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HOMESPUN



WORSHIP



HOMESPUN

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THE WEAVE

THE TEMPLE

EDWARD T. CONE

A pathless ocean breaking on the silver, shell-lined sand;
Sandpipers' twinkling feet upon the shore,
And plunging gulls and ospreys on the sea,
And overhead the scythe-billed curlew's fluting call;
A wide expanse of trackless marsh behind,
Alive with stately herons, blue and white,
And mud-hens' cackling cries—
This is the greatest temple ever made;
This is the fittest place to worship God.

PURITAN WORSHIP

CAROLYN HINES

THE Puritans were those deeply religious people who did not approve of the worship ceremonies of the Established Church of England. Large numbers of Puritans left England and migrated to America, because they believed that the forms of worship should be purified—a thing which they could not accomplish in England.

It would seem that the rulers of the Puritan colonies would have realized the benefits of peace and tolerance because of their long period of persecution in England, but their views were not of this nature. No freedom of conscience was permitted. Everyone was compelled to obey the rules of the Puritan Church, and these rules were very severe. The Puritans made many people leave Massachusetts on account of their religious beliefs. Some people were so provoked with the Puritan intolerance that they moved away from them and settled farther back in the wilderness.

The children of the Puritans were born into a religious atmosphere. They were reared in religious ways and could not escape the impression of deep religious feeling. They had a thorough knowledge of the Bible, because that was really the universal child's book of that day. One of the great Puritan preachers who was loved by the children was Cotton Mather, a most devout Christian.

The Puritans' strict religious customs were shown more fully in their observance of Sunday. Fines and imprisonment often were the penalties paid for the breaking of this holy day.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, a beloved poet, gives a description in one of his poems of the strict observance of the Sabbath in the Puritan communities. He says that no footsteps were heard out in the fields and that no happy children's voices were raised in laughter. It was only a day of quiet worship and the obeying of the rigidity of the laws.

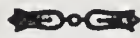
The Puritans went to church in companies. They carried their swords and guns with them, because there was often fear of being attacked by the Indians.

The old New England churches where the Puritans worshipped

had high pulpits and square pews. The choice seats of the church were given to the older persons of high rank. The ministers decided who should belong to the church, and they permitted only a few to enter.

The sermons usually lasted two or three hours, and the prayers were from one to two hours in duration. Their singing consisted of a very few tunes, which were unmusical and not often sung correctly, but singing was one of the Puritans' few delights.

What would these Puritans say if they could see how some of us spend the Sabbath?



WE THANK THEE

MARY ELIZABETH MOORE

For the clear, still night and the one bright star, and the babe in
the cattle shed,

For an empty tomb in a garden spot where a Christ has risen,
For all these things we thank Thee.

For our mothers who gave the gift of life to us,
For babies with starry eyes and chubby velvet cheeks,
For fathers whose strong shoulders bear all burdens,
For all these things we thank Thee.

For wee houses with undrawn shades,
For a wood fire crackling on a hearth,
For those who join hands in a family circle,
For all these things we thank Thee.

For wine-red leaves and purple haze,
For a dew-drenched lilac spray,
For a larkspur bed, with blue and orchid blooms,
For the ruddy glow of a sunset sky,
For all these things we thank Thee.

For life,

For hope,

For the joy of living,

For all these things we thank thee.

Amen.

CHRISTMAS MUSIC

NIMMA FULLER

Inside a cathedral lighted only by candles from the large star at the front, a group of people knelt, silent and worshipful. A spirit of reverence pervaded the spacious church; and as the shadows flickered over their bowed heads, a sweet, low voice sang:

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace,
good will to men.”

The choir softly took up the refrain and sang as though inspired. As the echo of the beautiful message died away, from a balcony high overhead came the soft, beautiful strains of “Silent Night, Holy Night.” The childish voices carried peace and happiness into the hearts of many a listener. Softer still, another choir of children joined in from the opposite side of the room; from somewhere in the congregation a woman’s voice, low, but distinct, joined in also, until the entire congregation was singing that beautiful old carol.

When the sound died away, the minister rose to his feet, and by the light of the star read to the listening people the sweetest story ever told. The people listened intently, and when the minister closed with a prayer, they filed out of the church, each with a song upon his lips and the light of Christ in his eyes.



CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

HELEN CRUTCHFIELD

Red and green lights,
Gayly-wrapped packages,
Holly wreaths and fat candles,
High clear skies and faint stars—
All this for Christmas,
Celebrating a glorious birth,
While Christ stands in a bread line
And begs in the gutter.

THE MORAVIAN CHRISTMAS EVE LOVE FEAST AND CANDLE SERVICE

THOMAS MILLER

The Moravian Church is unique among the Protestant Christian Churches of the world in that it has an international governing body. Thus supervised, its customs are uniform throughout the world. A service conducted in the mission field of Alaska or Tibet in observance of an annual occasion is identical with the same service as conducted in the First Moravian Church of Greensboro.

Most of the characteristics of Moravian practice have been seasoned through a dozen generations. The Love Feast service of this church is an ancient custom, observed today as it was generations ago.

The Love Feast service is held in all Moravian Churches in connection with the Christmas Candle Service on Christmas Eve. In the larger congregations, in order to accommodate the many visiting friends, it is sometimes necessary to hold as many as three individual services. Where only one service is necessary the hour is seven o'clock in the evening.

Following a preliminary recital, consisting of ancient Christmas carols, the combined junior and senior choirs enter the church in procession singing a Christmas carol peculiar to the Moravian Church.

The program follows with the reading of the Christmas story as the scripture lesson. Following the prayer, the congregation sings several hymns appropriate to the Christmas season. During the singing of these hymns sweetened buns are served those present by young ladies; and, immediately following, mugs of hot coffee are distributed throughout the audience by young men. As soon as the buns and coffee have been distributed, the officiating minister explains for the benefit of strangers present that the Love Feast service is simply one of Christian fellowship and by no means is it a sacrament of the church.

With this explanation the congregation partakes of the coffee

and buns in Christian fellowship, while the choir renders an appropriate anthem.

The message of the occasion is of a Christmas nature and is delivered either by the pastor or some guest clergyman.

During the singing of "The Morning Star," a distinctive Moravian Christmas carol, by the choir, individual lighted candles are distributed throughout the audience, following which the service is concluded with "Sing Hallelujah, Praise the Lord," as the recessional hymn.

The lighted candles distributed during this service symbolize the birth of the Christ Child as the Light of the World.



THE RED CANDLE

MARY KATHERINE BRADLEY

Sweet Christmas Eve! The snowflakes softly fall.
Within the church a crimson candle burns;
Its soft white glow is mirrored on the wall,
But on the altar's face its shadow turns.
The village folk have often said in awe
That when a perfect gift is offered there,
The candle's light will pass beyond its law
And turn itself upon the offering fair.
There are but few who see ethereal light
That comes to those who give a shining gift.
The giver's heart must be of spotless white;
His hands of peace must many burdens lift.
Too few are those whose hearts and lives are clean,
Whose gifts may be of God and Heaven seen.

FAMILY PRAYERS

MARILU SMITH

As far back as I can remember I have always loved the quiet hour at night when all our family gathered in the living-room and my grandfather read from the old family Bible. When the youngest members of our family began to grow cross and sleepy as their bedtime drew near, my grandfather would come to the living-room and call us all in from our play.

We never hesitated, for we loved the words that were spoken at that hour, because they were always explained to us so that we wouldn't forget them; and we haven't forgotten them—such verses as, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth." My grandfather used to read that psalm more than any other; and when he had closed the Bible, he would say, "How did you like that?" so reverently that sometimes his voice would shake as he told us to bow our heads.

After he had finished his prayer, we would talk about anything that we had seen that day that impressed us, or that we thought was pretty. I well remember how he used to tell us that there was more than one way of displaying true worship. He said that to go into the woods on a day about this time of the year and marvel at God's creations meant just as much as kneeling at night to say our prayers.

Then after it was all over, many are the times that he has said, "Look over there"; and my little brother was asleep in his chair. The last picture I see now is my grandfather leaning over Tommy, who was named for him, before picking him up to carry him to bed.



Bethlehem star, as you look down
Upon the Babe's straw bed,
Your soft light forms a sparkling crown
About dear Jesus' head.

Ruth Gardner

LET US WORSHIP

Words by RUTH HILL

Music by EDWARD T. CONE


Andante

mf
Now let us
Call him Je-
wor-ship the
ho - vah, All
God of our
pow - er - ful,
fa - thers,
Fa - ther;

p
Him who is
Pray for his
ma - ker of
bless - ings to
land and of
fall on our
sea;
head;

mf
Lift up our
Mind - ful of
voi - ces in
mer - cies, re -
praise of the
mem - ber - ing
rul - - er -
kind - - ness,

f
Pow - er - ful,
Wor - ship the
mer - ci - ful,
one in whose
lov - ing is
love we are
he.
led.



COLORS IN THE WEAVE

NEW LIGHT

CHARLES SHARPE

I stood and gazed at stars that shone two thousand years ago.
I felt beneath my feet a sod that watched the nations grow.
I breathed a prehistoric air and felt its age sublime.
I sensed the boundlessness of space and endlessness of time.

Then human life became a stream that made its weary way
'Mid banks in ceaseless monotone—the song of night and day.
The stream flowed on for ages in one bare and changeless plane—
The same desires to rule the race; the same motives to reign.

Then came a power in the stream that raised its plane above
And changed ideals of selfishness to sacrificing love.
The glowing stars of eastern skies seemed shining once again
Upon the wise men of the East and angels' sweet refrain.

The star that rose o'er Bethlehem shone forth as joy began—
The Perfect Life had come to earth to bring new light to man.
And as the stream went on its way, the principles He gave
Remained a challenge to man's life—a promise for his grave.

A TALE OF A STAR

LANE BARKSDALE

THIS is a tale retold from Arrowsmith; she was the minstrel of my childhood, a teller of tales whom I shall never forget. Her name was Carol, and this is a carol that she gave me at Christmas time eight years ago.

In the winter time many, many years ago when Time was a little baby, the great God of man called all the stars of heaven together. And when' they were assembled on a sky of the spickest and spannest Judean blue, he said, "Soon there will be a little baby born in the world, and he shall be known as my son."

At this point all the little stars and big stars blinked at one another.

"And," said God, "when he is born, the three wisest men in the world will come to behold him that they may tell mankind of his coming."

"What has that to do with us?" asked the Great Star whose brilliance outshone all the rest.

"It has this to do with you," declared the great God of man: "the one of you who can shine most brilliantly at the time when I shall call you together shall lead these men to the birthplace of my son, and thereover shall hover till dawn; and in like manner at the same time in each oncoming year he shall shine."

Then, after God had told upon what day to assemble to be chosen, they all started off for the Moon. Many did not know why they were going to the Moon; but the Great Star was going to the Moon, so there must be a reason.

There were hundreds of thousands of stars all following the Great Star. They made a parade of shimmering diadems across the Judean sky. There were mother stars, daddy stars, grandfather stars, grandmother stars, and little tiny stars all marching across the heavens. And last in the great parade was a Little Brother Star, who had been late to hear God's request because he was helping a poor old mother star who was crippled and could not manage well.

Now it so happened that there was only one place in the world where one could get star-dust, and that was in the mountains of the Moon. Every star knew that to shine brightly he must have some of this precious powder.

When they had traveled for a year's quarter in days and nights, they came upon the cold ice of the Moon. So frigid was this crystal planet that their little five points were numbed, and this made the traveling quite hard.

Little Brother Star with the Crippled Mother had just reached the Moon when he beheld the Great Star in all his brilliance carrying a bag of star-dust. Now star-dust has great healing power, and thus the Crippled Mother was moved to beg the Great Star for just enough dust to make her broken leg whole once more so that she could travel independent of the Little Brother Star.

"Why, no, I will do no such thing. What is youth for if he is not to help old age?" demanded the Great Star, and with that he went on.

"Oh, we can never make it," declared the Mother Star in despair.

"Why, surely we can make it," said the Little Brother Star, and on they went.

When they had traveled for three days, they met a long line of stars, each bearing star-dust and not a one would give the Crippled Mother enough to heal her broken leg. Paying little attention to their refusal, Little Brother demanded of them the distance over which they had come, and soon he and the Crippled Mother were off again.

At last they came upon the edge of an immense canyon twenty leagues deep, and they could see no end to its length. Soon they started down one side; and just as they had gotten midway, the Crippled Mother fell, pulling the little brother behind her. On and on they went, sliding over cold ice until finally they reached the bottom. The Crippled Mother was so faint that she could go no farther; and so she lay in the base of the ice canyon awaiting the return of Little Brother.

After he had climbed up the opposite side of the cave, he found the journey much easier. By this time all five of Little Brother's points were stiffened with cold, and he bore himself quite

weakly. At last he did come to the cave of the Star Dust, and here he filled his little bag and started back to the canyon.

He had scarcely left the cave when he met an old man star whose tips were all cracked and worn, and he begged for just a little of the star dust. Little Brother gave him this and then went his way. So many invalids were there that when Little Brother started into the Great Crater, he had just enough to heal the Crippled Mother's leg.

This done, they set out for home, and after having journeyed for a year's quarter in days and nights, they came over the land of the east where a great assembly of stars lay awaiting the decision of the Great God of Man. Little Brother Star was ashamed that he had no star dust to use on himself, and when he heard God say "Great Star, you indeed shine brightly," he thought how grand was the Great Star, how sensible in his ways.

God told them what a hard task they had had, and how he had hoped that they all might shine with equal brilliance.

"Great Star, you are indeed brilliant," said God, "but you will not suffice." And in like manner he looked over hundreds of stars, but none were bright enough. Finally his eye fell upon one, a glittering star who was standing in the background; and then God reached out his hand and drew in the air in front of Little Brother a cross; so that he would always know the star that led the three great kings of wisdom to the place where the Christ-Child lay. Thus Little Brother shone

"While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The Angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around."



A falling star speeds through the moonlit night,
A glowing spark from far celestial fires.
Another star stays watchful in the sky,
A burning brand of flame ethereal;
The night goes on, on through the endless void.

Hilliard Clein

A CAROL OF GOOD TIDINGS

SUSAN BARKSDALE

A bell is tolling yonder, Friend;
Its notes are ever falling.
A bell is tolling peace, O Friend,
With solemn notes it's calling.

A star is shining yonder, Friend;
Its rays are golden clear.
A star is pointing yonder, Friend;
All mankind's King is here.

A voice is singing skyward, Friend;
Oh, soft and sweet its song!
A voice is singing praise for, Friend,
A King we've waited long.

The shepherds leave their flocks, O Friend;
The angels show a star;
The shepherds leave their flocks, O Friend,
To seek their King afar.

Away across the desert, Friend,
Three men are riding fast.
They're bringing presents rare for, Friend,
A King that's come at last.

Oh, sing to Him and praise Him, Friend,
Who comes to us our King.
Oh, sing to Him and praise Him, Friend,
For He shall goodness bring.

A CHRISTMAS LETTER

BILLIE ANDERSON

Greensboro, N. C.
Christmas Eve.

DEAR AUNT:

Whew! (sigh, puff-puff) Christmas preparations are over. What a satisfaction! Now we can "settle down for a long winter's nap" with a feeling that "it's all over but the shouting." Now we won't have to worry about what to give this person or that person for a whole year. I suspect that is one of the reasons why Christmas comes but once a year. We won't have to fight our way through a motley crowd, yell for a clerk, who is patiently waiting for some old woman to stop quibbling over a toy which will bring only momentary happiness; nor will we have to experience the doubt that our present will be appreciated or understood.

I sure am tired—and how—mentally, spiritually, and physically. You know what goes on!

"Oh look; let's get this for Ann."

"Oh no, she's too young to appreciate that. Let's get it for Peggy."

"But we have a present for Peggy."

"Well, let's not get it."

"No, it's probably cheap, anyway."

Yet we pride ourselves on our Christmas spirit.

When we stop to analyze the Christmas spirit, we find that our celebration of Christmas makes it seem that we have no conception of the meaning of the term. Aren't our gifts in the main the meeting of obligations rather than the expression of friendship, or a commercial exchange instead of a voluntary offering? They should show sacrifice of time and effort and real thought on our part. But perhaps this is accomplished in the shopping. It seems that nothing, not even Christmas presents, come without work. This feeling can be proved by the attitude with which we receive the gifts of others. Did you ever hear anything like this!

"Look here, I paid my good money to send him a nice present, and he sent me a measly post card. I'll get him next Christmas." But there are some kind-hearted souls that retain that warm-heartedness that we call Christmas spirit, who, on receiving a present which is of no value whatever, will say: "Well, wasn't it kind of her to think of me." We should learn to put something into our gifts which the price alone would not convey, for "the gift without the giver is bare."

The reason I haven't written you until this eleventh hour is, of course, all this rush and bustle of last-minute preparation. We are all sheep. We buy these trinkets and perform these silly observances and are so rushed we haven't time to stop and remember the Supreme Present or to listen to the angels sing. Shouldn't we change our sense of values? Shouldn't we realize that such as these, the song of the angels, or the gifts of the wise men, are the only things that give durable satisfaction? These things seem to be brought out today only by the gifts which come, not from the purse alone but also from the heart. Shouldn't we appreciate just as much as a trinket, or even more, a letter from a friend, a letter in which you can read between the lines real friendship?

I suppose we got the idea of presents from the wise men of that first Christmas; but, if so, it certainly has degenerated. The gifts of the wise men, while they did have material value, represented care and toil in necessitating their conquering the long desert in order to pay tribute to the Christ Child. We should, by imitating the wise men in our presents, show sacrifice and determination to honor.

If you heard Fosdick not long ago, you will remember that he said that we are paying attention to trivial things at a serious time. This seems to be proved by our present-day Christmas preparations. In this time of depression and unemployment, when there is so much real suffering and want, we should think about the real things that count in life, instead of the trinkets. We should look at life not only from our viewpoint, but also from that of the unfortunate.

I hope your family will have a big Christmas. The presents we

sent are nothing, merely a gesture; but we are sure you will understand the spirit that prompts them.

You certainly have evinced the spirit of Christmas in sending the presents you did. It seems that you can always send gifts which are original and useful. It is really a talent to be able to do this. Your gift always "hits the spot" and is the best present we get at Christmas. It may not be the best according to money values, but it is appreciated more because of the spirit in which it is sent. It is probably responsible for putting me in this deliberative mood, so you can blame yourself for this letter, instead of your grateful nephew,

BILLIE.



ON CHRISTMAS EVE

LILE MACGINNIS

Oh sing a song of Bethlehem,
A song of Mary's love,
A song of old through ages told
On Christmas Eve.

Oh sing a song of Christmas cheer,
A song of Jesus' birth;
And this song shout while bells ring out
On Christmas Eve.

Oh sing a song of golden notes,
A song of peace and joy.
The angels sing of Christ the King
On Christmas Eve.

THE CHURCH AT BATH

RUTH JONES

The hot sun shines down upon the quaint old town of Bath, huddled on the banks of Bath Creek. On this particular Sunday morning, peace and contentment and a spirit of worshipfulness seem to enshrine the sleepy village.

As we ride down the winding, dusty road, no hot, glaring pavement is seen, and huge elms as old as the earth form an arch overhead. The houses of Bath are grim and gray, yet peaceful-looking with age. Numerous dwellings have watched the years creep slowly upon them and will doubtless witness many more. History is written in the brick and wood of these old homes, which are unaware of any modern devices.

Many inhabitants are seen walking leisurely toward the one church of which the town boasts. Nothing could be more peaceful than this ancient brick church, almost covered with ivy, and the graveyard of sunken, weather-beaten monuments, over which vines creep and spread. Pigeons roost in the eaves of the church, and low cooing birds add charm and peacefulness to the tranquility of the place. The bricks, which were imported from England, are much smaller and perhaps much stronger than ours, for they have stood the heavy storms from the Eastern Carolina coast for over two hundred years. Also the original tiles which form the aisle of the church are still in good condition. On each of the tiles some figure has been carved, but footsteps and time have erased most of these. Only the figure of an Indian head and a dragon remain. The rest of the floor is made of wood, under which the early colonists buried their friends and kindred to keep the Indians from knowing how few survived. On each side of the pulpit are two stones, marking the graves of two inhabitants of Bath. The heavy silver candlesticks which Queen Anne sent over from England are still there, and also the old Bible which King George gave.

I think the most beautiful and impressive thing in the church is the bell which Queen Anne gave. Its mellow tones ring out over the countryside, bidding everyone to come to this beautiful old church and worship.

THE TRAVELER'S WHITE GIFT

MAUREEN MOORE

A MAN trudged wearily along a lonely road. It was a beautiful night. The moon had not yet risen, but the whole countryside was illumined by a soft, silvery glow, coming from the light of the stars. Indeed, the very stars themselves were a picture far too beautiful to be painted either on canvas or by words. The vast, dark background of the endless heavens, over which were spread many thousands—millions—of tiny, silvery lights, twinkling, twinkling, twinkling, as they have done since the beginning of time and will do until the end of it was too infinite, too full of an inconceivable beauty to be reproduced by man.

But this beauty was lost upon the traveler. He was weary—wary of the endless monotony of walking, and counting the steps—one by one, step by step; and after all, where were they taking him? In his embittered mind, they were taking him nowhere; he knew not why he was here, nor did he care. He was tired of living, and he did not care what happened to him. He only knew that he hated all mankind, and that he never wished to see life in the form of a human being again. Walking along, he was so deeply engrossed in these thoughts, his heart so filled with bitterness toward the world, that he failed to notice a small white object lying by the roadside, until a faint moan caught his ear. He hesitated, undecided—torn between his overwhelming bitterness of the moment and the natural sympathy and curiosity that is in all of us. Finally the latter prevailed, and he turned reluctantly back. What he found was not a human being, as he had expected, but a little white dog, half-senseless from pain, with both of his hind legs broken and torn. He had probably been caught in some trap set for wild animals, torn himself loose, and crawled off here by the roadside to die.

With skilled fingers the man set the broken bones. His fine, slender hands worked swiftly and could not but betray his profession, even to the slowest-witted. For no hands but those of a surgeon could perform the operation so deftly and with such care.

After he had set the bones, he made splints of some sticks that he found nearby and bandaged the legs with some strips torn from his shirt.

When he had finished the job, the man sat down to rest, for he had traveled a long way that night, and he was tired. He wondered what to do with the dog. He certainly couldn't leave it there to starve, or perhaps to be killed by some wild animal; but then, it would be almost as fatal to carry it with him, crippled as it was. While he was pondering thus, he felt something warm and moist touch his hand. Glancing down, he saw two trusting brown eyes looking up at him; and they were filled with the light of adoration that is in a dog's eyes when he meets his true master. That decided it. He could never leave those trusting eyes, that warmed tongue that caressed his hand so gently. He gathered the small bundle of life into his arms and took up his weary march again, being very careful not to hurt the injured animal.

On he walked . . . mile after mile; hour after hour he journeyed onward. Still he knew not where he was going, but there was a vague idea in the back of his mind that when they came to some sort of habitation, he would try to get something for the dog to eat. He had lost a little of the hardness in his heart, and there was almost a love for the little dog. "For pity is akin to love," he thought; "and he is inhuman indeed who cannot pity a dog or a child in pain."

Preoccupied with these thoughts, the man traveled on for many miles, until at last, completely exhausted, he dropped by the side of the road. An inky darkness closed over him like a soft, velvet wrap; and he felt himself sinking, sinking. Then, suddenly, he was nearly blinded by the great light that shone around and about; and as his eyes became more accustomed to this light, he saw that it came from a great star which hung low in the heavens, slightly to his left. This star, shining radiantly among the many millions of smaller stars, was like a great diamond, unequalled in beauty, surrounded by many other tiny gems—all on a background of jet.

He walked toward the star, and as he came nearer, he saw that it hung directly over a manger, in which cattle were lowing gently.

Upon entering, he saw a man, a woman, and a young child, all enveloped in a divine light. Some inner force—he knew not what—compelled him to fall on his knees; then he saw many other people, who were kneeling also, gazing worshipfully at the baby. There were shepherds from the hills; there were wise men who came from a great distance to see this child, all bearing gifts. The man was saddened. What had he to give the babe? Money?—He had none. Expensive gifts?—Of course not. Then he remembered. Kneeling before the child, he tenderly laid the little dog at his feet. Then he smiled, ever so gently, but a smile of infinite sweetness. And with that smile new life came into the man's heart; a new hope was born.

Suddenly as it had come, the light faded, leaving the man alone. He rubbed his eyes. Where was he? Why, it must have been a dream, or a vision; for there was no sign of the manger now, and the dog was still in his arms. But no! The pathetic, broken little body was there; but the life had gone. With something almost like a sob, the man gathered the little body into his arms and carried it away.



It was not at the noon of day,
When the earth was beggared of shade;
It was not at the twilight cool,
When all was beginning to fade;
But at the newness of morn
When life was beginning again,
That the baby Jesus was born,
Born over hearts to reign.

Frances Talley

BY AN OPEN WINDOW IN CHURCH

ARTHUR COOKE

A small square of light shone through the colored glass window of the ancient church. This allowed a stray sunbeam to wander in among the oaken benches. As I sat deeply meditating on the inspiring words of the fervent old preacher, my glance chanced upon this small opened window. At first I was blinded by the dazzling rays of the morning sun, but this soon passed, and the small opening portrayed a most inspiring scene.

The scene in itself would not be difficult to describe, but my emotions and thoughts at seeing it would be. It was so simple and natural that one would not be astounded with its physical beauty, but rather with its relationship to the beauty of nature's handiwork. The whole scene could not have covered over a three-foot square, as it was close to the window. In this scene was the tip end of a tree limb, sparsely covered with the reddening leaves of autumn. On the limb sat a thrush, his sharp voice silent as if in respect for the worshippers within. The sky in the background was blue with a very small cloud sailing by. In all, this scene represented the complete artistry of God.

Then, as I looked, the brown-breasted bird spread his wings and flew. The dying leaves released their hold on the branch as it shook in the gentle breeze. The clouds in the sky changed to a gray, which darkened even as I looked. Then I saw what a bare picture was presented by the black limb outlined on the ever darkening sky. Again God's handiwork in nature presented a picture, this time one of sadness.



Tiny grains of desert sand—
What knowing little things
To have borne across their land
Three camels of Eastern kings!

Lane Barksdale

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

LANE BARKSDALE

CHARACTERS:

ELLA, a maid.

PRISCILLA, second maid.

JANE, the blind girl.

VOICES OFFSTAGE.

SCENE ONE

Christmas Eve. A moderately-furnished room. To left of stage is a sofa, at one end of which is a floor lamp. To the left of the sofa, is a cheap coffee table. In the center of stage, back, is a large window, which reaches from within a foot of the ceiling to the floor. At the end of the room, back of the sofa, there is a fireplace in which no fire is burning. As the curtain rises, a girl in maid's habit is wrapping a sheet about the base of a Christmas tree. PRISCILLA, another maid enters.

PRISCILLA: Ella, can't ya pay attention to directions? I said to put it on Martha's side of the room.

ELLA: But I didn't know which side was Martha's.

PRISCILLA: Oh, I forgit; I keep forgitting that you are new here. Well,—that's Martha's corner over there. (*She points to the opposite corner.*)

ELLA: (*In an humble tone.*) If it please you to hear it, I'm a-wonderin' why we are putting up a Christmas tree in the servants' quarters.

PRISCILLA: For Miss Jane, of course—why, for who else would it be if it weren't for Miss Jane?

ELLA: Miss Jane is the master's daughter, isn't she?

PRISCILLA: Yes, and a fine daughter she is, but she can't see. It's a pity, too. You see they was in an accident—her papa, her mama, and her. Her mama was killed, and Miss Jane got blinded.

ELLA: Yes, I know she's blind. What's that got to do with the tree in the servants' quarters?

PRISCILLA: You ain't lacking in curiosity, are you? Well, you see her papa's gone away on business, and Miss Jane's got to spend

her Christmas with us. (PRISCILLA *bends down to pick up something.*) They can't trust her alone.

ELLA: No?

PRISCILLA: No, because once she tried to kill herself. (*Thoughtfully.*) You see it ain't like a person that's been blind always. It's kind of hard after having everything ya way—to lose ya sight all of a sudden. Well—come on, let's move this tree over to Martha's corner.

ELLA: (*Catching one side of the base of the tree.*) Don't she value her life a-tall?

PRISCILLA: (*Bending over to remove the sheet.*) She ain't in much fix to care for living. Just like I said—she always had what she wanted, and now she can't have one thing—she can't even see.

ELLA: You say she's tried to kill herself?

PRISCILLA: (*As they begin to move the tree.*) Yeah,—cut a vein with the manicuring scissors.

ELLA: Yeah?

PRISCILLA: (*Just as they come near the window.*) Let's set it down for a minute—a piece of cedar stuck in my arm. (*They put it down, and the maid begins picking at her arm.*)

ELLA: (*Rising.*) Go on; what happened after that?

PRISCILLA: (*Pinching the flesh about the cedar in her arm and looking at it.*) All I know is that the doctor told her that she would see by this Christmas. The fact is, her papa told her that if she had faith enough she would be able to see by this Christmas Eve at twelve o'clock. (*Confidentially.*) They couldn't make it too far off.

ELLA: (*Shudders.*) Oh, ain't that terrible! Poor thing, what if she can't see when the time comes? (*Musingly.*) Why not turn the clock back?

PRISCILLA: (*Still picking at the cedar.*) That won't do no good—she can hear the bell in the chapel below.

ELLA: (*Affirmatively.*) I believe the Episcopal chapel is below.

PRISCILLA: (*Finally pulls out cedar.*) All right, it's out. Let's go.

ELLA: (*As they lift the tree.*) Maybe she'll enjoy the midnight service.

PRISCILLA: What midnight service?

ELLA: (*As they come in front of the window.*) Oh, the Episcopalians are having a midnight service and—(*At this point ELLA stumbles, causing the tree to slip from PRISCILLA's hand out against the glass window. The lower window is shattered and pieces of glass can be heard falling below.*)

PRISCILLA: My stars!—now look what you've done!

ELLA: (*Coming out from under the tree.*) Oh, I'm so sorry.

PRISCILLA: Yes, you *are* sorry. (*They take up the tree and put it in MARTHA's corner.*)

ELLA: I hope the glass didn't fall on any one below. (*Looks out of the broken window.*) Why, there's a fire escape here!

PRISCILLA: Yes, there 're lots of things about this house. It's been everything from a doctor's office to the servants' quarters of Miss Jane's papa's house. (*She comes over and looks out of the window.*) You know the front part of this house is almost new—it was built about ten years ago. This part we're in is about sixty years old I guess—I reckon you noticed the "ginger-bread banisters" on the side porch, and this window—the way it reaches to the floor. (*Clock on the mantel strikes one time.*) Goodness—eighty-three. It's past time I was gettin' Miss Jane. (*She goes out of the door.*)

ELLA: Aint we gonna dec'rate the tree?

PRISCILLA: (*Off stage.*) Not till Miss Jane comes.

Curtain

SCENE TWO

Same room. A fire now burns brightly in the fireplace. The sofa, the coffee table, and the floor lamp have all been turned around to face the fire. The shade is pulled down over the window to the rear of the stage to keep the wind out of the broken portion. ELLA sits in a chair before the fire talking to herself. JANE is a girl of about sixteen, dressed in a red dress with white lines here and there and with white collar and cuffs. She is feeling a big globular decoration on the tree.

JANE: Are you there, Ella?

ELLA: Yes, miss.

JANE: Are the decorations pretty?

ELLA: They are very beautiful, miss.

JANE: You musn't call me "miss." That's too distant. I like for you to call me Jane.

ELLA: But the Housekeeper said——

JANE: Never mind what Miss O'Neal said—(*Pauses, wrinkling her brow.*) Even if I can't see, I can be my own boss.

ELLA: Yes'm.

JANE: Ella, do you believe that faith can move mountains?

ELLA: Oh, yes'm, faith can do anything.

JANE: (*Unsteadily, as if about to cry.*) I don't know what to believe. (*She feels her way to the sofa—ELLA rises to help her.*) Oh, Ella! I've had faith, but the result was nothing. (*She grasps the arm of the sofa.*) Why, do you know, (*Smiles.*) I'd give everything I've got just to see a tree's bare frame, just to see an old leafless tree. That's what I used to call them. For twelve years I lived with opportunity to see, but it was a mental impossibility; and now I have the sense to see, but it is physically impossible.

Enter PRISCILLA carrying a bowl of rose-buds.

JANE: Roses—and so fragrant! Is that you, Priscilla?

PRISCILLA: Yes—Miss O'Neal has gone to her mother's, and she sent these roses. She said that she hoped you would have the happiest Christmas that a human being can have.

JANE: (*Dejectedly.*) Oh, if I could have half as happy a Christmas as any one in the world.

ELLA: Remember faith, miss.

JANE: Priscilla, will you go to my room and bring all of my dolls—I always like to have my dolls at Christmas time.

PRISCILLA: (*Glancing at ELLA.*) Yes, Miss Jane. (*Exits.*)

JANE: Ella, do you know any new Christmas stories? (*Window shade rattles as it is blown inwards.*) What's that?

ELLA: It's the window shade. I broke the windowpane when I was working with the tree today. (*Nervously.*) I'm very sorry.

JANE: Oh, that's all right, it just startled me. (*Pause.*) Don't you know any stories?

ELLA: (*Looking into the fire.*) I once heard a story about a little girl who was lame, and her god-mother gave her a little bluet plant for Christmas. It was a magic bluet plant. She said that when it bloomed the little girl would be able to walk. (*Chapel clock strikes eleven times. JANE sits erect.*)

JANE: (*Hysterically.*) Ella! Oh, Ella! (*More calmly.*) They've told me that I will see by twelve o'clock tonight. (*Rubbing her hands across her forehead.*) Will I see?—Oh, will I see?

ELLA: (*Consolingly.*) Miss Jane, Miss Jane, have faith in the Almighty. Jesus walked on water and——

JANE: Did He? Could He have?

ELLA: You want to believe that you can see—the doctors have said you will, your father has said so—God is left to do what he wishes. (*Pauses dreamily.*) Have faith, Miss Jane, have faith.

JANE: I can't stand the thought of being blind for a lifetime. Now in less than an hour I will know that I shall never see, or I shall be a new being. (*Resolutely.*) I shall have faith, I have faith. (*Shouts.*) I will be a new being. (*Pause.*) Ella, get a bud vase, please. I want to put one of those rosebuds here on this table. (*She feels the table top.*)

ELLA: But, Miss Jane, they told me not to leave you at all.

JANE: (*Pleadingly.*) Have faith in me, Ella; I will sit right here while you are gone. (*Exit ELLA.*)

JANE: Oh, God in heaven, I have the faith, faith enough to see a thousand things; but if I could just for one moment see a Christmas night, I would be ready to give up the rest of my life. Make a new being of me; for one moment take me out of my hopeless state.—(*Enter PRISCILLA bearing dolls.*)

PRISCILLA: Where is Ella, miss.

JANE: I sent her to get something. (*Enter ELLA.*)

ELLA: (*Takes bud from rose bowl and places it in the vase.*) Here is your vase and bud, Miss Jane. (*She puts it on the coffee table.*)

PRISCILLA: (*Addressing ELLA.*) I thought I told you to stay right here.

JANE: (*In an irritated tone.*) Priscilla, you may go; I think Ella will take care of me.

ELLA: But, miss—(PRISCILLA *exits.*)

JANE: Ella, I shall (*Feels about on the coffee table for the bud vase.*) Let this rosebud be like the bluet plant in the story. If it opens up by twelve o'clock, I will see.

ELLA: (*Pityingly.*) Oh, Miss Jane, don't do that. Oh, please don't.

JANE: Now, now, Ella, be calm, don't lose faith. (*Meditatively.*) Faith has moved mountains, surely it could unfurl a little rosebud.

ELLA: Oh. (*In a hopeless, dissatisfied sort of tone.*)

JANE: (*With a confident mien.*) The doctor said so, father said so, and Ella has said so; it will be so.

Through the window can be heard a choir singing.

“It came upon a midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold;
'Peace on the earth, good-will to men
From heaven's all-gracious King';
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.”

Tone softens on second verse; clock strikes one time.

JANE: (*Much moved.*) Oh, Ella, listen.

ELLA: Yes'm.

JANE: Ella.

ELLA: (*Very dreamily.*) Yes'm.

JANE: Ella, please go look on the bed in my room and get those gift packages.

ELLA: But Priscilla told me not to leave.

JANE: Oh, Ella, what do you think I am? (*Resuming.*) And as you leave, please let up the shade so——.

ELLA: The draft might give you a cold.

JANE: No it won't—I can hear that better if you do.

Ella exits, letting up shade. Choir louder.

“O ye beneath life’s crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and slow!
Look now, for glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing:
O rest beside the weary road,
And hear the angels sing.”

Choir softer.

“For lo! the days are hast’ning on——”

JANE: (*Singing.*) “Oh, rest beside the weary road,
And hear the angels sing.”

The rose! (Absently she rises and clutches the bud vase. Almost a scream.) It’s bloomed! (Falling back on the sofa, she grasps the floor lamp, which falls over and goes out. Only the flickering of the flames in the hearth can be seen.)

JANE: Oh, God, can I see? It has bloomed; can I see? Just once, God, let me see just once. (*Becomes hysterical—mutters.*) Faith! Faith! I have faith. (*Clock in chapel sounds twelve. As the last stroke is sounded, the choir begins.*)

“Oh come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant.”

Immediately JANE rises and goes towards the window, through which shines the brilliant street lamp.

JANE: I see! I see!—the star! Oh, I see the star! I am coming, I see. (*Gropes her way through the window. Glass can be heard to crackle under her feet from without. Suddenly JANE screams. Enter PRISCILLA. Choir stops.*)

PRISCILLA: Miss Jane! Miss Jane! Ella! Oh, Miss Jane!
(*Enter ELLA.*)

ELLA: Where’s Miss Jane?

PRISCILLA: Oh, why did you leave her? Oh——

Sound of an ambulance siren from without. Both maids rush to window. The ambulance can be heard to stop just under the window. There is a great murmur of voices.

A MASCULINE VOICE: I heard her scream somethin' about a star, and then I seen her fall right over that banister.

A FEMININE VOICE: Oh, how terrible.

SECOND MASCULINE VOICE: Didn't she have a happy expression on her face?

A FEMININE VOICE: Yes, she did wear a pleased look, like as if she'd gotten her last wish.

General murmur of voices becomes lower and lower. The two maids draw inside before the fire.

ELLA: (*Half dazed.*) Oh, how did I know that it would come to this!

PRISCILLA: (*Sympathetically.*) You should have stayed with her.

ELLA: Do you reckon she killed herself, and (*She breaks into sobs on the sofa.*)

PRISCILLA: 'Tis bad, but I've been most prepared for it any time, and——

Choir continues the singing of "Oh Come, All Ye Faithful." The choir is a group of angels, and they pass in pairs. A brilliant light is thrown on the window, so that they are easily seen as they pass. JANE follows right behind the last two angels. There is a contented look upon her face. As the last one is seen, PRISCILLA lifts the floor lamp up and plugs the socket in the floor. Just as the light goes on, ELLA jumps from her position on the sofa. She is very worried-looking. She picks the rose from the floor.

ELLA: (*A startled tone.*) It did bloom.

Curtain

Choir sings.

"Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth."

THE GREEN CANDLE

EDWARD T. CONE

"Here are the dozen red candles," said old Mr. Framberger; "and here is a green one—for luck."

"Luck? What kind of luck?" asked Arthur.

"Never you mind!" chuckled the old German. "Just set it on your window-sill tonight, and some kind of luck will follow. It's a Christmas Eve candle—the kind that the fairies drop in the regular lot, just for fun. Fairies, you know, hate red; so red candles never bring them; but green is their own color. Well—a merry Christmas to you!"

"The same to you!" smiled the little boy.

* * *

A green Christmas Eve candle is magic—it has a message which mortal eye cannot read, but which all fairies must obey. See how this lone green candle burns on the window! And now, see how it flickers—once, twice, three times, as if a tiny breath of wind were blowing over it. But is it the wind? Look, for there are three tiny figures on the window-sill—perfect human forms, but only six inches high—two in tight-fitting green suits, one in a flowing green dress. But now one of them flies to the candle (yes, they have tiny wings, invisible except in flight) and blows it out. Now it is dark. There is a delighted squeal of laughter, then a snap and a stifled scream. Now all is silent.

* * *

The next morning Arthur awoke with the joyous thought, "It's Christmas!" He bounded out of bed; but he sat down suddenly, remembering that he was not to see his presents until his sister was ready too. She was so lazy, thought Arthur; she never woke up until seven-thirty, not even on Christmas. At any rate, he could dress in the meantime.

It was surprising how fast Arthur could get dressed on Christmas. Any other day he would be a quarter of an hour taking off

his pajamas. This morning he was putting on his socks after five minutes. He soon finished, and he began looking around for something else to do. The thought occurred to him to look at his candle. It was out; but of course one could not expect it to burn all night, standing in an open window.

Then he remembered the mouse-trap. He had baited it the night before with a piece of Christmas fruit cake, hoping that the mice might take advantage of the festive season. Yes, there was a mouse; no, it must be a rat. No! It was—yes, it must be—a fairy! “A real, live, fairy asleep in my mouse-trap!” shouted Arthur, excited and gleeful. He could see that the little elf had been caught by its foot. It was a little man, dressed all in emerald green.

Very gently Arthur held the sprite while he drew back the spring. The touch awakened the fairy. He opened two surprised, chagrined eyes. “Hello!” he said.

“Err—hello!” replied Arthur, not knowing how to address a being like this. “Er—are you hurt?”

“Not at all,” replied his captive, “but my pride is. Fancy being caught in a mouse-trap! It’s very humiliating. But what I want to know now is whether or not you’re going to let me go. You don’t have to, you know, until I’ve granted you three wishes; but if you make me do that, I shall lose my social standing. Well?”

“Well,” said Arthur, “three wishes would come in mighty handy; but I’d hate for you to lose your social standing. How would it do if you gave me one wish?”

“That wouldn’t be so bad,” mused the elf; “what would it be?”

“I’d want to be able to see fairies,” asserted the boy promptly.

“But I have no power over the other fairies,” was the answer.

“I’ll tell you what I could do, though. I could enchant your eyes.”

“The very thing!” exclaimed the delighted boy.

“Well, set me down,” said the elf, “and I’ll see what I can do.”

“How do I know you won’t fly away?” demanded Arthur suspiciously.

“You’re a sly one, aren’t you?” cried the fairy, making a face, “Well, hold me up to your eyes, so. Now close them.” Then he softly blew upon the eyelids. “Now!” chuckled the sprite.

"Now what?"

"Now you can see fairies once a year, on Christmas Eve, if you'll put this same candle in your window, as you did tonight. Now will you let me go?"

Regretfully Arthur opened his hand. "Wait!" he called. "What's your name?"

"Call me Mouser!" laughed the fairy. "Goodbye!"

"Goodbye!" called Arthur.

Outside the window two other elves joined the one just released. They besieged him with questions—"Well, what happened? Did you give him his wishes? Did he let you off, or did you fool him?"

Their brother eagerly told them his tale. "What would he says," he concluded, "if he only knew that his candle alone gives him the power to see us!"



THE ANGELUS

BEN WILSON

The sun is low in the tree tops;
The west is a rosy glow;
And the mellow notes of the Angelus
Peal out sweet rythm and slow.

Out on the golden harvest field
Two weary peasants stand;
A crucifix is held quite tight
In a worn and calloused hand.

A reverent pause, a muttered prayer,
The crucifix plea to God,
The echoes of the bell die out,
The peasants turn to plod.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

MARY MARGARET BATES

How and why hymns came to be written is a fascinating study. The stories of some of the best known Christmas carols and the lives of their composers give one a deeper appreciation of the carols.

Probably the oldest of the more familiar carols is "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night," which was written in 1703 by Nahum Tate, once poet-laureate of England.

"Joy to the World" was written by Isaac Watts in 1719. H. Augustine Smith in his book, *Lyric Religion*, calls this carol "A carillon of praise." At the time when Dr. Watts wrote this hymn, religion in England was a cold, formal affair. Christians were few, and little gain in the ranks could be seen. In spite of it all, Dr. Watts wrote this hymn of exultation which is today one of our best-loved Christmas hymns.

During the eighteenth century Charles Wesley, one of the world's greatest hymn-writers, wrote "Hark the Herald Angels Sing." This hymn is one of the most popular of all Christmas carols. There were very few people by which, and fewer churches in which, this hymn was not heard last Christmas. It is an interesting fact that the carol written by a famous hymn-writer should have the world-famous composer Mendelssohn as the writer of its tune.

It was in the eighteenth century, also, that the well-known carol,

"O come, all ye faithful, joyful, and triumphant,
O come ye; O come ye to Bethlehem"

written in Latin, appeared in a collection of hymns. Various translations have been made; but the one which is most used is one by Frederick Oakley, once a priest in the Roman Catholic church. The tune was written by an unknown hymnist of France in the early part of the eighteenth century.

In 1818 a German, Joseph Mohr, wrote the carol which has come to be, probably, the world's best-loved carol. He was at a

Christmas celebration and went aside for a few minutes, returning with a paper—his Christmas gift to his friend, Franz Gruber—on which were written the words to “Silent Night, Holy Night.” That night after the celebration was over and Mohr had retired, he heard his hymn being sung to a beautiful melody. Going down, he found Franz Gruber singing it. Together, then, they sang it—Mohr singing the melody in tenor and Gruber accompanying on his guitar and singing bass. Singers going from Germany to Austria made this carol popular.

Later in the nineteenth century “The First Noel” appeared in *Christmas Carols Ancient and Modern* by W. B. Sandys. When, why, and by whom it was written, nobody knows. It is called a “West of England Carol” and is a true folk song.

America has made her contribution to the carols to the Christ-Child in the beautiful hymn, “O Little Town of Bethlehem,” written by the great American preacher, Phillips Brooks; the melody was composed by the organist of his church. There are three memorials to Dr. Brooks—Trinity Church, Boston, which was built under his rectorship, the St. Gauders’ statue of him, and the hymn, “O Little Town of Bethlehem.” The church and statue may be destroyed and forgotten, but the hymn will live forever in the hearts of men, especially at the Christmas season.

The most popular themes of the early carols were the Annunciation, the Angels’ Message, the Lullaby, the Shepherds, and the Wise Men. All these themes are used in the carols we sing today. From the smallest child to the oldest person—all who have ever heard the Christmas carols—love them and know from memory at least one of them. The singing of Christmas carols is certainly a means of worship—of adoration of the Christ-Child.

TAPERS

NELL HARDEMAN

Red candles on the avenue
Are burning bright tonight;
The red is for the Saviour's blood
He gave in want of right.

Red tapers burning in the dark
Their ever-flickering flame—
They signify eternal life
For which the Saviour came.

In stillness of the night they burn;
They give a fading glow
In memory of His holy birth,
From those He loves below.



THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

JOHN McNAIRY

It is the day before Christmas, and the fire station is being rapidly emptied of the brown pasteboard boxes furnished by the Community Chest. In each there are clothing, toys, and a bountiful Christmas dinner, all ready to be cooked. All is hustle and bustle, the boy scouts packing the filled boxes on the trucks, the firemen distributing groceries to the different cartons, and Community Chest workers checking over their lists of families in need.

Now one of the trucks is loaded, and two scouts and the driver climb aboard. Let us follow it. The first stop is at a small, tumble-down shack, from which emerges a large Negro mammy. She can hardly express her delight with the box, and she is all smiles as they

leave. The driver remarks to the scouts that she is supporting a family of seven by taking in washing. The next stop is at a large, prosperous-looking white house—so prosperous-looking, in fact, that they look twice at the address before they see how sparsely furnished the house is, and how scantily clothed are the five children who run out as they arrive. The overworked little woman with a face lined by care tries to keep up her courage, but her eyes fill with tears as the boys bring in the box. Wishing her a merry Christmas, they are off again. The driver says the little woman's husband has been out of work for half a year and in bed the last three months.

Late that evening they get back to Greensboro, tired, hungry, and stiff, but happy from the knowledge that they have helped spread the joy of human happiness where there would otherwise have been misery. As the boys go home, they voice a silent thanksgiving to the Lord for their happy homes and families.



ORGAN PRELUDE

PHYLLIS HAGEDORN

The brilliant chords resounded on the air;
The church was filled with their solemnity;
I bowed my head to breathe a silent prayer,
To lift my soul in reverence, Lord, to Thee.
To Thee I look for solace in my grief;
To Thee in happiness I turn my heart;
In sorrow Thou art ever my relief;
In triumph I am made to feel my part,
And I am humbled by Thy greatness; Lord,
I pray thee let me e'er find comfort in
Thy name as now. My thoughts, with one accord,
Reach heavenward and mingle with the din
Of angels' voices, or the choir's; still
The organ's rhapsodies the dark church fill.

SUNDAY MORNING

MARY FRANCES SUTTON

Ho hum, eight o'clock. It will soon be time to get up.

The breakfast bell will ring, and seven pairs of legs will come trooping down the stairs. In due time nine heads will be seated around the table, and peace will reign.

Mother will open the Bible and read several verses. After this each child will repeat a special verse that he has learned. Even baby will say, "Upper de ittle chidens to come unto me," or some other verse equally as simple. Daddy will then bow his head—whereupon we follow his example—to pray. I will have to hold baby's head down, for she likes to sit and watch us. Following this, we will all take part in sentence prayers.

Suddenly the peace will be broken, and cries such as these will be heard: "Maryances, I bid for the first waffle," or "Frances, me ave one," or "Maryances, you ought to give me the first waffle, 'cause I gave you a bite of my candy yesterday." This last speech or one similar will come from Billy in his high piping voice. And suddenly I will become the most beloved member of the family, as I am the chief waffle cook.

However, Daddy will soon quiet the fuss by giving the first to the baby, of course, and the next to mother.

I will finish a little before the others and will get up from the table, as I always do; whereupon Daddy will say, "Mary Frances, don't put any of that mess on your lips." I've never known it to fail.

At last mother will pack us all off to Sunday School. Peace will reign again over the household.

Eight forty-five. I must get up and dress. Oh, dear!

A GIFT FROM FATE

A One-Act Play

HARDY ROOT

CHARACTERS:

SILAS WHITAKER, a multi-millionaire.

HENRY WILLIAMS, the butler.

SARAH, the maid.

Curtain rises on luxurious dining-room of SILAS WHITAKER. A small fire burns in the fireplace at back of the room. There is a large window on each side of fireplace. A light snow is falling outside. There is a door on both sides of room. A long table is left center. Two overstuffed chairs are upstage, center. They face each other. The butler is busy tidying the room. SILAS enters from left. He has on dressing-gown and bedroom slippers.

BUTLER: Good morning, sir. May I wish you a merry Christmas?

SILAS: Bah! Merry Christmas! What a foolish thing to say!
Crosses to chairs and sits down.

BUTLER: Beg pardon, sir—shall I bring in your breakfast now, sir?

SILAS: Yes, yes, yes! Confound it! Do I have to tell you that every morning? Don't I always eat breakfast?

BUTLER: Sorry, sir. I'll get it right away, sir. (BUTLER turns and makes exit through left door. Pause. From outside come the faint noises of the Christmas celebration. With a muttered oath SILAS gets up, hobbles to the window, and shuts it with a bang.)

SILAS: Blithering idiots! I can't understand what makes people such confounded fools! The idea of raising all that hullabaloo on Christmas morning. I can't see anything to celebrate, anyway. (During this speech he has been hobbling back to his chair. He seats himself with an effort. He adjusts his glasses and picks up paper from table. After a brief glance at it, he slams it on the floor and yells at the top of his voice.) Mary! Sarah! Henry! (When no one answers his call, he gets up and gives the rope to the servants' bell a series of hard jerks. Finally a maid breathlessly enters.)

MAID: Did you ring, sir?

SILAS: Did I ring! Did I ring! You must be as deaf as you are dumb. Come here. *(He walks over, picks up paper, and shoves it into her face.)* When was this paper published?

MAID: *(Glances at paper.)* Why, on Wednesday, sir.

SILAS: Well, today's Thursday. *(Pause.)* Well, don't stand there—get me today's paper!

MAID: Yes, sir. *(She hurries from room. SILAS hobbles back to his chair, mumbling to himself. Enter BUTLER pushing tea tray, upon which is SILAS's breakfast. A box of cigars is also on the tray. He pushes the tray to SILAS's side and begins arranging the food. He unfolds the napkin and places it in SILAS's lap. This proves too much for grumpy MR. WHITAKER. He jerks the napkin, and then places it back in his lap.)*

SILAS: What do you think I am? A baby? You act as if I'm an invalid or something. *(He sees the box of cigars.)* Here—what's this for? I can't eat cigars.

BUTLER: Pardon sir, but I took the privilege, sir—It's a Christmas' gift from me. *(SILAS starts to say something, but can't seem to find words. It is plainly noticeable that grumpy MR. WHITAKER's heart has been slightly touched. Finally:)*

SILAS: Humph! What kind are they?

BUTLER: *(Eagerly.)* El Toro's, sir—your favorites.

SILAS: Who said they were my favorites? They're too mild. *(Pause.)* But thanks just the same, Henry. Sweeten my coffee. *(Butler does so.)* Where do you go every night when you leave here, Henry? Here, sit down; you make me nervous. *(The butler is very surprised.)*

BUTLER: Sit down, sir? You mean——?

SILAS: Yes, yes, yes! You know how, don't you? First you bend your knees—then just squat. *(He laughs long at his own joke.)* Go on; sit down. For fifteen minutes I'll let you be my friend instead of my butler—that's my Christmas present to you. I'm not such a hard-hearted old cuss after all. *(Chuckles to himself. The butler, still shocked beyond belief, sits down in chair opposite SILAS. He is ill at ease. SILAS picks up box of cigars and opens it.)*

SILAS: Here, have one. (*The butler awkwardly accepts.*)
What's the matter with you? I've never seen you act this way before? Why so nervous?

BUTLER: Why—why nothing, sir; only this is a privilege beyond my comprehension, sir—I——.

SILAS: O come, come. You've got fifteen minutes to be my friend. You may enjoy every privilege my guests do. Wait. (*He gets up and rings the servants' bell. The maid enters carrying the newspaper. She gasps in amazement when she sees the butler. She crosses the room and lays paper on table beside SILAS'S chair.*)

MAID: Yes, sir.

SILAS: Oh—yes—er—Sarah, you may bring Mr. er—er.——

BUTLER: (*In an affected, dignified way, wishing to show off.*)
Williams is the name—Williams.

SILAS: Yes, yes—bring in Mr. Williams's breakfast, Sarah.

MAID: Yes, yes, sir. (*She leaves the room with her mouth wide open.*)

SILAS: Heh! Heh! Kinder surprised the old girl, eh? Williams? (*Pause.*) Come, come, old man; tell me about yourself. What do you do when you leave my house every night? I've often wondered.

BUTLER: Well, sir, I go home. You see, sir, I have a wife and six children. Yes, sir, they're the finest specimens of childhood you ever saw——

SILAS: Six children! I certainly feel sorry for a man in your fix. Why, man, I've never had the slightest desire to have a wife, much less six kids. Whew!

BUTLER: If I may take the privilege, sir—I think you're wrong. (*The butler is now at ease.*) You see, sir, the only pleasure I get out of life is with my wife and children. Perhaps you'd understand how I feel if you were in my position, sir. Every night when I go home, the kids climb all over me, they're so glad I'm home; and my wife always has a good hot supper on the table waiting. It'll be extra good tonight. It's Christmas.

SILAS: I'm not so ignorant regarding the life of a man in your position as you think. I dare say that when I was the age of your

oldest child my family's station in life was much lower than yours is. Oh, I've heard a lot about "home, sweet home," and babies on the floor, and such, but not for me. I remember how my father used to come home from work tired out. I remember how we kids would climb all over his back, and how he used to give us a back-handed slap in the jaw. No, you can have your vine-covered cottage, but not me.

BUTLER: Oh, no sir. I never slap my children when they want to play with me. I guess I'm that much of a kid myself. Why, sir, it's a pleasure to go home at night after having stood straight as an arrow all day and have a tussle with the kids.

SILAS: Maybe.

BUTLER: You see, sir, I've always wanted to tell you this. You think you're happy, but you're not. I'll say that if you had a wife and kids to share this mansion with, you'd realize what real happiness is.

SILAS: Bosh!

BUTLER: This is Christmas morning. What does it mean to you? Nothing. Why, when I got up this morning and heard the children's happy voices rejoicing over what few toys I could afford them, why, I tell you, sir, it isn't human not to cherish that sort of life.

SILAS: You are probably right, but you are of a certain class of people. You enjoy the companionship of children and such. Some men are naturally that way; but as for men like me, we like to be left alone. We want to be away from all such tom-foolery. We like peace and quiet. *(At this moment the maid enters from left. She is pushing tea tray upon which is another breakfast. She wheels the tray to the butler's side. The butler puts on airs and once in a while blows cigar smoke in her face. He scrutinizes the meal.)*

BUTLER: This egg is cooked too hard. My good woman, what does this mean?

MAID: *(Can hardly control her anger.)* You—*(She stops.)*

BUTLER: But never mind; I'll make the best of your awkwardness. You may go. *(The maid turns and walks towards left exit. When she gets behind SILAS, she turns, makes a face at the butler,*

and hurries from the room. Pause. BUTLER continues:) Sir, if I may say so, I think you're a bit narrow-minded. What men of your caliber need is a more thorough understanding of children. You don't understand them—that's the trouble. All you think about is whether United Steel is 40 and 3-8 or down to 25. Oh, sir, there are many things in life besides business.

SILAS: No! Business is everything. Where do you think I'd be today if I hadn't made business my main objective in life? Suppose I had followed your plan and spent all my time in playing with children? I'd probably be the superintendent of some orphan asylum!

BUTLER: I can see that you are convinced you are right. But tell me this, sir: When you are alone sometimes at night, don't you ever have a longing for companionship? Don't you ever stop to think how nice it would be to have a dear little wife sitting opposite you as I am now? Haven't you ever wanted just—just one little chubby boy playing about the floor?

SILAS: No!

BUTLER: *(Sbrugs his shoulders.)* You'll understand some day, sir. *(Pause.)* I guess my fifteen minutes is up. *(Rises and stands erect.)* I'm now your butler again, sir. *(A bell rings three times in quick succession.)* That's the doorbell, sir. If you'll pardon me, I'll see who it is. *(He exits. Long pause. SILAS rises and paces back and forth across the room. He is muttering to himself. Finally he says in a loud, sarcastic voice:)*

SILAS: Babies on the floor—Sweet little wife in the chair—a pretty picture! Bah! *(Butler enters carrying something wrapped in a blanket. He is exasperated. He crosses to SILAS, and before SILAS can offer any objection, he places the bundle in his arms.)*

BUTLER: Look, sir—someone left it on the door steps! They left this note. *(He unfolds piece of paper. During all of this SILAS is so dumbfounded he can find no words to express himself.)* It says: "Dear sir, I know you must be a kind-hearted soul. You are a bachelor, and I know you will take good care of my baby. God bless you, sir." *(SILAS dashes madly about, not knowing what to do with the bundle. Then:)*

SILAS: Here, Henry—take this thing! Take it, I say! (*The butler turns and begins slow exit to left. When he reaches the door, he turns and says:*)

BUTLER: The fates are kind, sir. (*He exits. SILAS starts to follow him but stops. He pulls back the blanket and peers inside. Perhaps when he does so a small rosy hand reaches up—or perhaps he sees a cute little pug nose. At any rate a smile creeps slowly over his face. He begins to coo to the baby as a proud mother would. The maid enters from right. SILAS turns and faces her.*)

SILAS: See, Sarah, what I've got! (*The blanket falls away and reveals a tiny infant. The maid's mouth drops open. She stands rigid.*) Yes, Sarah, this is my Christmas present. (*He continues to coo to the baby. He goes through all the actions every baby-lover goes through when he has a sweet, rosy-cheeked baby in his arms.*)

Curtain



MY GIFT

LEE GILLESPIE

On Christmas Eve when shadows fall
And lights are dim and low,
I'll kneel and pray in silent peace
To God of all the earth.
My prayer shall be a simple one,
A prayer of praise and joy.
I'll ask my God for just one thing,
A gift of priceless worth.
I'll pray for love to fill my heart,
A love for all mankind,
A love that will forever make
My dreams of life come true.

Then I shall thank my Lord for this,
For His great love for me,
For Jesus Christ who came to earth
To live as humans do.
I'll thank Him for the Wise Men Three
With gifts of myrrh and gold,
And I shall ask my Lord to take
My gift of faith untold.



WARP AND WOOF

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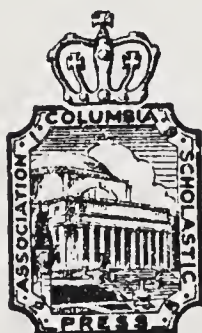
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Worship

WHAT is worship? Surely it is more than just a thing of words and actions. We go to church and take part in a service. We pray, and we listen to a sermon, but are we really worshipping? A large majority of us are not, for worship is a thing of the soul; and our souls are often not touched by the church service.

Have you ever looked at the great canopy of the night sky and wondered at the innumerable stars which make it so beautiful? Have you marveled at the magnitude, the infinity, and the incom-

prehensibility of the universe? If you have, then probably you have known the feeling of humility and awe which one has at such a time. When a person tries to visualize the being who created such magnitude and such beauty, he has a desire to worship, a desire that is as old as man. This desire is involuntary. It comes to people regardless of age and is not a result of training. It is man's natural longing for higher and holier things. It is true worship, and beside it any other kind of worship seems a farce.

Worship, however, cannot really be explained; it must be experienced. It cannot be analyzed, because analysis is physical, and worship is spiritual. Let it suffice to say that anyone who has not experienced a time of true worship has missed something that has no substitute and which will always be one of the greatest moments in man's span of years.

Filmore Wilson



“The Substance of Things Hoped For”

What havoc is wrought in a man's soul by daring contemplations running in the cold channels of reason. It is strange that in the human mind, affected and sustained by faith alone, there should find growth such potent forces of thought striving unceasingly to overthrow and trample in scorn the very foundation and substance of existence. Is it that the Creator unconsciously made an error in the endowment of mental faculties, or was it designed that such conflicting elements should exist in the mind. Let us prefer to believe that back of this condition lies divine foresight and purpose and that adequate provision has been made for what might seem to be disastrous result.

The main characteristic of the upheaval of these concurrent forces is doubting. There comes a period in mental development when reason begins to assert itself. Its first step as it begins to feel

supremacy is the skeptical questioning of conventional theory and custom that it has accepted before in absolute confidence and trust. Thus far its severe and exacting quest after truth is accompanied by only moderate mental disturbance—there is even a serene peace in the confidence of the efficiency of its establishment of an order of truth.

But soon reason turns its searching light upon the very basic principle of life—religious faith. Then is the man torn by great conflict. That “noble and most sovereign reason,” bred of the concrete experience of the world, disdains to accept a thing that, in its light, seems only fantastic theory. It is only natural that reason, developed through necessity to deal with earthly problems, should condemn that intangible in its own field. Its arguments are empty beside the power of faith; but, since man in his earthly existence knows but to judge by earthly faculties, reason is reason’s judge—it is herein that its argument gains weight and plausibility.

The man clings with despair to the cherished faith and promise that has grown to be the standard, the purpose,—the very substance of his life. Is this to be snatched away? Can state of mind condemn this and leave but a handful of ghastly bones stripped of beauty, drained of hope, and bare of philosophy? Thus he remonstrates and seeks to support his tottering craft by that same methodic reason which opposes it.

The cloud of doubt grows larger, gradually dimming the pure light of faith and pictures vividly the doom of the soul. There is no earthly hope. Man has resorted to reason, which can only lead him farther away from the evidences of faith.

At this point only divine grace and mercy can effect mental peace and a resoration of the real order of things. The viewpoint of the mind is suddenly reversed, not, however, by any power of its own. The field of faith is seen as the major and only true existence while this embodiment of life becomes the delusion.

Thus has provision been made for this issue, and thus is man converted to an understanding of his true relation to creation.

Charles Sharpe

We Wonder

When in the dark hours the Night-blooming Cereus has for a brief time thrown back its petals, a host of human beings gather about to see its beautiful contents. Some stare in wonder as they watch this exotic blossom recapture the undying story of twenty centuries ago, and a few understand.

Here nature has reproduced in a cactus flower the star of Bethlehem, which is suspended above a tiny crèche held by the lower petals. A cup this is that symbolizes Christianity's beginning.

Far off, where people are not gathered, a moth flies to a non-audienced Cereus. He enters, passing through the inspiring picture of the Christ Child's birth, and with his insignificant back turned to life itself, he sips his fill of worthless nectar, then flies away.

When Christmas comes and people assemble for the church services in tiny numbers, it is time to wonder. When men of letters become in reality what beggars are in books and go hungrily gazing into houses dazzling with golden tinsel and other ornaments, it is time to lament. When six percent of a town's inhabitants are starving, it is time to abhor the sound of Santa's well-filled sleigh. With such things before us, we wonder at human kind's relation to the Cereus moth.

Lane Barksdale



TANGLED THREADS

SIMPLE THINGS

SUSAN BARKSDALE

When seeking beauty look for simple things—
The endless even blue of summer skies,
The smothered brownish wings of candleflies,
A bell's enchanting note that slowly rings,
A spider's webby throne of silver strings,
The fluffy white meringue on lemon pies,
A daisy center's dainty yellow eyes,
And solemn nightly songs the cricket sings;
The ragged rock upon the sloping hill,
The even earth about its reddish foot,
The polished glass of waters lying still,
The rugged strength of trees, and twisted root—
Oh, you were made to love such fashionings!
When seeking beauty, look for simple things.

WHAT BOOKS CAN MEAN TO US

Awarded Prize for Best Essay Written During Book Week

CHARLES SHARPE

“To be ignorant of what happened before one’s birth is ever to remain a child.” How aptly these words have been put, and how ponderous with truth they have become. Their author visualized a measurement of mentality based upon its understanding of the why’s and how’s of life drawn from a knowledge of past ages and their experiences. How important it is that our minds grow up in this respect. How enticingly interesting to interview the lives of dead souls of the past glorified by that mysterious power of time which magnifies by distance and enriches by age and to discover a fallible humanness in the motives of their actions and mistakes. How satisfying it is to be able to solve our own problems through inferences made from the adventures and the practical wisdom of the ages embodied in pure facts—facts that are sound, facts drawn from real life, facts that are stranger than fiction. Our insight should indeed mature early with such opportunities of adding to our own stock of experiences at the expense of the time and energy of our forefathers.—What a glorious heritage is a knowledge of the past. What heroes, its personages; what drama, its happenings; and what priceless gems, those grand old volumes, whose grandeur lies in the very mustiness and antiquity of their themes.

If some fabled fairy were to approach me with that trite yet vividly agitating statement, “One hour to live; what will you have?” let this be my reply: “A book. Give me a book whose pages are so saturated with the epic of humanity that its very leather covers have absorbed character and personality and proclaim the richness of its matter—a book whose every page portrays the soul of a Lincoln, the rise of an America, the evolution of a race.

“Let me hold it in my hands, feel its rugged, massive covers, hear the soft turning of its thin pages. Let me run through its stately columns, eagerly reading in review snatches of golden phrasing on the cherished incidents and characters of my favor and

admiration. I would tread the paths marked by the great, live the events felt by the world;—I would herald a peace, cross a Rubicon, free a nation—I would live.”

If this wish should be granted, in that one hour would I so steep my mind in the essence of human existence that I would greatly cheat my untimely death by living years in minutes and draining to the lees my cup of three-score-and-ten in the time a handful of sand slips through an hour-glass.



To F.

The moonlight was hypnotic;
It was as though my eyes
Had never been used before—
Or ever would be again.
I drowned my soul in the light,
My heart in the sound of the waves
Pervaded with music;
It was the call from afar off
That I had heard in Byron
And wondered at in Keats.
It was beauty supreme.

Helen Crutchfield

A GAME FOR TWO

PEARL PARIS

IF it is true that it takes five generations to make a lady, Madeline should be, and was one. Tall, slender, with dark hair and eyes, she stirred the heart of every eligible young man in Kentucky.

Her family had been one of the few that had preserved their wealth through the war between the states. She presided over the handsome estate of her father, Colonel Haig, with a grace that was the envy of many elderly women. She was not only beautiful and graceful, but clever. No one had stirred her heart, not even the Duke, who had attended the Derbies and had won the heart of every other girl he met. Madeline had turned him down with the same grace she had employed toward the others.

She was twenty, I believe, when the nephew of ex-Governor Pollard came to visit his aunt and uncle and make his home in Louisville. He was an artist—cared little for people except as a study. He had spent some years in Europe and the last five in India. Phillip Pollard created quite a flurry of talk among the mothers of marriageable daughters; but he accepted few invitations and was seen seldom, until it was whispered that he was seen with Madeline. The girls pitied and left him alone.

As time passed, they attended all social affairs together; but few thought anything of it until it came. On a June Sunday in big headlines appeared the announcement. All refused to comment.

The date was set only a month off. Of course there were parties, teas, and dances for her. Most of her trousseau was sent to her by an aunt in Paris. The announcements were all ready to be mailed when it was suddenly known that Phillip Pollard had left for Africa, without letting anyone know except his aunt and uncle. Madeline merely announced there would be no wedding. Naturally there was talk and then more talk; nothing definite was learned. Madeline immediately left for Europe.

Being an old friend of the family, I was sent by the feminine members of my household to call on Colonel Haig immediately after

Madeline's departure. Try as I would, I could learn nothing. I am frank about the above visit, for it was merely human nature; and I always was the man to excuse human nature in such cases. I admit I was as curious as my wife and daughter. Why had this lovely creature been disappointed, for it was known Phillip had left without Madeline's foreknowledge. He had written her a note—a mere note, only one page long. Madeline's maid had told our cook, so all knew. Well, as I say, I learned nothing.

Madeline spent one year in Europe and returned as lovely as ever. She joined in the social affairs and spent most of her time on the charity board. She was now twenty-two. As time passed, the younger girls and boys left her out of their parties. She watched her closest friends marry but refused to be in any of the weddings.

By the time she was twenty-five, five years after Phillip Pollard left Kentucky, it was understood that Madeline was to be, what all the mothers spoke of in undertones, an old maid. Phillip Pollard was still in Africa, so it was said; but Madeline never heard from him after he left the one note.

I returned from my office one day to find my household talking over every 'phone—from the one in the kitchen to the one in the garage. Phillip Pollard was in town! Mrs. Hope had called and said he had actually gone to see Madeline.

Well, Phillip Pollard was in town to stay; and, much to my surprise and everyone else's, Madeline was going out with him. They were seen lunching together, at dances, and in various other places. He was as handsome at the age of thirty-five as at thirty. Exactly five years and two months after the engagement was first announced, it was announced again. The whole town wondered at Madeline's sanity. As for myself, I was beyond speech.

The very same wedding was planned as before; and Madeline was to wear the same dress. The announcements were out, and finally the day came. I was summoned home at 5:30 o'clock in order not to keep my family waiting. I overheard the maid telling the butler that Mr. Pollard hadn't left town at 4:00 because she had seen him. And true it was, for I saw him waiting patiently in the library of the church as I passed, only a few minutes before the wedding.

The flowers were lovely. The first bridesmaid appeared sharply at 8:30. All necks were turned. The other followed, and finally Madeline herself appeared. Dressed in heavy white satin and with a train that I never did see the end to, she smiled faintly as she entered. She kept her eyes on Phillip as she leaned on the arm of her father. At the altar the Colonel gave her to Phillip. The ceremony continued; the rector asked Phillip if he would take her to be his wedded wife. He answered in a loud, strong voice, "I will."

He turned to Madeline. As he did so, she turned and looked Phillip straight in the face and smiled.

"Will you, Madeline, take this man to be your wedded husband?"

Madeline half turned and smiled coldly and answered in a loud, clear voice, "I will—not." She took her arm gently from Phillip's arm and walked quickly out of the church, followed closely by her blushing father. Silence reigned behind.



DINNER ON THE GROUNDS

BILLIE ANDERSON

The two mules pulling our buckboard amble slowly up and stop in a clearing before a small house with a little appendage on what appears to be the front end, a good makeshift for a steeple and bell-tower. It is early in the morning, but already there are mules hitched to the surrounding trees, and old buckboards and dilapidated wagons are standing idle. Also there is a motley crowd standing around, men in one group talking crops and pricing mules, women bustling around with the food they have brought, and children in varying stages of development from swaddling clothes on up, some held by girls little larger than their burdens, others running around loose, and, incidentally, managing to get in everybody's way while playing hide and seek.

A few more vehicles arrive and disgorge their carloads of humanity. The crowd moves toward the building, which we find upon entering is a church. A few rude old benches comprise the pews. To one side, on a raised platform, a box-like structure which emits unearthly noises in a doubtful rhythm serves for an organ.

The program starts with a prayer by an earnest old countryman who gesticulates with head and hands and otherwise thoroughly elocutes his petitions. Then follow the reports of the different Sunday Schools represented. These reports are invariably closed with the entirely original expression, "We would like to know how to he'p make our Sunday School grow."

After Scripture reading and one or two more prayers, the leader announces that the meeting will adjourn for "dinner on the grounds." O welcome words! All those who have attended before know that in plain language this means "Let's eat." Four strong men carry two benches and place them seat-to-seat outside in the clearing. All the women are now busy laying table-cloths and placing food on the benches, stacks of lemon pies, ten to twelve high, large shoe-boxes of fried chicken, bottles of pickles, and various concoctions of jam. Then, as if this were not enough, cakes galore, of every sort, kind, and description, four and five layers high with inch-thick filling, more filling than cake. If anybody's dinner is too dry, he will find at one end of the benches a large barrel of cold spring water with lemons and sugar to be stirred into it with a paddle. A request for silence is made, and someone in sonorous tones blesses the food. After this, everyone pitches in, literally and figuratively.

From the women may be heard such exhortations as "Mrs. Kimsey, I wish you would try my fried chicken. I fried it a different way this time." And the answer comes, "I will, and you try my raspberry jam." The men in lower tones give confidential hints such as, "Hiram, go get ye a piece o' that there 'tater pie."

After everyone has satisfied his appetite (surely physically, and in some cases spiritually), the meeting is considered at an end. Preparations for the homeward journey are made; and as the last one goes out, peace and quiet return to the church.

STRAY SMILES

KENDRICK VESTAL

People shuddered involuntarily when they saw him. He knew that, and because of it his sensitive soul was hurt. He was "only a beggar," as he heard more than one person remark.

He always occupied one place—the most unobtrusive one on Main street. Even at that thousands passed him every day; but only a very, very few deigned to notice him.

From the few pennies he received daily he was able to get a meager sustenance—barely enough to keep him alive. It seemed as if it had always been thus; and because of it, when he looked at other people, going down the street happy and laughing, he felt as if they lived in a world entirely dissociated from his. He hadn't even smiled for—well, for years. When he thought about it, he found that he hadn't had anything to smile at. Well, for that matter no one had ever smiled at him. He, a hideous, grimy, wizened old man, was anything but pleasant to look at.

"Today is Christmas." The beggar caught the sentence from the conversation of two bystanders.

"That's queer," he murmured. He didn't know that,—not that it made any difference. He suddenly hated everyone. Today was Christmas, and no one gave him a thought. He glanced in the tin cup. Three pennies—three pennies were his Christmas gifts.

"That's queer," he said again. He often used those two words, whether they were appropriate to the occasion or not.

He glanced up as a well-dressed woman passed—without noticing the beggar huddled in a corner to escape the chilling blasts of wind. He looked at the fur coat of the woman and drew his ragged overcoat closer.

"I hate 'em—hate 'em all. What've they done fer me?" He struck his flat chest with a dirty hand. A few people passing by turned and looked at him curiously—and shuddered.

"Yeah, I hate you all," he screamed at them frantically. His voice broke under the unaccustomed strain. One of the gaping

onlookers, a nice-looking young man stepped out and tossed a bright silver dollar in the battered tin cup.

"Here you are, old man," he said cheerily. "Buck up; I know how you feel." He smiled at the beggar.

The surprised beggar looked up at the retreating back of the man and smiled—a little quavering smile!

"That's queer," he murmured!



MAYBE ME

HORTENSE JONES

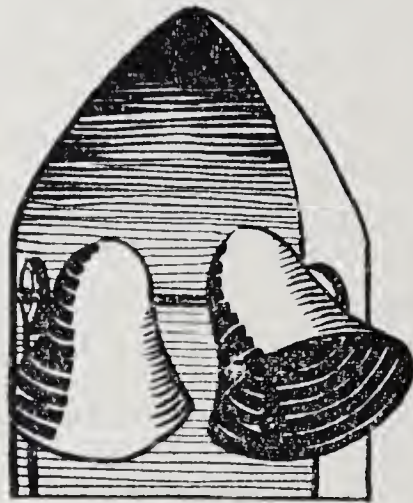
"Wishy-washy" seems to be
Just the "nom de plume" for me.
I start in prose;
I end in verse,
Or something that sounds even worse!

Of strange likes, I have a few;
I like to smell new tires, do you?
A currant bun,
A book, brand-new—
These two will always see me through.

Of my dislikes there seems to be
A little smaller quantity—
A catty girl,
A boy who talks—
At these my patience always balks.

My aspirations aren't so queer—
Perhaps because they're not quite clear.
Life's an adventure,
I've heard it said.
I'd like grand ones right ahead!

Oh, that to me there belonged
A smiling face when I am wronged,
Or that I had
The pow'r to hide
A burning hate down deep inside!





PATTERNS

FROM THE BOOK SHELF

Sons—PEARL S. BUCK

The second novel by Mrs. Buck, like her first success, *The Good Earth*, deals with the lives of the Chinese.

In this book, *Sons*, Mrs. Buck tells of the temperamental sons of Wang Lung. The oldest son is one who makes luxury and the attainment of the things he desires his chief care; the second son is a crafty and unprincipled merchant, who is inclined to be a cheat. The youngest of the sons is a man of more frivolous disposition. He runs away from his home because of his private love for Wang Lung's house maid. Defeat and the realization of his unfairness change him, and he becomes a soldier.

As the story develops, the treatment of the characters becomes a little ineffective and overemphasized. Throughout the book the handling of the subject fails to measure up to the high qualities of *The Good Earth*, in which the characters were definite types, but always worthy of belief.

The story concerns China in the last century, in which it was a land of drought and flood. Mrs. Buck has portrayed very effectively the natural calamities which follow these conditions.

In *The Good Earth* the Biblical passages were few and always suited the incidents for which they were used; in *Sons* they are plenteous and may fail to please the average reader.

On the whole, however, the book is worthy of high praise and certainly deserves to be a best-seller.

Marie Hedgpeth

The entire contents of *When the Star Still Shines* is a vivid, beautiful description of the Christmas celebration in the town of Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The author wrote the articles which compose the book as the summary of a visit to old Salem during the Yule Season, and the pictures which she paints of all the historic and picturesque places in that mellowed town are most realistic.

The Moravians of old Salem give their homes and churches an atmosphere of love and worship during this season. The tradition which has passed down through the years from the time when the unforgotten builders founded a city to suit their own faith causes the city to live again the first Christmas. It is this inheritance that causes the decorating of the tombstones with holly, the symbolic making of the famous Christmas candles by natives of that city, and the treasuring of antiques which have been kept in certain families since the time of the first settlers in Salem.

Probably the most important objects in making each successive Christmas in old Salem beautiful and wonderfully different are the "putzes." These are small landscapes which are skilfully made of paper, wood, sand, moss, and other similar material, which show a rebuilt Bethlehem. Some of these putzes, which are placed beneath the Christmas tree, require years for their making; but the Moravians never use exactly the same putz that they had used the year before.

At the Children's Christmas Eve Love-feast all the small toddlers are brought to the old Moravian Church to hear Bishop Rondthaler tell the child story of a star as he has told it for more than half a century. This Love-feast was first celebrated over a hundred and fifty years ago, when the land of Wachovia was still wilderness. At this feast, children of every age from one year to twelve sing carols and are given small lighted candles, which they joyfully carry home. A short prayer is repeated, buns are eaten and coffee drunk, the Bishop tells his story (never does he tell it twice the same), more carols are sung, and the people leave to go home after the Bishop's blessing.

The grown-ups gather for their love-feast a few hours after

their children leave. During this the love-feast buns are passed around by women and girls clad in white, carols are sung, and candles are passed around. The Bishop briefly tells the meaning of these tapers, and the people go onto a platform (there is no light except that of the candles) where they sing a benediction.

The glory of this old town in the joyous celebration of Christmas is nowhere equalled. Visitors come annually from miles around to hear the singing which echoes among the dark streets on Christmas Eve. The praise of Christmas-time in old Salem is the praising of a light.

“Thy glad beams, Thou morning star,
Cheer the nations near and far;
Thee we own, Lord alone,
Man’s great Saviour, God’s dear Son.”

Maurice Polk

A Christmas Carol—DICKENS

“Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! A squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching callous old sinner!”

Are these words familiar to you? I know you’ve heard Dickens’s *A Christmas Carol* time and time again, and so probably you’ve come to the conclusion as I did that I knew the story, and that there wasn’t any need of my reading it again. Imagine my surprise when I found it was almost like reading a new book. The situations were familiar, but I had forgotten the artistry and descriptive qualities portrayed in this Christmas carol.

To get in tune with the true Christmas spirit, read Dickens’s well-known story. The plot is too familiar to rehearse in detail. Briefly, it tells the tale of Scrooge and the apparition of the three spirits and how they changed his entire life. Vaguely I remembered it, but on reading it anew I can appreciate it freshly and get a new viewpoint on it. It caused some introspection on my part as to whether or not I had the true Christmas spirit. It isn’t just buying tinsel and presents and going to parties and giving perhaps a thought to the religious side of the day.

As brought out in *A Christmas Carol*, it is a time when men and women open up their hearts and think of other people as if they really were "fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys."

Re-read *A Christmas Carol* and thrill again to situations just as timely and fitting today as they were then; feel again sympathy for the suffering and misery brought out in it, and chuckle over the amusing incidents.

Rosemary Kubn



RAVELINGS

A CHRISTMAS GHOST

PHILIP HAMMOND

DECEMBER 24 was cold and dark. Outside of the warm, slightly stuffy reading-room of the Boston Public Library the lowering sky threatened still more snow. It had been snowing intermittently all week, and even the lovers of a white Christmas were satisfied that the snow was there to stay. I was immersed in the hobby of my spare moments—stories of the supernatural. Marlow's *Ghosts, Ancient and Modern* was before me on the table. Not having encountered this volume before, I was finding in it a wealth of new detail on the lives, habits, and characteristics of supernatural visitants.

Happening to look up, I saw coming towards me an old friend, Farlowe by name, whom I had not seen for years. I arose and shook his hand heartily, and then we sat down and started talking. Noticing the book in front of me, my friend asked if I were interested in ghosts. Of course I answered in the affirmative, and it developed that John Farlowe had had several puzzling experiences; so we discussed ghosts, pro and con, for several minutes.

I had made a thorough study of the subject and was convinced that, though there might be spiritualistic manifestations of various kinds, there was no possibility of a solid, material ghost's existing. I made this assertion somewhat dogmatically during the conversation, and Farlowe positively laughed at me.

"You apparently don't know your Boston as you should," he remarked seriously. "Why, Boston is the best hunting-ground in

the world for ghosts.—See that old gentleman over there in the corner?”

“Yes, you mean the one with the white beard? What about him?”

“His house has puzzled investigators for years. Awful shrieks and howls come from all parts of the place. Flickering blue lights glide up and down staircases. No one has ever explained them.”

“Isn’t he frightened?” I asked curiously.

“No, they don’t bother him in the least. He is rather deaf, and his sight is poor.”

“But a solid, material ghost,” I said skeptically.

“Just a moment—see that blond young man over in the other corner? No material ghosts, ha, ha. Listen. He lives in a dark, rambling old house dating back over a hundred years, away out in the outskirts of town. Every Christmas night one of his immediate ancestors, either male or female, comes back from the grave and has supper with him! Appetizing thought, isn’t it—a spectre sitting opposite one at supper! The apparition, however, is usually quite orderly; but I will never forget the time when I hobnobbed with one of them.”

“You!”

“Yes, that’s Van Derwent, a very good friend of mine.”

“And you actually saw a ghost.”

“Yes, I did. It was this way: Van invited me out to have supper with him and the family one Christmas night. He told me about the ghost that appeared, but I thought he was kidding and paid no attention. He warned me that they never knew which of the departed ancestors would show up, and some of them were rather violent at times. I certainly got a Tartar, an old gentleman with bushy sidewhiskers; thought I was a Democrat, so he heaved me out of the window. They fished me out of a rose bush a little later. Lucky for me that the dinner was served on the first floor. Van told me outside that I had picked a particularly inauspicious occasion, as this was his grandfather, a deep-dyed Republican, who in his day had borne the reputation of being able to scent a Democrat a mile away; and the trouble was I am a Democrat, see? It seems that there is some rule that the ghosts have to come

in turn, so Van wanted me to come back the next Christmas; but perhaps it isn't a hard and fast regulation about coming in turn. I might meet up with grandpa again, not me!"

"Come on now, anything like that would be the talk of the town. You must think I am credulous enough, telling me this, to swallow the tales of hobgoblins and boogies that say 'boo!'"

"Of course it's true, and it certainly isn't the talk of the town. You don't think anyone would advertise the fact that there would be an annual appearance of the ancestral wraiths and especially such a sensitive person as Van Derwent. He would have spectators a mile deep around his house. You don't believe a word of it, do you?"

Here I had to make some explanations of the eloquent sniff that I had emitted at the end of his little fairy tale. But John was angry and refused to listen to me when I said that of course I believed every word of the story.

"Van, this is Philip Hammond," said my friend as he introduced me to the possessor of such a peculiar domestic problem. As I shook his hand, I was less assured that the whole thing was a joke. Derwent was the very antithesis of a person who would engage in tomfoolery. Tall, blond, his face cast in a mold of respectability, he was a younger prototype of Governor Gerry of Massachusetts, whose picture, in oils, stared down from the wall behind.

Farlowe took his friend aside and in some way persuaded him to invite both of us out for Christmas supper. I noticed John trying hard to suppress a smile as he concluded the conversation, and I took a mental note to beware! I had been fooled by ghost tricks before. Although I was pretty doubtful of the ghost's appearing, you can never tell—there might be something in it after all.

All Christmas Day it snowed in spurts, intermingled with intervals of sleet, forming that compound which has given us the term "nasty weather." Night came at last; and as I had been dressed for a long time, I was ready to leave. Dinner was at eight.

Just as I opened the door of my apartment, the 'phone jingled—one of those irritating jingles which make one wonder whether to go or not to go. At last I rushed to answer it, fearing all the time

that it would be Farlowe, calling off the dinner. It was someone to remind me that I had evidently forgotten to bring some packages to a charity party for poor children. What a nuisance! I gathered the bundles up hastily and slammed the door behind me, rushed down the stair, and caught the elevator at the third floor. Naturally it would have to be as slippery as glass; naturally I would have to hunt a half-hour for the welfare department, just when I was in a hurry.

As I swung in the driveway, I realized this house was a hundred years old; the only thing new was electric lights at the entrance. Dinner must have already begun. The butler, an extremely thin, sharp-angled specimen, gave me the thrice-over as if to say, "If you can't get here on time, you shouldn't come at all."

The dining-room was long, and the table was long. Making a hurried apology to my host, I sat down in the vacant place opposite Farlowe, who was already eating. Then I looked more closely at my fellow diners. Van Derwent was seated at the head; at the foot was a woman whose strange air immediately attracted my attention. She was thin, pale, almost like a wraith in the light of the tall Christmas candles. As I looked around, I knew that I was the victim of a practical joke, for seated all around were men in ambush—men with beards, without beards, with whiskers, without whiskers, with curls and curlless—and a sprinkling of women. It was a farce, except, perhaps, the woman, whose strange appearance struck me anew every time I looked at her.

There was no conversation; there couldn't be. To see the courses of that meal pass down behind the bobbing Adam's apples was amazing, astounding. The Adam's apples reminded me, absurdly, of an elevator light in a skyscraper. As I looked at the gentleman who needed so badly the attention of a barber, I sniffed, mentally, "Do they think they can fool me with all that chin foliage?" I started the meal, thinking: "Ghosts don't eat—anyone would know that, and certainly a student like me." Yet a hundred-year-old appetite—I wasn't so sure after all.

Van Derwent seemed very calm and very serious throughout the meal, except at intervals he would, with a nervous jerk of the

head, glance at the woman at the foot of the table. She was a dowdy creature with a complexion like a yeast cake, and the oddest thing of all was that she didn't eat a thing. At times she nervously raised her fork to her mouth or sipped from a tumbler of water. This decided me; here was a real ghost. I believe everyone was conscious of her, even the actors with the ridiculous beards and moustaches. And, too, I noticed that Farlowe paid little heed to them; whereas he regarded the woman at the end of the table with a very peculiar look. Here was my great opportunity actually to be able to observe a ghost—in the flesh.

Then towards the end of the meal a still stranger thing happened. Those whom I was supposed to suppose were ghosts began to cast questioning glances at the spectre at the foot. She, looking perturbed and worn by a hundred years of ghostly existence, was silent. Their glances were out of the corners of their eyes; mine were direct, for I anticipated no bed of thorns if my political relationship became known by some process of mental telepathy. Time after time I looked at John Farlowe, but he always avoided my gaze. He would look at Van, then look at the woman and occasionally at the many members of the House of David that adorned our midst. I was anxious to ask him just who the woman was and if she had ever appeared before; so I impatiently waited for the dinner to end, meanwhile watching the ghost intently.

Immediately after dinner I tried to find John but was lost among my fellow guests. Finally at the door I got a chance to speak to him and said enthusiastically, "The ghost did appear!"

He replied, quite shocked, "Are you speaking in the singular or plural?"

I realized he was trying to spring the joke that those freaks were ghosts, so I, unable to resist the temptation to show him that I wasn't such a sucker after all, said, "Wasn't she pale, and so pitiful-looking. John, I don't believe this ghost life is so good for the health. And she didn't eat a mouthful, the poor thing."

"Who in the world are you talking about?"

"Why, the ghost, of course, the pale woman at the foot of the table."

“Ha! Ha! That was Van’s mother; she had a terrific attack of indigestion, yet she felt honor-bound to come.”

A horrible suspicion seized me. “Who were the people with the whiskers?” I asked hoarsely.

“Oh, they were the ghosts. All of the departed ancestors assembled tonight. This was a family reunion. Thank goodness Van’s grandfather couldn’t come, though. He has been made door-keeper down below to check the ghosts in and out—see?”

I saw.



THE GREAT GARBO

IRMA LEE GRAVES

My face looked like a spattered pie;
My nose was like a parrot’s;
My hair was straight and short and thin
And colored just like carrots.

My form was quite a walking joke;
Those extra pounds were trying.
My eyes were gray and red at time,
As if I had been crying.

Despite these physical defects,
A dream I’d often harbor:
I had a vain, a mad desire
To look like Greta Garbo.

So happily I chanced to read
In some big magazine:
“Come, make your eyes like sparkling stars
By using Maybelline!”

I gasped with joy and vowed I'd try
 This famous preparation;
And further on I found that I
 Could wear a transformation.

With a showy wig and sparkling eyes
 I turned my thoughts to clothes,
And in my shopping tour I bought
 A straightener for my nose.

From exercise I lost some weight,
 And I was quite elated.
And I, each night, in fancy clothes
 Before my glass paraded.

"To waste my time at home," I said,
 "Why nothing could be dumber."
I vowed I'd go to Hollywood,
 And be a knockout number.

As Garbo's double I would be
 A hit in film creations,
And in the movie-goer's heart
 I'd cause some palpitations.

I met some big producers there,
 And each one did desire me;
But I was careful how I chose
 From those who wished to hire me.

I flirted with those movie stars,
 And every single man
Remarked that I was just the type
 To double for Poll Moran.

DOORBELLS

HARDY ROOT

One of the chief reasons for my graduating from a foolish, prankish kid into a more serious and studious young man was a little incident which happened one doorbell-ringing night a few years ago.

I was the leader of a gang of dirty-faced youngsters who called ourselves the "Black Terrors." On this particular night we met in our clubhouse and decided that we would spend that evening in ringing innocent people's doorbells and having them come to answer while we left. I, being always original, decided to ring the bells and wait until the sleepy-eyed person within came to the door; then I would think up some fictitious name and ask to see that man. Of course no such person would ever live there, and I would get a great kick out of asking where he did live, etc.

Well it worked great for the first four or five times. I would go to the door, ring the bell, and say something like this:

"Pardon, is Mr. Skyvinski in?"

The person would naturally say: "You have the wrong house."

Then I would say, "Isn't this where he lives? Oh, I'm sorry." Then when I got back to the side walk, I would yell, "When he gets back, tell him he doesn't live there." Then I would beat it.

After the first few houses my face was flushed with excitement. I hadn't had so much fun in years. But alas, all good things must come to an end (and some stop rather unexpectedly). Here's how my fun ceased:

After going the rounds among the ordinary wooden houses, I decided to alter my line of attack and visit some of the "higher ups."

So straight to the restricted residential part of the city I went.

I was in high spirits. I was congratulating myself on how much smarter I was than the dumb bloke who fell for my joke. Then, still giggling, I pressed an ivory-carved button on the panel of a huge wooden door which was covered with futuristic iron hinges.

"Some dump," I told myself. Then the door opened. I saw standing on the threshold a man dressed like a monkey. He had on a tight-fitting jacket, which was covered with brass buttons. His chin was at a forty-five degree angle, and from the expression of his face I decided he must have smelled something that didn't agree with him.

"Is Mr. Skyvinski in," I asked.

"Yes, sir, won't you come in, sir," said the butler. Well, there I was. I cleared my throat and said more plainly, "I want to see Mr. Skyvinski; are you sure he lives here?"

"Yes, sir, right this way, sir," said the man, without changing his expression.

Before I knew it I had entered the house. The man jumped in front of me and kept saying: "This way, sir, this way!" Well, the inside of that palace reminded me of the Pennsylvania Station. The roof was so far from the floor that the Graf Zeppelin could have flown about with ease.

At length we came to a room filled with cushioned chairs. The man in the brass buttons motioned for me to have a seat, a thing which I did with pleasure, for my knees were weak. The man left, saying he would summon Mr. Skyvinski. I started to make a mad scramble for the door; but before I could make up my mind to do so, a tall, stately man entered the room.

"I," he said, "am Mr. Skyvinski; you wish to see me?"

"Er, well—er yessir, that is—I did—" I gulped and stopped.

"Come, come, young man! my time is valuable. What do you want?"

I was truly up a stump. I didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Well, I always was good at thinking up excuses in a hurry; so after a brief pause in which I was doing some heavy calculating, I said in an affected, dignified way: "I'm sorry, but you're the wrong Mr. Skyvinski. The man I am speaking of was much shorter than you—I'm sorry to have bothered you. I'll be going now."

At that the man grabbed me by the collar and growled in my ear: "You're darn right you'll get out. I may be fool enough to fall for that joke once, but not twice in the same night," he yelled.

He dragged me to the door and gave a kick I'll never forget. I afterwards found out that one of the gang had visited the house before I did.

That taught me a lesson. From that day to this I've never had the least desire to ring doorbells unless I have a mighty good reason for doing so, and even then I'm a rather nervous person.



THE FAMILY PEW

IRMA LEE GRAVES

I've had agonizing tortures,
Suffered pain, and so have you;
But I've spent my worst moments
In that dreadful family pew.

I've heard preacher tell his people
They were sinful through and through.
I could feel Old Satan's presence
In that awful family pew.

Oh I shrugged, I turned, I twisted,
Wishing that the thing were through;
And I've slept and dreamed of devils
In that awe-inspiring pew;

Dreamed that I was down in Hades,
Pleading with Old Satan, too;
Bound to burn 'cause I'd deserted
That old boring family pew.

But I'd wake with bad forebodings
Wondering what my Pa would do,
And I'd find him snoring loudly
In that tiresome family pew.



THE SHUTTLE

The Dial, Brattleboro High School, Brattleboro, Vt.

We like your cover very much;
We think your theme is good.
But why not have more poetry?
We really wish you would.

Odds and Ends, Detroit Northwestern High School, Detroit, Mich.

You have much good material;
But it should be better arranged.
We like the poems especially
And the way you write the exchange;
But having an article's end in the back—
To us that seems very strange.

The Torch, F. H. Morrell High School, Irvington, New Jersey

We read your magazine—the *Torch*;
We hunted through and through,
And still we found no true exchange;
What can we think of you!

We like the humor very much;
But watch out for the ads;
They are by far too mixed up with
The other things—that's bad.

The Purple Quill, Ball High School, Galveston, Texas

We've never seen
Such a magazine!
The stories are all we desire;
But a poem without
Punctuation, no doubt,
Is enough to kindle our ire.



THE WEAVER'S GUILD

DARK LAUGHTER

Awarded second place in the O. Henry short-story contest May, 1932

ELIZABETH CRAVEN

MINERVA WRAY loved her people—loved their vitality, their joyous love of life, their loud laughter, their black skins which shone all summer long with sweat; loved their very uncouthness, because underneath it all she felt there lay a fine and sensitive soul. At eighteen she resolved to give her whole life to educating her people, to bring this soul out into the light of day and the sight of white men. Through her, thousands would attain the freedom their groping souls were seeking—freedom from ignorance, from superstition. All this was in her heart at eighteen; today she is twenty-two.

I met Minerva Wray the summer of her twentieth year. We were in Dr. Brodtkin's class in Elizabethan poetry at Columbia College; and though I was white and a Southerner, I was attracted by her intelligent face and her intense, purposeful eyes. We never became intimate except on one occasion; something in my blood, in my upbringing would not allow it before, and restrained me afterwards. I regret it now; perhaps if I had been less bound by those narrow childhood conventions which forbade a Negro the friendship of equality, perhaps, if I had broken away then, I might be able to help her now.

The incident I mentioned occurred one evening in early spring. I had walked leisurely along through the park under the softly bud-

ding trees in the twilight to the King's Arms, a tea room where I often had my supper. My mood was pensive; I was disgusted to find every table filled with chattering students and greatly relieved when I discovered a vacant table in a gloomy little alcove. As my eyes became accustomed to the half darkness, I realized that Minerva Wray sat across from me in the shadow. Strangely, I was glad to see her; I spoke some word of greeting, and she responded in her quiet well-modulated voice. I ordered a salad, a sandwich, and a cup of tea, then turned to her with some casual remark about a poem Dr. Brodtkin had read in class that day. Halfway through, as I quoted a line, she interrupted me with a fervent cry.

"Ah, I, too, noticed that line. It makes me think of my people, my dark, wandering people. Next year I shall tell them all I have learned—in these last two years of study I have come to see things so clearly. I am sure I can help lead my people toward mental freedom as Abraham Lincoln led them toward bodily freedom!"

Her dark eyes gleamed from the shadowy corner in which she sat as she repeated the line. She had finished her dish of ice-cream when the waitress put my order before me. I ate almost in silence, only a word, a question now and then, as Minerva Wray talked for almost an hour in her low, passionate voice of her own life, of her great ambition; many times the phrase "my people" recurred, and each time her eyes gleamed in the dim light of the alcove. When she finished, the tea room was deserted, and my own ice-cream was melted in its dish—forgotten.

Minerva Wray was the daughter of a gardner and a housemaid. She said she was like her quiet, gentle father; but I saw in her movements and expression a heritage from a vivacious mother. She had lived a great deal with white people until she was thirteen, when she was sent to a school heavily endowed by her parents' mistress. The girls there were eager to learn, and the teachers were kind and thoughtful. In all her life no tragedy had touched Minerva Wray. Inspiration had come to her from the teachers in a happy school environment, not from pain and suffering. She had never loved any individual except her mother, and that was a peaceful devotion. All the fervor, the passion, and the energy of her emotions—and

she was capable of a great deal—were directed toward the welfare of “my people.”

She told me that night that she was prepared now, that she planned to go South, to go home, the following winter. Suddenly she stopped speaking; her lips were parted, and her eyes held a far-away look. I knew then that I saw into the soul of Minerva Wray.

Graduation followed close upon this chance meeting of ours; and somehow, in the rush, the barrier which had fallen during that hour grew up again between us. I saw her only once before I went home for the summer; she gave me her address in Haysville and asked me to remember her.

I had promised, and my promise was called to my mind early the next winter while I was on a visit in Haysville. Mrs. Egbert, my hostess, was ordering the supplies for dinner as I read the *Haysville Ledger*. She had just asked me what I would especially like when my eye was caught by a familiar name—Minerva Wray. It was a small article in the right hand bottom corner which merely stated that she would give the first of a series of lectures that night at eight o'clock in the Washington Auditorium of Freeman College; the public was invited. So I responded to the query of my friend with a request for anything, if I might have it in time to attend the lecture, and explained my interest to her.

We arrived early, chose obscure seats, and watched the merry crowd assemble. All the girls except a few from the college seemed on a holiday search for amusement; they laughed with honest coquetry into the faces of their escorts. They were full of life and full of an animal joy in living; they were free and happy; they wanted no more. It was to this group that Minerva Wray gave her first appeal, showed the path which leads to the higher planes of intellectual freedom. But they did not understand; they were not interested. They moved uneasily in their chairs; a few even slipped out into the chilly moonlight to talk of things they knew and felt by instinct. Toward the end of the lecture she quoted the line we had discussed that night in the King's Arms. She did it well, but the audience misunderstood; they wanted relief, so they laughed. They laughed, laughed at this, the essence of Minerva

Wray's ideal. She stopped suddenly as if some one had suddenly slapped her; she paled; her eyes grew large and wounded as a child's. But she clenched her hands and went on in a quiet, dead voice. We slipped out before it was over; I could not bear the look in those large, dark eyes.

I learned through letters from Mrs. Egbert that she gave three other lectures during the winter. I was glad the first defeat had not beaten her, but I knew something had been murdered by that laugh.

I was not in Haysville again until the next spring. Minerva Wray's last lecture was the night of my arrival. I walked to the auditorium in much the same mood I had been in that night a year before. But I was shocked to alertness by the change which had come over my supper companion. She was gaunt and thin, her lips turned down at the corners, and her eyes held a harassed look in their beautiful depths. Her plea was impassioned, desperate; but her listeners were few and inattentive. She became overwrought and rash. She declared in ringing tones that the white man had been right long ago: black men were not worthy of help; they had no souls; they were hulks of clay; for all she cared, they could go to the devil. With these words ringing in the mildly astonished ears of "her people," she dashed from the stage, the eyes of every person in the room on her for the first time.

I rushed back stage at once, but she would not see me. For a year she had heard nothing from me; and she thought I, too, had been a sham in which she had placed her trust. Try as I might, I was unable to help Minerva Wray. She went out of Haysville alone, her every god in the dust, her every ideal dead. They tell me that she is a dancer in a New York night club, bitter, cynical, degraded at twenty-two, all because the vibrations of a primitive laugh broke the strings of an instrument too sensitive and fine to stand a discord.

