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Kenyon Collegian - April 1, 1953

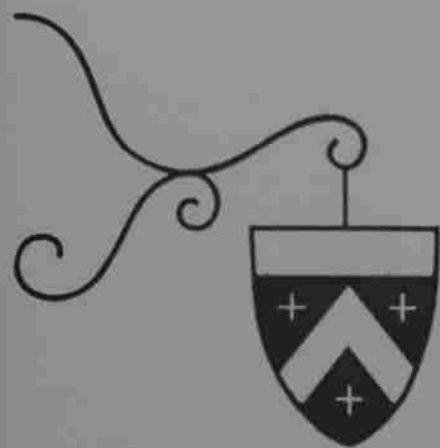
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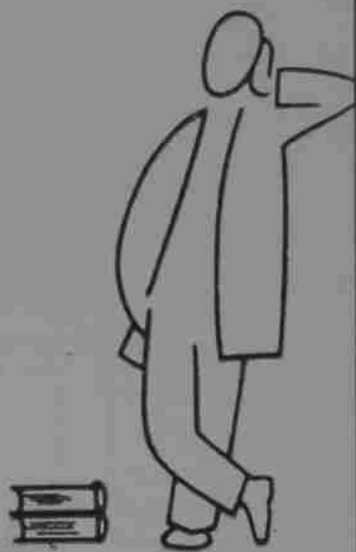
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the collegian



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LEMASTER'S

"... FINE CLOTHES FOR MEN ..."

IN THE MAILBOX:

For three and one-half years I've labored under the notion that the lack of interest in the religious life of the campus was due to the lack of respect or interest aroused by the chaplains serving the college. The large majority of the students who begrudged chapel attendance always defended their boredom with some such reason. They complained of the lack of the immediacy of the sermons or of their non-applicability to the problems and interests of the undergraduates who were allegedly intensely concerned with religion and its place in every day experience, but were in no way pleased by sermons of abstract theological problems. They claimed to be seeking a "vitalized" approach to religion.

I must admit that I was duped by this line of reasoning and could only sympathize with the undergraduate who felt his religious needs were not being met by the chaplain. It was for this reason that I welcomed the coming of Rev. Mr. Starratt. He, I thought, might well have the answer to the problem in what was rumored to be a "different" approach to religion on campus. I was not disappointed. The Kirkridge Fellowship, the sermons on contemporary problems, and stimulating articles in the Gambier Observer appeared to me to be the sort of thing that would surely arouse the interest of those claiming to be in search of "vitalized religion," whether or not they agreed with Dr. Starratt's opinions.

I have said that I was not disappointed. Unfortunately, those undergraduates of whom I speak were again disappointed. It was then I realized that the problem was one of reaction against religion when it involved any inconvenience of a Sunday morning. The cry went up that politics had no place in the pulpit, that the secular should not invade the religious, that Senate investigating committees were not province of a sermon. This, after all, was the House of God! This I fear, was rather the House of Indifference. It is incredulous to me that undergraduates supposedly concerned with the stimulation of the intellect could fail to understand the significance of a pastor's position in so many of the problems of the day which are termed "political," but truly involve the concepts of the dignity of man and of his individuality and importance. This puritan insistence that religion be isolated from the secular prob-

lems appears to many, such as Canon Bernard Iddings Bell of the Episcopal Church, to be a result of the Protestant obsession with separating church and state to the extent of frantically battling to keep any semblance of religion from the lower levels of education. This insistence on isolation can only result in the sterility of the religion and the weakening of the bond of the youth and his church—and ultimately loosens the bond of the youth with his God. In Canon Bell's words: "... we may seek to be inoculated against Christianity with a churchly solution of one part Christianity and 99 parts respectability and good fellowship." Is it any wonder that the undergraduate fed on the preparation in his own social-club parish where too often "... the sermons are not disturbing of complacencies" rejects Dr. Starratt's approach? The fault, we see, is not that of Dr. Starratt.

A second, though less voiced, charge is that Dr. Starratt has taken to "moralizing," to chastising from the pulpit. It seems those who consider Kenyon College and

the Episcopal Church as a finishing school for suburbanites are repelled by such methods. They resent being disturbed of their complacencies—as Canon Bell states. It is Christianity without Christ they seek, morality without moral precepts, propriety not piety. Here again the blame must be laid in the laps of those ministers and parishes where organ music and well appointed altars flourish, but where Canon Bell says they "... so dilute the grace of God as to render it almost powerless." It is a result of preaching God as the gentle tender of his flock, and not as the jealous creator; a result of dwelling on the serenity of Christ in the manger and not on the agony of Christ on the cross; a result of emphasizing his Resurrection and ignoring Mt. Calvary.

What these anguished undergraduates want, after all, is the proverbial "Painless Christianity for Retired Christians" which they have come to expect. Fortunately Dr. Starratt seems neither prepared nor willing to deliver it.

Sincerely,
J. A. Rotolo

the Collegian

April 1953

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AROUND THE HILL

FOOTPRINTS ON THE SAND

As the student body slowed its pace after the end of the down period on March 14, in order to begin Spring Vacation in a proper mood of relaxation, the professorial side of the academy showed a special Springtime blossom of speech-making and article-writing activity. . . . Dr. Bayes M. Norton spoke in Los Angeles for the Division of Chemical Education of the American Chemical Society, on "The Status of the Chemistry Major—A Report from the Nation." His speech dealt with the work of the Chemistry Committee of the nationwide study being made under the auspices of Kenyon College, the School and College Study of Admission with Advanced Standing. . . . On the night of Monday, March 23, Professor Henry D. Aiken of Harvard University spoke in Philo Hall on the topic, "Santayana: Natural Historian of Symbolic Forms." Professor Aiken, a world-famous value theorist, analyzed lucidly the unique combination of naturalistic methods and idealistic conclusions that comprise Santayana's philosophy. . . . Professor Aiken spoke again the following morning to an assembly of students partially weak from bloodletting, on the subject "Academic Freedom and Responsibility." His speech was prefaced by a few paradoxical remarks from Professor Aldrich to the effect that our academic responsibility for coming to the assembly would by all means result in our gaining freedom. . . . Later that week, Dr. Ralph J. D. Braibanti read a paper on Japanese-American relations at the annual convention of the Far Eastern Association in Cleveland. . . . The current issue of the *Georgia Review* is carrying an article by President Chalmers which deals with the "extreme danger" of the statistical imagination in contemporary university thinking.

The special event before the Spring Vacation was the very successful visit of the Red Cross Bloodmobile on Tuesday, March 24, which resulted in the collection of 171 pints of blood and a very warm feeling in the hearts of all to displace the few drops of blood relinquished. . . . At about the same time Kenyon students received word at last from the outside world that their efforts do not go by unnoticed, that Kenyon was found to

be fifteenth out of 562 institutions throughout the nation in the production of graduate school scholars, and second in the humanities in particular. These are the results of a survey conducted by Robert Knapp and Joseph Greenbaum, two psychologists at Connecticut Wesleyan University, who have published their finding in a book entitled, "The Younger American Scholar." . . . At last the vacation came, and exodus to Florida and elsewhere.

The Kenyon tennis team played three tough matches down there among the orange groves, losing, alas, all three. But their luck improved right after the vacation, holding back for a moment over a tight 5-4 loss to Miami University on Friday, April 10, then surging forth rather gloriously in an 8-1 rout over Cincinnati the next day. . . . The Lacrosse team was equally successful that same Saturday, battering Denison with ten goals, while the opposition went scoreless. . . . The baseball team did not share in that day's glory, however, losing to Marietta 6-5. . . . As this issue goes to press, Jean Renoir's magnificent film, *Grand Illusion*, finishes a two-night stay in Rosse Hall that was, as advertised, grand, but not well enough attended.

HARMONY

On Saturday night April 18, the combined efforts of the Lake Erie College choir and the Kenyon Singers presented to a large Pierce Hall audience the third concert of the present season. The selections were mostly ancient, the air was predominantly Anglo-Saxon, and a jolly time was had by all. The finale was the cantata, "In Windsor Forest," by Ralph Vaughan Williams and based on Elizabethan texts.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the very rich evening was the group of pieces sung by the Lake Erie College Madrigalists, under the direction of William Martin. Madrigals are rarely heard these days, and it was our particular good fortune to hear them well performed. The infinite delicacy of the airs themselves, combined with the sweetness of the female voices, was a gratifying thing to the predominantly masculine Kenyon ear.

Mr. Harold Fink, the director of the Lake Erie group, also conducted the Kenyon Singers on this even-

ing, in the absence of Dr. Paul Schwartz. Dr. Schwartz was in Miami Beach attending a premiere performance of one of his orchestral compositions.

The fourth and last concert of the 1952-53 season is scheduled for Friday night, May 1, at 8:00 P.M., in Philomathesian Hall. The performers will be the American Quintet, a woodwind group from the Indiana University School of Music. For the information of those who have not taken Dr. Schwartz's music course (like this writer), a woodwind quintet consists of a flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, and French horn.

AN APOLOGY FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE

A recent survey, mentioned elsewhere on this page, has placed Kenyon high among the top colleges in the country, and particularly high in the humanities. Few of us are surprised at this. Our departments of humanities leave little to be asked for. Furthermore, our departments of natural science deserve an equally high rating, as the caliber of their students and professors now at Kenyon will readily show.

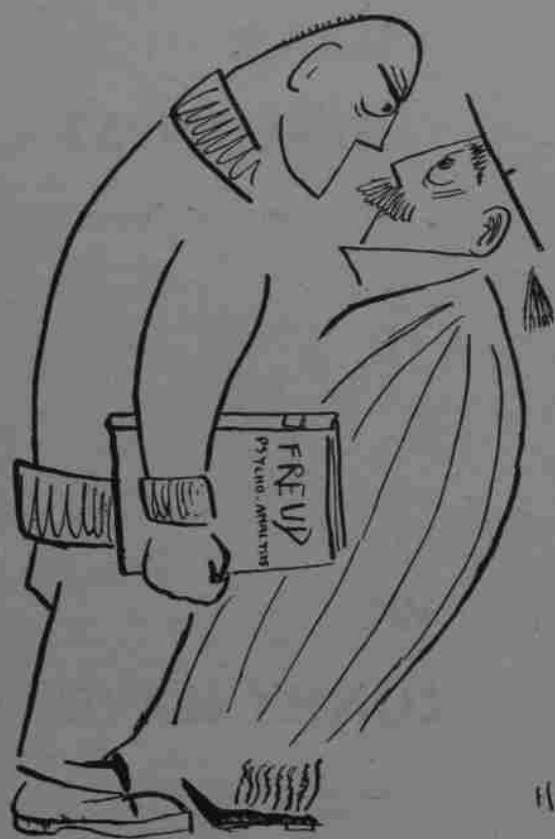
The social science departments are every bit as good, what there is of them. Unfortunately, the particular lack of behavioral sciences,—no sociology, no anthropology, and not enough psychology—is no minor setback. Any science of society that does not include or only partially includes these subjects is quite a few years behind the times.

We all recognize and respect Kenyon's emphasis on the "humanization" of its students. Our eyes are properly being fixed upon the higher manifestations of humanity. But let us not forget that humanity exists in some less glorious forms than that of poet and philosopher, and that a not inconsequential body of thinkers are studying men from precisely this point of view. The student may very well reject their outlook, but that is for the student to decide.

It may be true that a book such as *Middletown*, U. S. A., by the Lynds, is not a "great" book, but neither is a zoology text. Our study is of ideas as well as works.

Let us hope that this deficiency will be remedied in the near future.

THE STUDENT



Hans
Gesell 53

THE AWAKENING

by

Hans

Gesell



Page 5

This day has risen like all others here,
 Slowly and vigorously, its violet tint
 Lying on hills dynamic and austere
 And drawing like a curtain on the far
 Perspective of this land's vast firmament;
 And I have watched since death of the last star.

The day ascends over the Judas flowers,
 Devoted to its full and proper glow.
 Two thousand miles away the spectrum hours
 On the Atlantic and the outland space
 Revolve daylight from dark to dark as though
 Owned by a corporation. Nothing more:
 The nimbus hazes running their fixed race,
 A job of cloud or sunlight to be done,
 The bald and meager sky I saw once, shored
 By factory stacks, coughing into the sun.

With Yeats' or Plato's mirror I should not
 Measure the complex sky for its reflection:
 No instrument could mark what I have got
 From this sky fashioned over Eden's place,
 No glass could mark a second such perfection.
 But standing in a brightly coloured trance
 I am sufficient mirror, by my face,
 My heart, swimming in such vast radiance.

These deep and ravenous hills shall swallow soon
 The thick sun travelling in this afternoon—
 Such is the Texas day: the morning earth
 Expels amidst the trees a distilled mist
 To breathe tinder for sun; the heaven's girth
 Expands with incandescence, and the fast
 Clouds break and drive like graceful tugs the powered
 Sun to the west and evening hills to sleep.
 Such is the natural drug my long veins keep,
 And I am sleepy with its lucid power.

So shall I stand, always, livid with dawn,
 Livid with sunset, as the feverish air
 Tightens my body and provokes to spawn
 Demons of love ascending to these skies—
 Knowing that all things perish, shall I tear
 Into the sunset with my reckless eyes.

—Robert Mezey

TWO POEMS

TEXAS:

MARCH, 1952

(FOR ELEUTHERIA KARDOULES)

WE

LONELY LEAVES

So summers gold epitaph;
 So falls scarlet christening.
 Tangible, tired—found true.

We grow in season;
 With season, and are seasoned.
 Losing, lost—and love.

Wild, unwieldy wind across
 A languid landscape.
 Free, fathomed, and forever.

Feathered by whispering weavers.
 Woven by fatherly firs.
 Truth; totters, tremors—but endures.

We lonely leaves of fall
 Caress the careless bark of time.
 Scarlet to snowflake; showers and forever.

Cultured corn; tuned high for summersun,
 Bow heavy heads with seedles smiles,
 To gaze, to scorn we lonely leaves.

We lonely leaves—but two interwoven
 Follow out priceless pattern.
 Grow forever—grow fonder.

We two, all two.
 Seasons to years,
 But ever
 We lonely leaves.

—Myran J. Livingston

Christopher's Quest

A STORY

Christopher Himlock is right when he says that the Adirondacks on a misty day are primeval enough. He speaks only in reference to his impressions as a fourteen-year-old, but I think that even the fallen creatures of fifteen or more are capable of feeling what he goes on to describe. Imagine, or, if you are more fortunate, recall yourself walking in those hills, at a moment when the low-hanging clouds have flopped languidly onto the ground, bathing the entire scene in a gratifying tint of impossibility. Stepping from the well-populated Empire State, you suddenly find yourself in an unanticipated wilderness. And all the world was once like this. You might then imagine yourself another Champlain, hearing each step fall behind you as a monument to history, while forward lies a universe to choose from. Or perhaps you are an Uncas, pausing for a moment by a brook to mourn for the passing of a nation.

But then the mist rises, and you know once again that you are in the Empire State. Little spots of agitation crowd the foothills. There lies the rub, or the comfort, each one a thriving community of gas, electricity, and all that a highly complex and well organized society has yet to discover. And there lies Orange Creek Junction, the home of Christopher Himlock.

In Orange Creek Junction, as in many of the nearby towns, lurks an ambivalence, due to its rustic environment, which threatens to destroy the look of eternal repose that greets the visitor as he descends into the valley. For this town, known to all as a sanctuary for lovers of the pastoral scene, houses an element which secretly longs to turn it into a metropolis. The spirit of a new era creeps in. While half the population establish their home as a tourist paradise, advertising a significant location on the scenic Mohican Trail, hailing visitors on all highways with a WELCOME TO ORANGE CREEK JUNCTION designed in criss-crossing logs (all at the rather forceful suggestion of the Chamber of Commerce), the other half gaze longingly at vision of skyscrapers sedulously aping the latest New York fashions, and trying to shut those ever-present mountains

out of view. These latter are relieved at the recently laid pavement on the local segment of the Mohican Trail, and are proud of the fact that their town with a steadily increasing population figure that now reads 14,000, is the home of a state teachers' college, and of *The Graywater County Journal*, one of the largest weeklies in northern New York State.

But Christopher Himlock at the age of fourteen was a member of the primitive faction. He admired the forest like a native of old, and without even the more practical considerations that motivated the Chamber of Commerce. He and his companions could take to the woods with a genuine relish, delving into the cool shadows on each mountain-side for days at a time. They called themselves the "wood-trail boys," and prided themselves on their discovery of knowledge which could not even be found in the Boy Scout handbook. They could astonish themselves without end, finding at each step a revelation in the turn of a shrub. And they were even able to accomplish a level of understanding which might have been the envy of any woodsman, by participating somehow in the spirit which gave life to Carey Smollett.

And since one cannot pass lightly over that legendary name, I must pause to describe its bearer, who so dominated the imagination of every young rustic in Graywater County that he made for a turning point in Christopher's life and perhaps in many another that is not so well known. Carey Smollett was from the very beginning an authentic legend. He was adopted by Orange Creek Junction, who, with an eye to an even greater influx of tourists, claimed to be the first civilized community ever to lay eyes upon him. And this could not easily be disputed, since no one could confess to having heard of him, or of his cabin in the woods, before the day that a group of townsmen, cutting a road for the lumber company, hacked their way almost into his parlor. They describe the long, astonished moment during which the old man emerged, rifle in hand, to stand disdainfully in front of his cabin. He must have been at least seventy-five years old, but he was well over six feet tall

and he stood to his full height, straight as an arrow. His hands were massive, and so was his manner. For a moment, no one could speak. Then he spat, and walked back into his cabin.

From that moment on, Carey became public property, and visitors flocked to his doorway. His immediate reaction was, of course, a bewildered silence, but even that behavior was appropriate to a legend at the moment of its birth, when anything goes. It soon became not only impossible, but unnecessary, to separate fact from fiction about him; everyone was able to conjure a satisfactory image. He was a man's man. Young ladies found him attractive. Hunters and fishers even discovered the old-time storyteller in him, and they went home exaggerating his words almost as much as their own exploits. Actually, it was only to Christopher's rustic society that he warmed up in any way. He charmed them with the most coveted mysteries of woodlore; so much so, in fact, that Christopher boldly dreamt of going against his parents' wish that he become a doctor, and of becoming a Carey Smollett instead.

After the famous profile in *The Graywater County Journal*, it began to look as if Carey would approach something like national prominence. Written by a clever young reporter who has since moved on to a large New York City publication, the article did a great deal to further the legend by being archetypal, if not too literal. The opening paragraph ran thus:

Frontier days are here again, by cracky, and right here in the hills of Graywater County. Old Leatherstocking himself has returned, in the person of Carey Smollett. This ageless warrior divides his time between fighting a losing battle against the Twentieth Century and increasing his fame by spinning out endless yarns to visiting hunters and campers. Like a true pioneer he stands, tobacco juice trickling down his chin, ready to hack his way through an army of disbelievers and prove, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that he sure can talk.

The article satisfied many as a perfect description of the old man, but Christopher, for one, was indignant. He was certain that he had never seen Carey chew tobacco.

Then the legend had the unforeseeable obligingness to reach a dramatic climax; one day Carey mysteriously disappeared. A memorable furore was raised, and searching parties were sent out in vain.

All that was unearthed was a probable reason for his disappearance. For days Carey had been, according to reports, acting rather strangely. He was seen upon several occasions to grab his rifle frenziedly and run from his cabin, only to stand at the edge of the woods and stare at apparently nothing in particular. Someone once heard him shout at such a moment, "Keep away, keep away!" as he brandished his rifle threateningly. He kept complaining of shooting in the woods, and a group of campers tell of how they were startled one day by seeing his furniture piled in front of the cabin, with Carey himself crouching behind. "Run fer shelter!" he cried, "they're surroundin' us." They told the story well, and everyone agreed that Carey must have run off into the mountains to fight imaginary Indians.

The "wooded-trail boys" held an emergency street-corner conclave. All faces showed deep regret, but Christopher, for one, was certain that no one was quite so moved as he at the loss of their idol. Would any of them go look for him? he thought. I would. Someone suggested a close examination of the floorboards in the cabin, to see where some enemy might possibly have buried the old man. Another urged a cross-examination of their jealous rivals in nearby Wintertown. But to Christopher's ears all conversation subsided into an indistinguished murmur as his thoughts repeated with growing intensity: I could find him. I could find him. "I will find him!" All conversation ceased as a horde of bewildered faces gazed upon Christopher. He flushed noticeably for a few painful moments. "Well, I will," he said at last, and walked away.

For some reason, Christopher awoke at dawn the next day, just as he had promised to himself. Many other such resolutions had faded away with the running down of his alarm clock, but on this day he gave himself a surprise. He shouldered his pack and left the house before any of the more reasonable members of the family could awaken to dissuade him. Then he shook his head free of early morning clouds and saw the mountains rising before him. He really was going to look for Cary.

He began walking uphill into the woodland, following the lumber company's road. Bold and confident, he expected a great event or two around each turn. For a long while nothing happened. Then he was struck by a momentous reali-

zation. In all of their ventures into these woods, he and his companions had never lost sight of this road. The great Unknown lay either to the right or to the left, but they had always clung to this line of civilized reassurance in the center. Carey was certainly not on that trail. With firm resolution and a palpitating heart, Christopher plunged into the forest.

The trees stood before him like milestones to his accomplishment. He heard his merry whistle echo among them for a great distance, and felt that the whole world was a huge room of his own, where he could shut out intruders. Brooks paused in front of him, then carried his melody all the way to nowhere. Crickets scraped in emulation. And just as he was beginning to feel that in one bold stroke he had become master over nature, his fancies were shaken by a terrifying shriek just ahead of him.

He stopped sideways in his prospective path, his rear foot automatically pointing homeward. The shriek sounded again, more dreadful than the first time. Christopher was prepared to run at its reiteration, but some inexplicable impulse made him pause for another moment. These days he proclaims grandly that that impulse was the desire to preserve unblemished the first great act of his life; then again,

I have heard him intimate in a more nihilistic moment, that there was the thought of his angry parents back home. Whatever the cause, he stood there long enough to hear the unearthly noise for a third time, and to note something suspiciously ordinary in its monotonous repetition. He moved forward cautiously and heard it again. This time it sounded a little more like a squeak. Then he saw two dead trees leaning against one another like a pair of drunks, reeling irresponsibly in each gust of wind and rubbing together with a resounding . . . precisely, a squeak.

Christopher sat down to laugh at himself, and, as if to herald the reviving of his spirit, a Hermit Thrush lighted at that moment on one of the offending trees. The dappled creature stood there for only a moment, apparently just to gain Christopher's attention, and then bounded skyward. It flew into the center of a broad avenue of trees which made a perfect path up the side of the mountain, while the boy followed. Like a fluttering Polaris, it drew him with confidence along the steep ascent. And where the mountain went no higher, as though waiting for him, Carey Smollett stood clearly silhouetted against the sky.

He was on the very edge of a shelf of rock which projected out



over the valley. The whole world, it seemed, swept away for hundreds of feet below him, while he stood, rifle in hand, like the classic statue of the Minute-man. And, as though aware of the moment he was creating, he did it all somehow with a dramatic flourish.

Christopher approached him slowly until, far sooner than he wanted to be, he was at the old man's side. Carey glanced at him, then gazed ahead again, with a look of deep sadness in his eyes. The boy sat down on the rock, and stared also at the mountains before him. For a long while they remained just like that, both silent, contemplating a nameless something which only those two might have found on the mountain at that moment. Then Carey put a hand on the boy's shoulder.

"Listen," he said.

Nothing but the wind and the forest.

"What is it?"

"Listen," he repeated. "Drums."

Christopher strained to hear. But his ears were too untrained, he realized; he couldn't possibly hear all the sounds that this old man could so easily distinguish. But now the forest was unfolding grandly under his feet, where he could see thousands of green puffs swinging gracefully away from him, and the same thing beyond the other mountain-top. Nothing now could corrupt the sensitivity of his ears, and in a few moments he heard the drums.

"Yes. There it is."

Then he squinted through the mists that aureoled the mountain beyond.

"And smoke, too," he said.

Carey focussed his attention on the boy for the first time. "Let's see your hand," Christopher held it out palm upward. The old man gripped it firmly from beneath and gazed at it critically. "Strong hand," he said at length. "Always knew it'd be strong."

Christopher breathed deeply and looked toward the disturbances he had seen. "What's to be done?" he asked, hearing a deep ring in his own voice.

Carey sighed. "We got t'kill 'em. It's a sad thing," he shook his head regretfully, "a sad thing. But it's them we got t'think of." He pointed down the side of the mountain opposite to where Christopher had ascended. "We men done this thing ourselves, and its them that don't deserve it." The boy looked to where he had pointed and pictured the little cluster of cabins, with the women and children waiting fearfully behind the doors. We will re-

turn there, he thought, if we live through the day.

"What should I do?" Christopher asked.

"Git my other gun down at the cabin. I'll wait here."

Christopher ran immediately down the side of the mountain, in the direction that he thought the cabin must be. It was only then that he noticed it was raining.

He ran faster and saw from the way that his feet sank deeply at each step that it had been raining for a long time. The thick, dust-laden drops of summer rain grew heavier, and he began to think anxiously of shelter. He ran as fast as he could, his pack growing heavier with each step. Then his foot struck a root and he fell on his face.

He got up in a panic. Rubbing his hand over his forehead, he saw there a sickening combination of blood and mud. He dropped his pack and ran wildly wherever the hill went down. But it was total confusion; the dripping, tree-saded alleys went nowhere. Wet leaves smacked his cheeks and bulging streams coursed by as hazards to his feet. He became furious with himself. Over and over again he swore that he would never come into these woods again. At last he emerged onto the main road into town, in darkness.

A pair of headlights came around the bend and stopped alongside him. "Well, Chris Himlock," said a vaguely familiar voice, "where've you been all day? Your folks have raised hell lookin' for you."

"Are they mad?" he asked anxiously as he stepped into the car.

The driver answered with an ominous silence.

Christopher was hardly enough to come down with nothing more than a heavy cold, which subsided in due time. But Carey was never seen again. At long last, the *Journal* printed an obituary, written in the style that they had created for the legend, bringing the matter to a proper close. The boys who had known Carey began setting aside their youthful fervor, replacing such a callow mood with a sophisticated twinkle for their eyes and a warm glow for their hearts, to apply with reference to his jolly figure of their bygone days. Thus the legend matured, and old Carey was damned to everlasting quaintness.

Nor did Christopher escape sentence, for it could be seen from the very outset the sort of man that he foreboded. He is one of those for whom life retains an everlasting nebulosity, so that he encounters its situations always like a boy poised at the foot of an unexplored mountain. We call him the melancholy Christopher. He is doomed to gratify polite gatherings with his dewey-eyed countenance, harrowing the most prosaic of conversations with "a thousand similes" and an interjected, "Sans everything, sans everything," all digressions ending in a dramatic tumult of indecision. While all the time, behind this reflective gaze, there lurks the vision of an old man in . . . buckskins, was it? . . . rifle in hand, poised above the primeval valley. And beyond the hills, someday, you might go to see his home.

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"ENGAGEMENT" AND THE ARTS

by Sheppard B. Kominars

In Sartre's book, *What is Literature?*, a thesis is forwarded that only prose writing, of all the arts, is "engaged." This arbitrary distinction seems unsound, however when he applies it to emphasize his view that poetry could under no circumstances be engaged and still remain poetry. It seems to me, in the light of such poets as Eliot, Joyce, Whitman, Poe, and a few others, that M. Sartre's thesis is untrue, and for that matter, not only all literature but all art, as far as it is art, must be "engaged."

Sartre's reason for concluding that only prose literature can be engaged is that this is the only medium which uses signs and significations. . . "Notes, colors, and forms are not signs." They have no exterior reference. Poetry, though its form is readable, does not "use" words; it serves them,—considering them as things and not as signs. "For (the prose writer) they are useful conventions, tools which gradually wear out and which one throws away when they are no longer serviceable; for the (poet) they are natural things which sprout naturally upon the earth like grass and trees." They do contain a modicum of signification even for him, else they would lack any kind of "verbal unity."

I think that it is rather obvious that the poet uses words in a different way than the prose writer; nevertheless, both use them for essentially the same thing. "One is not a writer for having chosen to say certain things, but for having chosen to say them in a certain way." I think this statement is applicable to the artist in general—"The writer has chosen to reveal the world, and particularly to reveal men to other men so that the latter may assume full responsibility before the object which has been thus laid bare." The artist "reveals" the world by means of symbol.

Tones, forms, colors and words are the stuff of experience; however, art is essentially the realm of symbol. Words are used to structure symbols which create the work of art. The poet uses sensual and visual images, which through "paradox" (Brooks), or "ambiguity" (Empson), or "tension" (Tate), es-

entially "conflict," to structure symbols. The prose writer uses discursive language (which lies anywhere between scientific discourse and pure poetry) to create his symbols. It is through symbols that the aesthetic transaction occurs.

The other arts use their "language" in essentially the same way. Space, line and color present the painter's symbols, while tones, intervals, rhythm, and intensity pattern the composer's. Art is the language of symbol, whereas common discourse, or scribbling, or scales and arpeggio exercises, utilize the tools but do not use them to create.

By symbol I mean something more than Jung's "collective unconscious" or Langer's "representation of the object." Essentially, I mean a coalescence of fact with meaning far beyond the relevant data that compose it. It transcends perception and action, for it has its significance in the realm of ideas as well as in the realm of empirical data. A sign is heeded and its meaning directs action; however it necessitates no "involvement" for its meaning to be understood (for example, the sign "Slow" results in a deceleration of the auto being driven, but its meaning is directly and completely understood on the almost superficial level of a response reaction). Symbols are different in that to understand their meaning, one must be involved in the content. They require a grasping and a holding of their matter. To a sign there are only two possible reactions,—either to obey or disobey it. It has no sphere or depth of subject, for it is only a directive, an imperative. You needn't "involve" yourself in the idea of "slowness" before you put your foot on the brake; you either understand or don't understand the meaning of the sign, "Slow."

The symbol is a core of involvement. It is dynamic, for it can induce an infinite variety of responses depending upon the apprehending individual. Though they may be infinite in number, they are universal, since all men are capable, under certain conditions (i.e.: education, environment, religion), of having these responses. They involve a certain universalization of

human experience.

The symbol is structured out of the very stuff of life,—out of basic drives, emotions, out of an awareness of reality that is discernible through experience. Symbols are engaged in life, and art is created by them. All art is "engaged" in the human situation, but it is great or insignificant insofar as it achieves objectivity of its "engagement." By this I mean that at the same time it is of the human situation, it must maintain a perspective of such a sort that a lot more than the human situation is accounted for.

An artist becomes less artist and more social commentator when he loses perspective of the total situation and conveys the message of only one faction of humanity. I could not help feeling this loss of perspective as I looked at some of Orozco's works in a recent showing. Sartre's statement that the artist (painter) is mute did not then seem true, for it was impossible to look intelligently at the canvas and not read Orozco's "message."

The depth and intensity of art is such that a one-level presentation is insignificant. I cannot dismiss Picasso's "Guernica" mural the way Sartre does. He writes, "does anyone think that it won over a single heart to the Spanish cause?" If it could, or rather, if it did, and it did only this, it would be of minor significance. However, its presentation of war, death, destruction, and despair is of broader magnitude than a simple statement about Fascist oppression. The greatness of its essential perspectives in such a situation portrays all such situations of like nature. Its terror has a universality that penetrates every catastrophe.

I would say that in the Kantian sense, the use of symbol in art is "disinterested." The artist is not concerned with the actual existence of the scene that is presented (i.e.: the massacre at Guernica) or to use the presentation for some exterior end (i.e.: to win people over to the Spanish republican cause), but what he is presenting must be of such significance that it will seize and hold our interest even if we are not aware of, or do not care about, the Spanish Civil War. There must be such a significance of symbolization that any man who contemplates the painting can there apprehend the horrors of war.

Turning now to music, I must note with sadness the fate of such great composers as Shostakovich and Stravinsky, now "dead," "killed," or at least infinitely hampered by the restraint of Communist idea-

tional directives. Their music has suffered the limitations of Russian social and ethical philosophy, and they are confined by Russian taste. They create for special audiences with a mind to special concepts. They compose not for all men, but for only a segment of humanity. Their music is of far less artistic value now that they have relinquished the free range of ideas embracing all men.

All of the literature of the West, insofar as it deals with human actions is about freedom; about humans expressing choice, making and creating their own lives. The "literaturist" tries to assist man in his choices by presenting the choices that other men, men of qualities more or less "universal," have made in difficult situations. Such is the nature of tragedy—it is the embodiment of a symbol of many symbols, in a vivid panorama of actual experience. The tragic hero is engaged in living and choosing, as is every man, but though he is "in situation," his choice and his actions have a certain universality about them that intensify all of life. His choice is always fatal, whereas the ordinary man is not

at every turn confronted with death. It's usually a matter of "taking a toast and tea," and not, "To be or not to be" (though the latter may occur at times during an ordinary man's life). The dramatist tries to give perspective to the choice situation and succeeds or fails insofar as he engages his tragic hero in an essentially human situation while that situation at the same time retains universal applicability.

A private cause, a special audience, a personal or political message—all these cast art down into insignificance. Art must be engaged in the whole human situation. If its appeal is only to special interests, if its symbols are not universal, then there would remain men outside of art. But true art is within man: he can create it; he can understand it; he can profit by it. To say that he alone makes sense, when it is clear that all art "makes sense."

But the artist makes sense, of course, only to the extent that he is himself involved in life and is capable of helping his fellow men to understand the more complete panorama of the existential situa-

tion. The artist is only a man of better vision than most who has the ability to present the full scope of his vision by means of symbols. He gives perspective to the chaos in which man finds himself "geworfen," and he attempts to show the world relation, importance, value, and humanity, so that man, realizing he is not alone in bearing his "burden," may stand up and assert his humanity instead of being bowed down into the mire.

In other terms, art is truth,—not this man's truth or that man's truth, but truth for all men. The truth is implicit in the symbol and the symbol is "engaged" in life. Through the symbols, mankind may perhaps achieve harmony of art, religion, and science. Art is the distilled essence of life's meaning and direction; it is an embodiment of man's fulfillment.

1. J. P. Sartre, *What is Literature?*, Philosophical Library, New York, '49, Trans. by B. Frechtman, p. 8.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

RECEIVED LAST WEEK:

PHILADELPHIA, April 14—The president of the National association of Manufacturers today defended colleges and universities against "wholesale indictment" involving communism and voiced confidence that "the necessary house-cleaning is in good hands."

Charles R. Sligh, Jr., said that some college faculties probably still include professors with communist leanings or who expound socialist ideas in the classroom, but, he emphasized, that should not cause a "general condemnation" of our educational system.

Mr. Sligh called for stronger business support of the private institutions of higher learning. He said that increased business support of higher education is the "positive approach to the left-wing problem," and added, "We of business cannot wash our hands of education because a tiny fraction of the teachers have left-wing ideas . . ."

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