love in the Western World may be divided into four parts: the first part, which comprises *The Tristram Myth*, *The Religious Origins*, and *Passion and Mysticism* is analytical and theological rather than historical in its emphasis, and is the most carefully and fully thought out section in the book; it comprises, so to speak, the exposition of elements and causes.

The second part, *The Myth in Literature*, is an historical survey of the gradual popularization and degradation of the Tristram myth in poetry and the novel. Unfortunately it is somewhat hit or miss in its scope: De Rougemont discusses *Romeo and Juliet* but not *Othello* or *Antony and Cleopatra*, Corneille's *La Place Royale* but not *Le Cid*, and his glance at the fate of the myth in the nineteenth century is very cursory indeed. There are however some brilliant passages, such as his analysis of *Phèdre* as a chastisement inflicted by Racine upon the myth, in making the romantic heroine incestuous; or that of Don Juan as the inverse, or Satanic counterpart, of Tristram; or finally, his analysis of *Tristan und Isolde* as the artistic consummation of the myth.

The fourth part is *Love and War*, where he draws an extremely interesting series of parallels between the styles of making love and waging war in different ages: the elaborate rules of the Courts of Love in the twelfth century are matched by the equally elaborate code of knightly honor in warfare; in the fifteenth century, wars in Italy were carried on by mercenaries, and at the same time the courtesan occupied a respectable position in society; in the eighteenth century the military tacticians made the art of war as "scientific" as a game of chess or an experiment in Newtonian mechanics, and the art of seduction attained the dignity of an applied science, as may be seen in *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*; early nineteenth century romanticism reintroduced passion into love at the same time that Napoleon reintroduced passion into warfare and won his battles by breaking the classical rules; during the nineteenth century proper, most wars were fought for economic reasons or in a flurry of senti-

mentality, like the Franco-Prussian War, and similarly marriages were arranged upon an economic or sometimes sentimental basis; and finally, in the Fascist state, passion is transferred from the individual to the state: love is depersonalized by eugenics, and warfare, by complete mechanization; and then, curiously enough, just as romantic lovers are transfigured in death, so the Fascist state can attain its consummation only in war. The reader wishes, however, in going over both *Love and War* and the *Myth in Literature*, that De Rougemont had tried to develop an analogical dialectic showing how successive manifestations of the myth were brought about by the preceding ones.

The last part of the book comprises *The Myth v. Marriage*, and *Active Love, or Keeping Faith*, where De Rougemont writes as a moralist, viewing a world where the Tristram myth, which once governed men's lives, has broken down completely and pulled down marriage with it. At times, in this last section, he appears to be uncertain whether there is a Manichaean and irreconcilable opposition between passion and charity, or whether romantic love can be made to submit to the rule of reason and charity. Now though we condemn as wrong our proneness to romantic passion, we must not forget that while we can always discipline or temporarily trick or coerce a part of our nature, we cannot expunge it from us, even though St. Paul says, "there be some who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake." De Rougemont's own Kierkegaardian solution to the "break-down of marriage" lies in keeping faith "by virtue of the absurd, by virtue of an old promise, of human unreason, of a reason of faith, of a pledge given to God and underwritten by God."—C. G. WALLIS.

BOOK NOTES

We are pleased to see that Franz Kafka's novels and stories are being published in America. Alfred Knopf plans to print a new edition of *The Castle*, which he issued some years ago, this time with an introduction by Thomas Mann. In early December the Twice A Year Press will publish *A Franz Kafka Miscellany* which will include shorter works that have never before appeared in book form in this country. Max Brod, Kafka's literary executor, and Edwin Muir are translating and preparing the book. *Amerika*, Kafka's first novel, has recently been brought out by New Directions. *The Trial*, Kafka's other novel, has been previously published by Knopf, but is now out of print. If Knopf would reissue this with *The Castle*, all of Kafka's novels would be available in America. . . . Members of the St. John's faculty have been at work during the summer on books for use in the program. Mr. John Kieffer is preparing a new Greek grammar for the first year language tutorials, and Mr. George Bingley is translating Cantor's *On Transfinite Numbers* for the fourth year students. The books will be published by the St. John's Bookstore during the year. Mr. Charles Wallis, who has done more translating than any other member of the College community, adds another first translation into English to the St. John's books. This is Pico della Mirandola's essay *On the Dignity of Man*. . . . Freshmen at St. John's have always read Aristotle in the Oxford translations, with the exception of the *Physics* which first year students read last year in Mr. Wallis' version. This year they will read Richard McKeon's revised edition of the Oxford translations. Random House plans to publish this in

January. Mr. McKeon, who is Dean Of Humanities at the University of Chicago, has lectured at St. John's. His publishers have arranged his work in one large volume. This will contain the *Ethics*, *Politics*, *On Generation and Corruption*, *Physics* and *Metaphysics*, *De Anima*, *Organon*, *Poetics* all in complete form. Besides these there will be selections from Aristotle's other writings.

Random House is publishing other Great Books. In fourteen months they plan to issue an extraordinary mathematical work. This is the combined magna opera of Ptolemy, Copernicus and Kepler. Two years ago Mr. R. Catesby Taliaferro, a tutor at St. John's, translated into English for the first time Ptolemy's *Almagest*. Mr. Wallis' "first" translations of *The Revolutions of the Spheres* by Copernicus and Kepler's *Epitome of Astronomy* (Books IV and V) will make the accompanying volume in the Random House edition. These books have been studied at St. John's in mimeographed format. Their appearance in print in English has been delayed so many hundreds of years that the event of their publication will be both important and exciting. . . . In their first year at St. John's, students spend almost eight months studying the thirteen books of Euclid's *Elements* in their mathematics tutorial. They use the translation of Sir Thomas L. Heath, which is in three volumes (Cambridge University Press and Macmillan). This edition is so expensive that few freshmen are able to buy it and they have used copies from the College library. Within two years, Random House will have published a one-volume edition of Euclid, newly translated by John Neustadt of St. John's. This will enable every member of the College to own Euclid, which they find difficult to do without.

Helen Hill Miller, a lecturer and member of the St. John's faculty last year has written *Beyond German Victory* in collaboration with Herbert Aegar, which Reynal and Hitchcock have recently published. Forsaking popular instruction, Mortimer J. Adler's new book is *Problems for Thomists* (Sheed and Ward). Mr. Adler will begin his series of lectures in Annapolis in early December. Jacques Maritain, who visited and lectured at St. John's late last spring, also has a new book; *Scholasticism and Politics* (Macmillan). . . . A great many of the books read at St. John's have been out of print a long while. Publishers do not think it profitable to reissue these, so the college has had facsimile reprints made of some works. Books I and III of Kerr's translation of Lavoisier's *Elements of Chemistry* has been reprinted for third year students; Mottelak's translation of *On the Loadstone* by Gilbert has been made available for sophomores, and Dalton's *New System of Chemical Philosophy* (Part I) for juniors. For the fourth year, Freeman's translation of chapters I-III of Fourier's *Analytical Theory of Heat* and Virchow's *Cellular Pathology* (Chance Translation) have been reprinted. Macmillan has reprinted for St. John's a special edition of Thompson's translation of Huygen's *On Light*. These add considerably to the College's remarkable list of reprints and new translations.

All of these books, including the mimeographed publications may be purchased by mail at the St. John's Bookstore in Annapolis. A complete price list of the Great Books may be had on request. Knowing that there are a large number of people outside the College who are occupied in reading or rereading the books of the St. John's program, the Bookstore has provided a pamphlet

listing the books studied at the College, noting all the available cheap editions. This pamphlet also includes the reading schedule followed by students during the first three years of study. . . . To take leave of the ancients, we'd like to note a number of good books in cheap editions that have appeared in the last several months. Delmore Schwartz's translation of Rimbaud's *A Season in Hell* has been published by the New Directions at \$1.00. The Exiles' Press of New York has also issued some of the rest of Rimbaud's work in a new translation, Lionel Abel's *Some Poems of Rimbaud* (\$.50). Among other new translations are Gilbert Neiman's—*Blood Wedding*, a tragedy by F. Garcia Lorca (New Directions, \$.50)—and R. Ellis Roberts' *Peer Gynt* by Ibsen (Oxford University Press, \$.80). Some will remember Mr. Roberts' informal lecture at St. John's last year on Yeats. . . . New Directions has reprinted William Carlos Williams' *In the American Grain* (\$1.00). The Modern Library has supplemented their modern selections with Catherine Anne Porter's *Flowering Judas* (\$.95) and Joyce's *Ulysses* (\$1.25). The edition of Joyce contains Judge Woolsey's famous decision on *Ulysses* that is in the original Random House imprint. . . . For readers of excellent detective fiction, we must not forget the books of Georges Simenon, which Harcourt, Brace has put out. Simenon's sleuth is Maigret, who never makes a deduction, and whose patience is inexhaustible. Each of the three books so far issued contain two novels. The books are *The Patience of Maigret*, *Maigret Travels South*, and *Maigret Abroad*, all at \$2.00. Simenon is a Frenchman who has written hundreds of mystery stories under dozens of pseudonyms. His Maigret books are the first to be printed in America, and they scarcely accord with

the modern devices of detective fiction. We have been delighted with the change. Mercury Books (\$.25) have also published Simenon. His Maigret in *The Death of Monsieur Gallet* is a little more conventional, but still the best contemporary detective we know of. . . . Contrasting the quiet Maigret is Elliot Paul's cosmopolite Homer Evans, who inevitably makes major riots and minor deductions. Paul's first Evans orgy, *The Mysterious Mickey Finn* (Modern Age, \$.50) is the one amusing effort. The hugger-mugger and mayhem he has made for his man since are a little too much like the old two-reelers. In the new Homer Evans story, *Fracas in the Foothills*, the locale is Montana. We expect Homer will be taking shortcuts and heading them off. —BILGUS.

IDIOTICA

It would be impossible, in a contest before a committee of competent judges, to show that temporalities are, in respect of number, more than matched by eternalities, and that, in respect of relative importance, changes are as dancing wavelets on an infinite and everlasting sea.—CASSIUS J. KEYSER, PH.D., LL.D., D.Sc.: *The Human Worth of Rigorous Thinking*.

Five brilliant men got together for a dinner party 2,000 years ago. What they said about love is being re-discovered to-day. Read Plato's *Symposium*. Then listen to Huntington Cairns, Mark Van Doren, and Allen Tate discuss the one emotion in the world that makes a mouse out of a man, and vice versa. Get your copy of the *Five Dialogues of Plato* now. Spend Sunday afternoon listening in on a college reading course that will help you to catalogue your ideas about

love! GIMBEL's advertisement in *The Times*, October 19, 1940.

When human intelligence, the quality hidden away in the central heart of the lowest germ life, and arrived at after infinite unfoldings and long ages of development—when human intelligence arrives, the survival of the fittest proceeds along new lines.—FRED HENDERSON: *The Case for Socialism*.

CINEMA

To OUR generation, Charlie Chaplin is more of a myth than an actual personality. We have heard his name ever since we can remember. Our elders have always spoken of him with awe and profound respect. At some point we were sure that he must be an ex-President capitalizing on the ill effects of a present administration. Chaplin has been much more than president, of course. He has made the world laugh, and there is no nation that has not known and loved him. Charlie to us, he is also Carlos, Carlitos and Charlot. He was the one person in the new motion-picture industry who convinced the public that they couldn't do without the movies so long as the small man with the derby, the baggy pants, the cane and the fake mustache kept on appearing. It was in the Keystone comedies before the war that Chaplin first adapted this costume. It was there that he began to create one of the few universal clowns. And when he had perfected his character he knew that he should never change it. He was aware of his own capacities, and he knew that he could accomplish everything he wanted as the little clown.

Actors today avoid portraying similar characters for a second time. They call it 'getting the rut', and their god

is Glamour. It is strange that they do not know that the character performers are the only players endeared by the public for any length of time. Audiences are delighted when they know what to expect from a particular actor. Chaplin has always known this; it has been his special problem to know what people anticipate in the little clown, and he has not disappointed them. Once they were accustomed to him as a comedian with an astounding sense of the pathetic and a determination not to imitate the unnaturally distorted, Chaplin knew that his audiences would never permit a reversal in his characterization. But he foresaw that there should be surprises. Since he did not speak his part, he improvised a kind of pantomimic *ad lib*, thereby giving the impression that the little clown was liable to make extraordinary gestures and decisions seemingly apart from character but immediately recognizable as distinctively his.

After Chaplin had completely captivated his international audiences, the critics, who had appreciated him, thought something was wrong. To them, popularity was indicative of mediocrity, and not wishing to retract their admiration for Chaplin, they raised him from a comedian to an artist and gave his talent phases and periods—like Picasso. (It had not previously occurred to them that he had been an artist all along the line.) So they took his films and analyzed them, dissecting the little clown's movements and gesticulations to such an extent that they weren't funny any more. They came to regard him as a tragedian as well as a comic. There were suggestions that he act in *Liliom* and *Peer Gynt*. Despite this last the critics were not continually mistaken. When they diligently observed Chaplin's scenes they

discovered that there was no single motion or insinuation that the comedian had not analyzed before them. They saw that all possible effects had been thoroughly investigated and that interpretive alternatives would lead towards the desired end. Neither were they far wrong in supposing that Chaplin could do tragedy. In Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, two characters agree on "Oh, Give them Irony and Give them Pity." This might well be Chaplin's motto, but for its despair. With considerable subtlety Chaplin has always mixed irony with pity, taking care never to make use of the one without the other.

Chaplin has also consistently taken us away to another planet. Deliberately, he has made this change as quickly as film footage will permit. In *Modern Times* the substitution was difficult; too much of the imaginative world depended on our own. *The Great Dictator* introduces a new device. Here there are two worlds, one of Hinkel, leader of the Double Cross, and the other of the little Jewish barber of the Ghetto.

When the film begins the little barber is on the battlefield of 1918 operating cannons and anti-aircraft guns. Everything he could do correctly he appropriately mismanages for Tomania. And even though he rescues one of his country's generals, the war is lost. There is one superb scene in the airplane when the ship is flying upside down. Chaplin and the general do not know this, and it is only when the little barber slips out of his seat that they are aware of their predicament. Not to be flurried, the general offers his companion a cigarette while he hangs down from the plane. The motor stops, the general reminisces

pleasantly, and they glide down to crash on the trees.

The little barber loses his memory after the war and is sent to an asylum. When he comes back to his shop in the Ghetto twenty years later he is surprised to find that there is a dictator. He ignores the storm troopers, and with the help of the little laundress next door, escapes their torment. Every time he is attacked, the laundress hits the troopers on the head from her window. On one occasion she accidentally hits the barber, and he dances on the curb in a daze. This is the notable instance when we are assured of the old Chaplin. The world of the little barber is that of the little clown. Hinkel's is a world of satire.

Christopher Morley, writing a brief history of the autumn of 1938, remarked that Charlie Chaplin should sue Hitler for plagiarism. In *The Great Dictator* he has done so with satirical vengeance. His characterization of Hinkel is brilliantly written and performed. The several times the dictator speaks to his people are classic examples of imitation. Chaplin has taken Hitler's screeching crescendos and turned them into pig-German and pigeon-English. The portrayal of an ignorant and emotional ruler has been well done. There are scenes in which Hinkel appears that rival the traditional actions of the little barber: Chaplin's dance with the balloon, the incident when he and Napaloni, his fellow-dictator from Bacteria, are burnt with English mustard; the dance with Madame Napaloni; Herring's attempt to use psychology on Napaloni, and the brief interlude in the barber shop. For an actor who has stepped out of character for the first time, Chaplin's impersonation of Hitler is prodigious. And for a scenarist who has not previously written

spoken dialogue, his screen play is accomplished and expert. Here is an example from the barber shop scene: HINKEL: *I'm going to re-model the barber shop and put glass windows on the sides and the ceiling.* NAPALONI: *What's outside?* HINKEL: *A magnificent view of the bay and the mountains.* NAPALONI: *What's overhead?* HINKEL: *The ballroom.*

But it is as the little barber that Chaplin does his best work. When he shaves a man to Brahms' Fifth Hungarian Rhapsody he is certain of his effects, and the supper scene at which one member of the party is to find a coin in his pudding is so perfectly done that we find little to approach it elsewhere. And when we have become accustomed to this incomparable personality his character is changed and the film promptly collapses. Here Chaplin has made his one error in not knowing what his audience expects from him. At the end of the movie, when the little barber is mistaken for the great dictator, he is called upon to make a speech as conqueror of the world. He is introduced by Hinkel's assistant, Herr Garbitsch, as the man who will someday rule all peoples on the earth. The little barber, just free from a concentration camp, is not surprisingly nonplussed. His expression is one of exquisite suffering. He turns to his companion, who motions him forward. But he still cannot be sure of the situation. He simply cannot walk up to those microphones and speak to those thousands of people. With one last look of futility, he hesitantly rises and slowly climbs the steps to the platform. There Garbitsch awaits him at rigid attention. The little barber does not understand his respect, and when he is saluted he can only bow meekly, turning his cap in his hands. But of a sudden he is inspired

and steps forth to speak. The speech that he gives is one any other person in Tomania might have given but the little barber. The man who addresses the expectant crowd is unfaltering and determined; he has thought it all out before. He screams denunciation of dictators, demands that all races be treated decently, bemoans the state of the world and gives commands and hopes in the name of democracy. Had he omitted this last speech and the few actual scenes Chaplin would have made one of his greatest triumphs. But he has punctuated the two worlds he has made for us with stark reality. It is a reality we do not doubt, but one we refuse to accept beside the others. Chaplin has joined it with the life of the barber in order that it will not be ignored, in order that we might see truth and hear a message. The truth he shows us is the persecution of the Jews, and his message is to combat persecution and dictators. He has, in a word, said that this is no time for comedy. We are unable to forget that Chaplin's means of arriving at his message is comedy. It is a means others have used for similar ends. Aristophanes inevitably placed a message in his comedies, but they were all cleverly obscured in brilliant satire. Chaplin's satire of Hitler resembles the Aristophanic method. It is unfortunate that he did not realize how much more forceful his argument is when it is exemplified in Hinkel.

The Great Dictator ends in a Millet setting with Miss Paulette Goddard as the little laundress gazing despondently at the ground. We observe her for several minutes of portraiture photography. During this time she hears the little barber as the great dictator. She raises her eyes to the sky and smiles. Looking

at Miss Goddard's face for so long a while reminds us of her singular talent.

The other members of the cast—Jack Oakie, Reginald Gardiner, Henry Daniell and Billy Gilbert—do much with the opportunities their director affords them. But for the one exception, Chaplin has had excellent support in *The Great Dictator*. The music Meredith Willson arranged from Chaplin's themes is never inappropriate and always an addition to the perfection of particular scenes.

"The egregious merit of Chaplin," T. S. Eliot has said, "is that he has escaped in his own way from the realism of the cinema and invented a *rhythm*. Of course the unexplored opportunities of the cinema for eluding realism must be very great."

This was written in the days of an earlier motion-picture, but to Chaplin it is still applicable. He has re-created realism in his own right with a spontaneity and tempo that demands a place with the great. Offering a pathetically chaotic universe with sublime characters has been his business. He has created in the little clown a modern Petrouchka whose world is both joyous and absurd, gentle and true. But unlike the boyish puppet, there is no need for the little clown to thumb his nose at the charlatan who does not believe he is real.—SREDNI VASHTAR.

TRIVIA

SOMETHING should be said for the woman who walked into the Book Store and demanded "that book on Platonic Love." "It's called *The Republic*, isn't it?" she said. "You know, the one where an apple is cut in half and if one half finds the other, everything is all right."

At the earliest opportunity we're going to make a special trip to the Big City

to see what *The New Yorker's* Wolcott Gibbs means when he says the chorus girls in the Ed Wynn show, *Boys and Girls Together*, have a "rather literary look about them!"

Mr. Willkie, having been spared the orgies of the presidency, is now free to return to his reading—204 Big Little Books a year.

Mr. Mark Van Doren, in a recent lecture here at the College, told us that John Stuart Mill lived, during one period of his career, in a state of living death. This coma was charged to improper education. Gives one a sense of security, doesn't it?

Assistant Dean Raymond Wilburn, in a recent sophomore Seminar, while jumping too hastily from the specific to the general, confused the issue by introducing the term "intellectual tuition." The

error might have been pardoned had Treasurer Wright made it.

We suppose that something should be said about the fact that Housing Facility Stromeyer's name was misspelled in this column last month. On second thought, however, it doesn't seem to make a great deal of difference as this illustrious political figure is called by other names here at the College. Anyhow, a rose by any other name....

This season Broadway is presenting two comedies about film land. At least, Hollywood is still laughable.

A Cockney suggests to the British Government that it use a "screaming bomb" which, instead of screaming, whistles the "all clear" signal as it falls.

Last Monday morning someone remarked to us that it's a great life if you don't weekend.—R. H.

The Play

THE charming Grace George has returned after five years to do a revival of what is probably the finest of her many famous roles. It's a joy to see a character portrayed with such skill as Miss George lends to the part of Mary Herries in *Kind Lady*. Peak suspense coupled with genuine sympathy makes it difficult to imagine anyone as unfortunate as Mary Herries: for this again Miss George is responsible. Felix Jacovy, the Director, fulfills admirably the job of weaving a fast-moving story of horror and intrigue. Mr. Jacovy's presence is defi-

nitely felt, although certain minor details are, as yet, unsatisfactory.

The mood of suspense and terror sustained throughout nowhere resolves itself into that burlesque, physical, *Perils of Pauline* sort of melodrama typified by last seasons's unhappy *Goodbye in the Night*. The show is far more subtle than Emlyn Williams' classic psychological play, *Night Must Fall*.

The well planned settings by Watson Barrat are in perfect harmony with the action and atmosphere of the play. They have been ingeniously designed to

provide an easily adaptable, never static background which intensifies the effects of the action and keeps pace with the changing moods of the plot.

Kind Lady was adapted by Edward Chodorov from a story by Hugh Walpole. It was first produced in 1935. The present run opened at the *Playhouse Theatre*, New York in early September and was one of the first offerings of the present season.

The principle criticism of the original presentation seemed to be the weak script. Although certain faults in the book—such as a rather slow opening and indefinite delineation of minor characters—still exist, the structure of the play on the whole has been improved considerably.

Mr. Brady, *Kind Lady's* producer, has seen his opportunity in the current trend toward revivals; indeed in a sense he is the father of the trend, for it was encouraged, if not started, by his excellent presentation last season of Laurette Taylor in *Outward Bound*. To mention but a few other revivals of this season and last, there are in addition to the above mentioned: *Blind Alley* (another melodrama); *Charley's Aunt*; *The Show Off*, (in prospect); and, of course, Helen Hayes and Maurice Evans in the Theatre Guild's production of *Twelfth Night*.—ROBERT MYERSON, '44.

When we first saw Robert Sherwood's *There Shall Be No Night*, we were convinced that the contemporary theatre had reached its apex and henceforth would go into decline. Sherwood was the world's greatest playwright and Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne were the world's most superb acting combination. We held our breath until the play was published, so that we might

read again the letter which Dr. Valkonen sent to his wife, a testament to all that was honorable and loving and brave in a world filled with the crash of battle.

The play has been published, and we have read it. Strangely, it awakened in us not one of the emotions which we felt when the Lunts were doing the interpretation for the audience. Perhaps it had to be seen to be appreciated; we journeyed to New York, and watched them go through the motions. It was sadly evident that the actors had long since spoken their lines with any inspiration, and the highlights of the play passed by as though a fuse had blown somewhere.

In his introduction to *There Shall Be No Light*, Mr. Sherwood has traced his mental maneuvers in his past plays, and from them extracted a growth of his character and beliefs. Perhaps he has reached maturity at last; perhaps he has said in this play the things which deep down in his heart he believes; but for some reason his manner of saying them does not bear repetition. He has a belief in the fundamental dignity of man, and he tells us that anything worth living for is worth dying for, no matter how futile or horrible the death may be.

He tells us these things through the story of a Finnish-American family, caught in Helsinki during the Russian rape of Finland. Dr. Valkonen (Alfred Lunt) is a Finn, the winner of the Nobel Prize for researches in the human mind; his wife Miranda (Lynn Fontanne) is an American product of Cape Cod and New Orleans. Together they have settled in Helsinki and raised a son Erik (Montgomery Clift), who is seventeen, solid, serious and healthy. In their house also is portly Uncle Waldemar (Sydney Greenstreet), who plays a Finnish philosopher

in the Sibelius style. It is to these four people that things happen.

In the first scene (the best in the play), the audience is shown how happy the Finns are, how democratic and peaceful and idealistic. Dr. Valkonen has just been awarded the Nobel Prize, and speaks over the air to America; all is jollity and peace. The audience loves this family and its friends, despite the undercurrent of impending tragedy which is dimly felt. In the next scenes, tragedy is the motif; we hear of the invasion of Finland, followed by the call to bear arms sent to every Finn capable of carrying a rifle. Erik, who has done work on the Mannerheim line, goes with the ski-troops in the North, and his father, who has not looked at a mump for twenty-five years, serves in the Medical Corps in the South. Erik is killed; but before he dies, he is married to Kaatri Alquist (Elizabeth Fraser), by whom he is to have a child. Kaatri is sent to America, through the assistance of Dave Corween (Richard Whorf), the American radio man who covers Europe for the news-mad Yankees. Dr. Valkonen, caught in a school-house in the path of the Russians, together with several assorted citizens of various countries, is told by one of them of the death of his son, of which fact he had hitherto been ignorant. He is then inspired to make a speech, an extremely optimistic speech, in which he testifies to the nearing of the time when men shall know the light, and find within their own foreheads the place where there shall be no night. He also writes a letter of comfort to Miranda, and goes forth to die gloriously on the ice for Finland and the world.

Miranda discloses the letter's contents to us when she reads it aloud to Dave Corween and Uncle Waldemar; she is sending it to America for Kaatri's child;

Miranda feels that the child, as yet unborn, is her link with the future. In accordance with an old Finnish custom, she and Uncle Waldemar have prepared to raze the house, and die in defense of the city; her soft hands are unused to the touch of a rifle, but willing nevertheless. Uncle Waldemar plays a lovely Finnish folk-song, as Miranda sits on the couch, alone, where once her husband and her son sat with her; and as the curtain falls, the audience sees, as Mr. Sherwood intends them to see, that "there is a kind of peace in this Finnish-American house."

Throughout all this action, Mr. Sherwood has his actors say what he wrote when he was inspired; but it has the desired effect only upon those who share his feeling. He therefore has failed in his purpose; for if he desires that the rest of us should feel as he does, then we should be raised to his heights, and not merely kept there.

We think the fault lies in his place of action; Finland today is a dead issue: events move too swiftly, and tragedy overshadows tragedy. No longer is it easy to make audiences feel the fate of Finland as something alive and vital and supremely cruel. This is a shame, for a man of Mr. Sherwood's talents should be made immortal when he has a theme such as the author so obviously felt. He read *Mein Kampf* in 1930, and has been fighting for democracy ever since: would that he could make many more people feel the same way.

The whole play was written for three main speeches, which testify to Mr. Sherwood's beliefs: a confession by the Nazi ambassador to Finland of the goal of his country; the lecture which Dr. Valkonen gives in the little school-house; and the letter which he wrote to his wife. The first of these is brutal, shock-

ing, fantastic: and for that reason, believable. The second is a vision of the future, seen through the eyes of a man who takes the Bible as scientific truth; and the third is a beautiful symbol of one man's faith in his own mind and love for a woman, coupled with understanding of both.

Mr. Sherwood, to make the tragedy forceful, has one example of it after another, and it is almost too much for an emotional animal to take; but that is the way war is, and that is the way he has shown it. He has tried to awaken a nation, and sadly enough, succeeded only temporarily. Both Mr. Sherwood and Finland deserve a better fate.—J. L. H.

CONTRIBUTORS

DR. RICHARD KUEHNEMUND (*Of Doom and Hope*) is the second oldest member

of the St. John's faculty in years of service, having taught here since 1924. A classical scholar of the old German school, he obtained his Ph.D. from the University of Göttingen in 1922, while acting as assistant in the Philological Seminar there. Before the advent of the New Program at St. John's, he taught modern languages, but now adds Greek and Latin classes to his continued tutorials in French and German, thereby being an instructor in every language studied here.

He writes numerous articles for newspapers and classical journals, usually analyzing the present in terms of the work of some ancient or modern scholar. This habit he carries into his tutorials, adding much of interest to them. *Of Doom and Hope* is a condensed version of a much longer treatise which he intends to bring out elsewhere in the near future.

