

PENMAN'S PALETTE

Vol. III, Issue III

George Mason Jr.-Sr. High School Falls Church, Virginia

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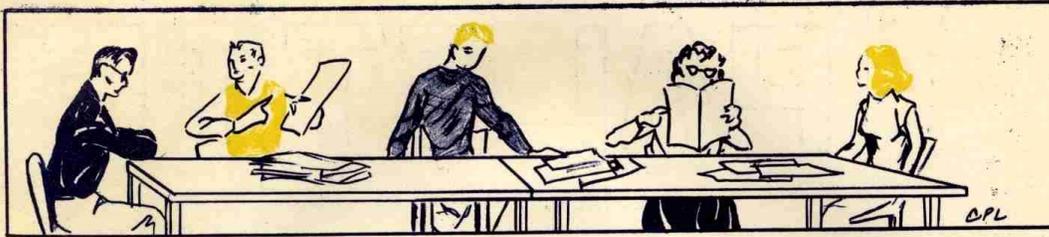
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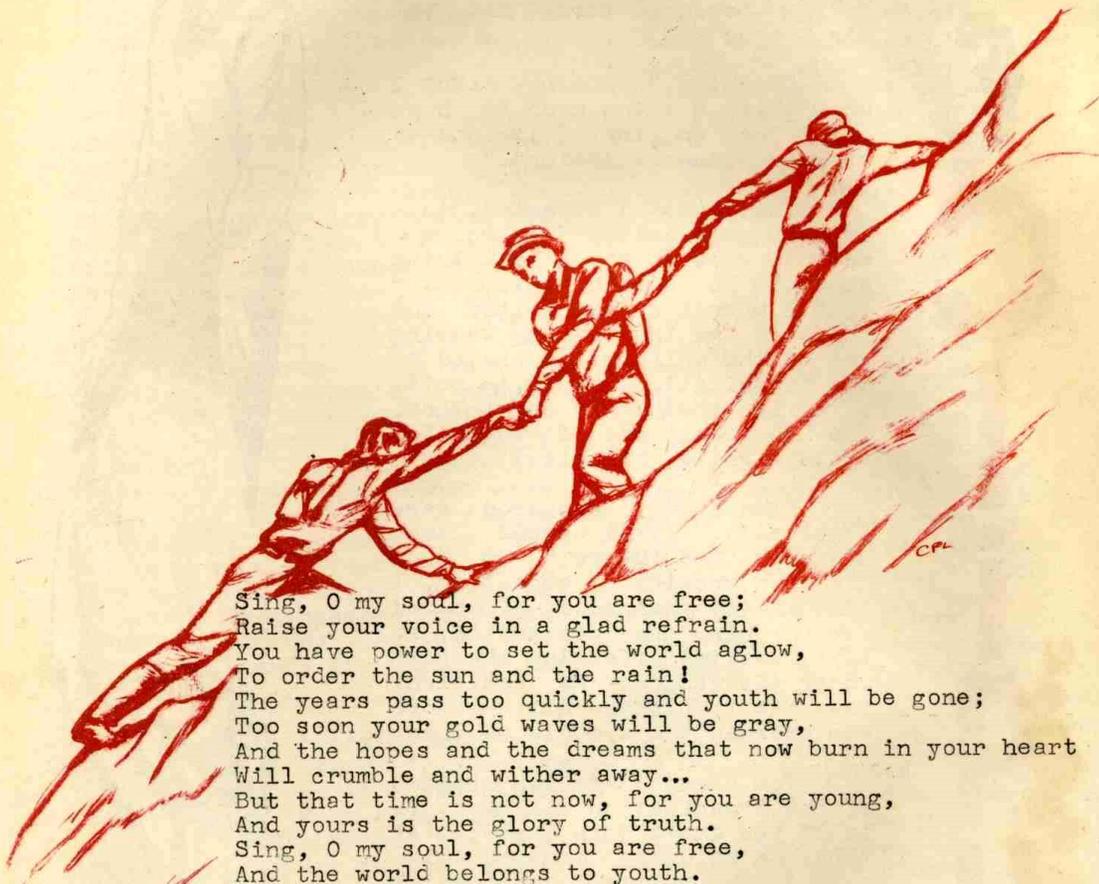
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A Song for Youth



Sing, O my soul, for you are free;
Raise your voice in a glad refrain.
You have power to set the world aglow,
To order the sun and the rain!
The years pass too quickly and youth will be gone;
Too soon your gold waves will be gray,
And the hopes and the dreams that now burn in your heart
Will crumble and wither away...
But that time is not now, for you are young,
And yours is the glory of truth.
Sing, O my soul, for you are free,
And the world belongs to youth.

Kasha Larew '56

O f C o n f l i c t s

My friend, Tom Collins, visited my place of station recently, obviously in a mood to create thought.

"What brings you here?" I asked, secretly hoping that perhaps the advance guard of an invading horde of Turks had cut his tongue out.

"Nothing," said he. (But I knew this was too much to hope for.) Then smiling: "I see you've arrived--congratulations."

"Arrived?" I repeated, playing the game called "I'm too modest to know what you're talking about." He smiled, pretending that I wasn't a hypocrite, and informed me that I was wearing one of the uniforms approved by the Organization. This, he said, signified that I was one of Them. (He had been one of Them for quite a while, himself.)

"Really?" I answered sarcastically. "I'll avoid such dress in the future." To keep him from knowing my objective, I immediately changed it--I decided not to join the mob which, at this time, was affecting the garb under discussion. My ambition, now, was to join the Elite--those who scorned the symbols of Them.

Tom asked: "Which Branch of the Organization will you be in if you don't join Them?" (At this, he solemnly crossed himself.) But before I could think of an answer, I heard a voice behind me--a voice, speaking to me softly as in a song, saying:

"Which Branch?" It was Fran Barrett. She sat--or rather, draped herself, down beside and around me. She smiled. "Which Branch?"

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Comets

I can predict what you will do some evening in 1986, (assuming that the C-bomb hasn't killed you). You will be looking at the sky, enjoying, being awed by, or frightened by the Great Comet of 1531, better known as Halley's Comet.

It will be quite a sight. The comet and its tail will stretch halfway from the horizon to the zenith, directly overhead. The head will appear larger than the moon, and almost as bright. The tail will be somewhat dimmer, and stars can be seen through it. In 1986 the main interest will be scientific, and, to the people in general, only that of a large, spectacular "show". But when it appeared before-- and it has appeared regularly since 240 B. C. about every 77 years--it created somewhat more fuss. The Huns under Attila looked on it as an evil omen, and several months later, in 451, were defeated in the Battle of Chalons. It appeared, and was feared by the English, just before the Battle of Hastings in 1066.

Although Halley's Comet appears a little more frequently than most comets, it is otherwise just average. Most comets follow elongated orbits around the sun, coming in nearly to the sun's fiery corona, and receding to the cold depths of space past Pluto. Comets make a sharp turn around one side of the sun, very close to it, and then curve out from it, less and less sharply, until finally they are traveling almost directly away from the sun; they then curve back on themselves until, far out past Neptune, they make another sharp

turn, exactly like the one they described around the sun, and begin their return. The trip takes them anywhere from 50 to 3000 years.

Most comets are large, the head of Halley's Comet is about 40,000 miles in diameter, (five times the diameter of the earth), but it is also very light. There seems to be about as much matter in a given volume of a comet's head as there is in the same volume of the vacuum within a good X-ray tube. And the tail is thousands of times less dense than the head.

The tail of a comet is a very peculiar thing. For one thing, it doesn't even exist when the comet is far from the sun. It is pressure of the light of the sun that tears particles out of the tenuous head of the comet and pushes them back, forming the tail. Only about 500,000 miles of the tail can be seen, but some tails are estimated to be 100,000,000 miles long! If the head of such a comet was at the sun, its tail would stretch past the earth. Because the tail is caused by the pressure of the sun's rays, the tail always points away from the sun. Thus, when the comet is receding from the sun, the head follows the tail. Also as the comet moves around the sun on one end of its flattened, elongated orbit, it appears to move sideways.

Although most comets move in elliptical, closed orbits, and return to the sun periodically, some appear to visit the solar system only once, sweeping from interstellar space, down around the sun, and then curving back out into the vast void between the stars. A comet like this

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NEW MEXICO

New Mexico, land of contrast and opposition, good
and bad--
High mountains, great stone piles fashioned by
giants' hands,
Rise skyward, offering alms to heaven, and peer
scornfully down
At the dust-choked, sweltering deserts
Which humbly labor for their lofty lords, sweating
and cursing their low plight.

New Mexico, land of different peoples and many mixtures--
Mexican farmers, relaxing after a day's work, jabber
fragments of Spanish and English;
Pink-shirted Texans, rich from drilling black gold,
stride with an air of slight condescension,
And swarm to their neighbor state like locusts,
eagerly seeking recreation and new things;
Indians, oppressed by the white man, drink at the
bars while some till their small garden plots.

New Mexico, land of contrasting cities and civilizations--
Sprawling, sleepy villages of adobe huts with musty
yellow walls
Lying perspiring in the mid-day sun, and freezing in
the chill of the night;
Looking at Los Alamos, the shining city of the modern world,
Twinkling with neon light, and buzzing with merry
people walking the streets--
Looking at Los Alamos, inventor of the hydrogen bomb.

Rob Coe '56



D.H.

GYPSY TOUR

There! Did you hear it? Off in the distance,
A sound like the snarl of a lion at bay,
The muted murmur of a hundred engines-
The Gypsy Tour is under way!

Wait--I can feel it, a faint vibration
Like a muffled heartbeat, strong and true,
A rising, throbbing, leaping pulse-
The motorcycles are coming through!

Look, to the east, along the horizon,
Out of a dust cloud--here they come!
Flying over the road at dawn
In a mad, intolerable race with the sun.

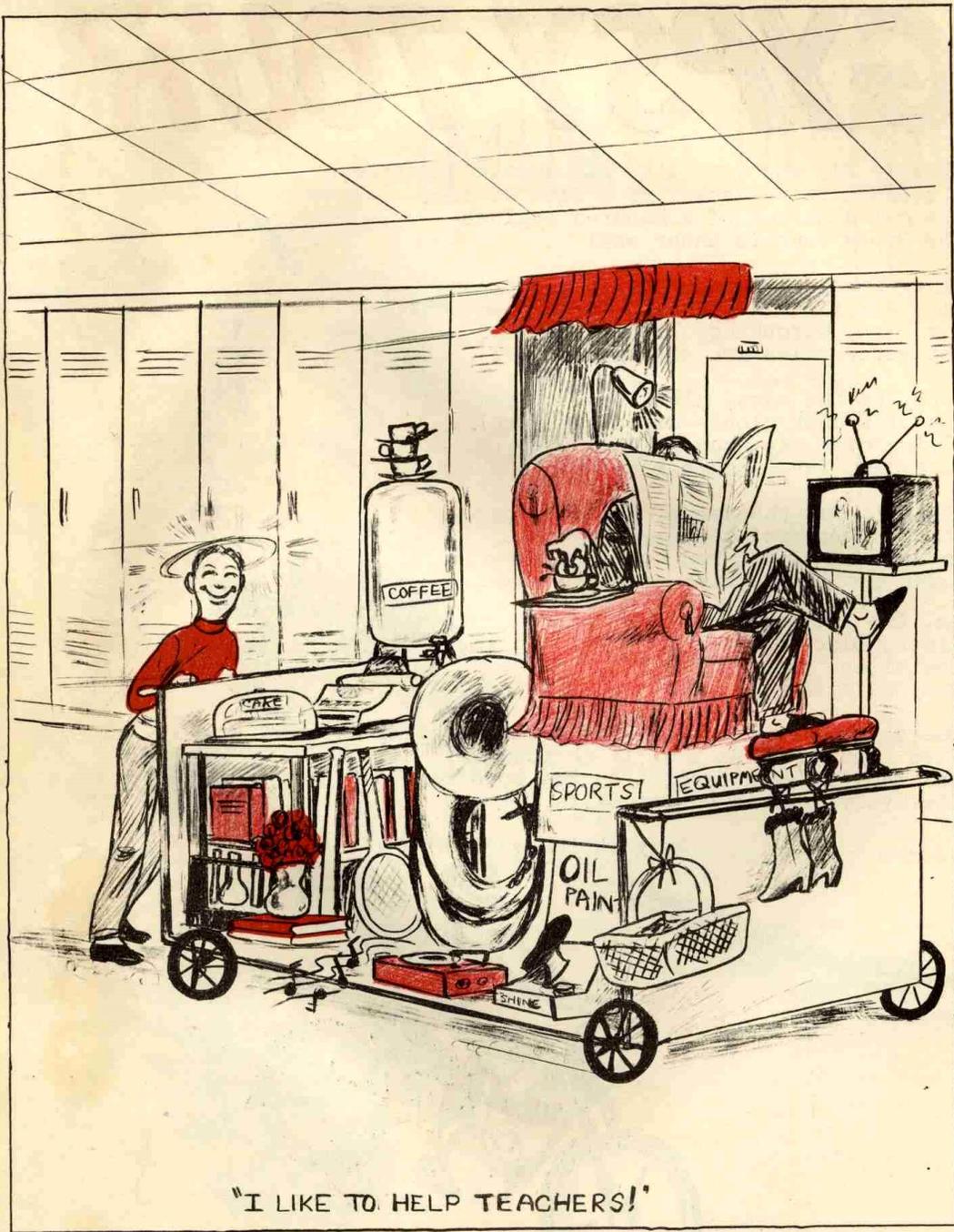
Listen! The thunder of their passage-
Engines stripped to the very core
And gutted pipes, red hot in torment,
Shake the ground with an angry roar.

Ah, the glitter of chrome in the sunlight,
Sleek, black leather, a mocking call,
The clean, sharp smell of gasoline
And the sick-sweet taste of methanol.

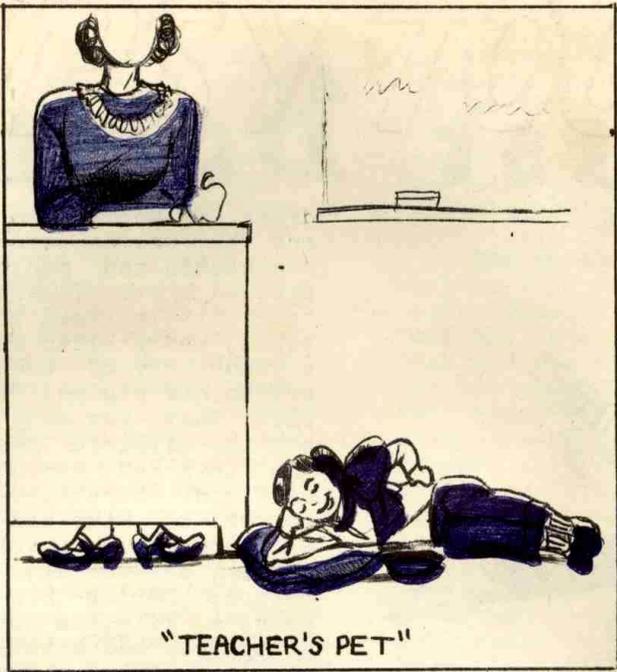
There! Do you see them, far down the hillside?
Five hundred miles they'll go today,
And they'll camp tonight by the open road-
The Gypsy Tour is on its way!

Judy Strickler '56

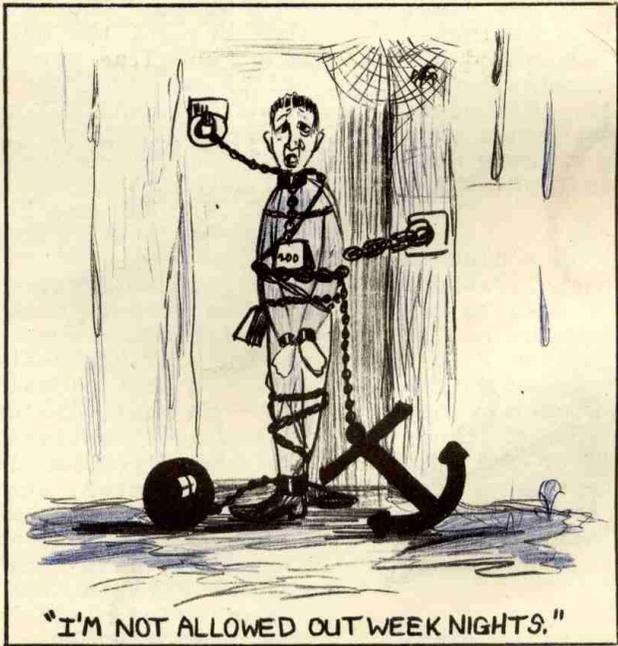




"I LIKE TO HELP TEACHERS!"



"TEACHER'S PET"



"I'M NOT ALLOWED OUT WEEK NIGHTS."

First Born



To begin with, Old Man Stratford was the last of the great financial tycoons. He was rich, eccentric, ruthless in business, and, like Ford and Morgan and his other contemporaries, was a legend in American industry. His escapades had made headlines for thirty years, and as a young man, he had been the toast of three continents.

I guess it came as a blow to everyone when Old Man Stratford died. The country seemed to realize that it marked the end of an era, and the nation's Old Timers nodded their heads and nostalgically recalled the days when the financial giants ruled industry. They mused over the way Stratford started on the proverbial shoestring, and carved a mighty empire of oil from the ancient silt of the Louisiana bayous.

Of course, every major event

draws its share of opportunists, and this was no exception. The newshounds and publicity sharks flocked in ever-increasing droves to my little town of Stratfordville, where Elias Stratford, as a young boy of twenty-two, had set up his rig and first struck oil. That was many years ago, but the oilfield had grown, and the town had grown around the oilfield. Stratford had been content to make his home there, and although he travelled extensively, he was always glad to return. During his last few years of life, he never left the grounds of his estate, and when on his deathbed, refused to allow himself to be moved to a hospital.

It was stories like these that brought the newshounds running, and I, as owner, publisher, editor and reporter of the Stratfordville Sentinel, conceived the idea of unearthing a few old yarns and anecdotes concerning Stratford and selling them to would-be scoop artists. For me, I guess, this is where it all started.

Old Man Stratford's will had been made public at his death. The will didn't surprise anybody; the bulk of his vast empire was left to his eldest son, Eric, with the rest divided among his remaining relatives, including his second son, Harold. Although it was expected, the will still disgusted the populace of Stratfordville. No one who knew Eric Stratford, save his father, had any use for him, and the consensus of opinion rated him a thoroughly spoiled, worthless little

pup. Naturally, people hated to see him become the world's richest man overnight. This, however, didn't concern me, and I proceeded merrily along with the business of vending small bits of Stratford personal history.

One afternoon, I sat musing over an ancient portfolio full of old photographs and letters that I had found in the attic of Stratford's rambling old house. There didn't seem to be anything worth salvaging among the letters, but one of the photographs interested me. The picture showed Stratford, as a young man of about thirty, standing beside an almost unbelievably beautiful Spanish girl, holding what definitely had to be a bundled-up baby in her arms. This was puzzling, because I considered myself an expert on Stratford's personal life, and I had never seen nor heard of the girl in the picture. I turned it over, and written in Stratford's unmistakable hand was "Eli, Conchita and Barney, 1912."

This was even more puzzling. Stratford's marriage was no secret. His wife was a New York model who had borne him a son, Eric, a year after they were married, and two years later, died while giving birth to Harold. After this, Stratford had never seen fit to remarry. His affairs had been manly, but always short and fickle, and never with any one of Spanish blood. Indeed, he seemed to have an abstract hatred for anyone even remotely resembling a Spaniard.

Who, then, was this girl Conchita? Had she been his wife? Did the baby named Barney in her arms belong to him? If so, why was the affair kept secret, and where did Conchita go? Stuffing

the picture in my pocket I determined to go and talk to Rafael, the ancient grounds-keeper for the town courthouse. He had worked for Stratford a long time ago, and if anyone knew of a Conchita, he would be the one.

Old Rafael Mirandez was more or less a fixture in Stratfordville. With his comically wrinkled face and his funny little walk that was almost a scuttle, he was the epitome of Old Mexico. On any sunny afternoon, he could always be seen on the courthouse grounds either mowing, planting, or raking, depending on the season. Today was no exception, and as I reached the edge of the broad lawn, I spotted him putting the finishing trim on a long green hedge that flanked the front walk. As I called to him, he turned and laid his clippers on the ground and walked over to me.

"Buenas tardes, Senor! May I help you?" he said cheerfully, his black eyes twinkling.

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First Born-Continued from page 11
"Buenas tardes to you, Rafael. I'd like a little information. Think you can help me?"

"Si, Senor, I try."

"Very well. A long time ago you worked for Mr. Stratford as a gardener, is that right?"

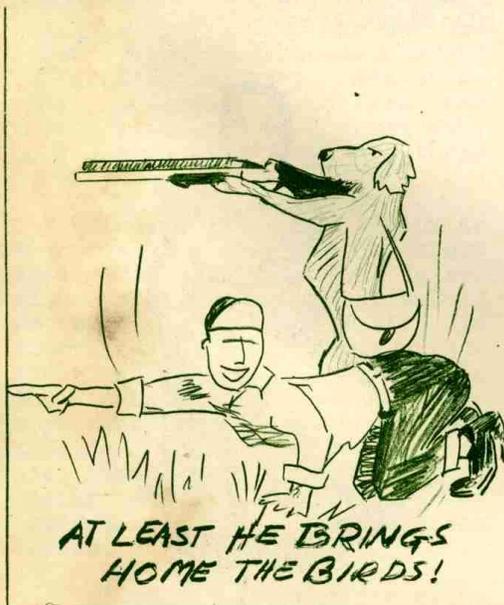
"Si. I work for Boss Stratford."

"And when you worked for him, he hadn't yet married, had he?"

"No, Senor," the old man answered.

"Well, then," I said, "perhaps you remember a Spanish girl he used to know? Her name was Conchita."

"Conchita! Pah! Mala perro," he spat. "Si, I remember Conchita Lopez. She was driller's daughter."



Boss Stratford save her life when oil derrick blow up. Her father, Senor Lopez killed in blow-up, and Boss Stratford take her to his house, let her stay and work. She young and pretty and his eyes watch everywhere she go with a look I no see before. Pretty soon he and she together all the time. They go away together, where I not know. Boss Stratford gone for more than year, when he come back he no have Conchita with him. We ask where she go and he get big mad. He get drunk and stay drunk for long time. When he wake up he fur---

Here Rafael's pidgeon English faltered and he groped helplessly for the word. "Furious?" I prompted.

"Si, Senor. Gracias. He get like that and fire all servants with Spanish. Castellias, Mexicanos, Creoles, everyone. I Mexicano, so I go too. Conchita, she to blame. She hurt Boss Stratford and make him mad. Pah! I not know much, but my sister, she and Conchita good friends. She tell you more than I. I give you number of her house and you vis--"

Here again Rafael stumbled over the unfamiliar word. I prompted him with "visit" and he continued. "Si, you visit her, she help you."

At this point he pulled out a blue envelope and presented it to me. It was a letter from his sister, and as I copied the return address, I noticed that she lived in New Orleans. It was only 75 miles away and I determined to drive down the next day and pay the lady a visit. I handed the letter back to Rafael along with a five dollar bill, thanked him for his trouble, and

Continued on page 20

Night's Breath Is a Liqueur

Night's breath is a liqueur,
drink it slowly;
let it burn to the reaches of your limbs.
The cold, aloof breath warms and thrills
Paces the heart,
warms the heart--
Lave's the intent,
emboldens the soul.

Night's breath is an ode to Melancholia--
pierces the pose
jitters your head.
The emptiness, blackness--
distant beauty,
So Vast--
So Sad.

Dick Fisher '55

AUTUMN STORM

The black clouds scurry across the sky;
A strong wind follows fast.
The trees toss, clinging to their leaves,
which finally fall at last.

The towering willows sweep their wands,
Quite frightened they appear
In waiting for the coming storm
Which they have cause to fear.

For now the rain falls, dashing,
The strong wind stronger grows,
Thundering loudly; testing its might,
And a great limb crashing goes.

The fall storm's fury now abates.
The strong wind lessens its might.
The rain, essential to all life,
Continues on through the night.

Lydia Munson '55



Gate of Hell



One of the most strikingly unusual films to come to Washington in recent years is the Japanese picture, "Gate of Hell." It was filmed, produced, and directed in Japan, with Japanese actors in all the roles. Because of the language barrier, English subtitles have been added.

Against varied and beautiful Japanese backgrounds comes to life a truly magnificent and highly dramatic story of a man's unrequited love for a married woman. Since the dialect is entirely in Japanese, you do not listen to the words; instead your

attention is focused on the varied facial expressions. The three main characters are to be complimented on the convincing way in which they portrayed love, hate, jealousy, and fear.

All that you have been told about this picture will not quite prepare you for the impact of its drama. Besides being nominated for an academy award, it also received the New York Film Critics Award: "Best Foreign Film of the Year." Consider it a must for the best in entertainment.

J. F. and C. H. '55

EDGE

OF

INFINITY

Rays of blue-white light extend through the years to where I stand. Here, at the end, and beginning of life I echo the aloneness. A distant multitude of stars gaze at me as they have for all ages. And I, on the very edge of existence, before endless space, am held by the murmuring voices of nothing--and all.

Path of stars, stretching from my loneliness into infinity. I, the chosen, behold a vastness, a void inconceivable. Rippling, from now to always, a velvet and gossamer carpet of music and voices and stars; pinpoints of light in an empty blackness, leading and echoing and inviting. A whisper of wind, sweeping across the endless years of nothingness.

I step forward. . .

Karen Jeanne Brock '55



Comets--continued from page 5
must be the most lonely thing in the universe. It moves, dark, (for comets shine by reflected light only) cold, and thin, slowly, through the endless cold space that is Space. Then, every few million years, it approaches a random star. The star's gravitation draws it down to its hot form, the star's light heating it to incandescence, and forming the beautiful glowing tail. It sweeps down, into the star's outer atmosphere in a glowing, brief frenzy of activity. But it sweeps on, out into space again, its inertia dragging it from the warm, active star to the cold darkness again. The star fades, and finally disappears. The comet moves on, waiting for another star, and another brief glory. . .

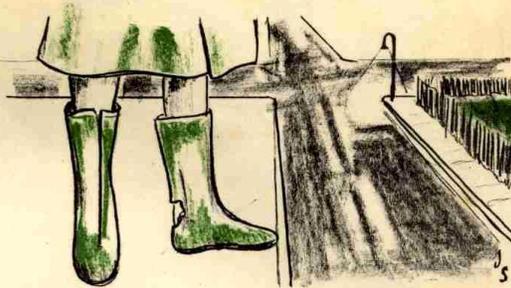
Steve Stephens '56

The Boots

The boots clomped down the bewildered sidewalk, drumming a dull rhythm against the cement. Their dispirited thudding steps were in sharp contrast to the daintiness of the pair of slim white legs belonging to the mistress of the boots. Once bright turquoise, the boots were now a drab gray, having lost not only their color but much of their rubber as well. One large hole showed the girl's skin low on the heel; it was not clear whether she wore open-cut shoes or went barefoot under the thin rubber. These were expensive boots, for the matching raincoat and umbrella were of the finest material, however sadly torn and color-streaked. The exquisite tailoring was somewhat marred by faded greens and blues surrounding worn elbows and lost buttons. From the umbrella hung a faint label, "Saks Fifth Avenue."

The girl was tall and slim. Ash-blonde hair hung straight, occasionally slicked back against her head by a nervous hand when it bobbed down in her eyes, gray eyes that were large and fringed with long dark lashes. Her face was thin, looking neither haggard nor hungry, only delicate and quite forlorn. Her fragile beauty was marred by a long scar running blood-red from mouth to mid-cheek.

Clomp, clomp, clomp. Desolate feet turned right at the corner, and travelled on down the deserted street. Some of the rain trickled off the umbrella while other drops seeped through it to fall upon the damp white forehead and run down the tearless eyes. The street was empty save for the re-



lentless march of the boots. Neither the rain nor the fog stopped to let pass the solitary figure in the tattered coat. Trees barren of leaves offered no shelter from the rain.

The directional arrow was still visible through the fog, despite the thickening caused by nearness to the water. Her heart felt a grim pang as her searching eyes found the sign pointing the way to the bridge, but never would the boots retreat. Through cheerless night a seagull shrieked its protest against the driving rain and enshrouding fog. The girl's lips let out an involuntary cry, all the disconsolate torment could not remain welled up inside her soul. On went the gray boots, on down the sloshy street while the depressed head hung down, letting the blonde hair fall free. She clenched her hands tighter and tighter; the knuckles turned to snow.

She had crossed the bridge many times, but never had she seen it so forsaken. Never had she known it to look so dismal and so cruel. She was upon it now, she was within its somber steel jaws. It gave her an almost childlike thrill to look down through the mist into the swirling waters. She laid down the leaking umbrella with hands shaking from the wintry bleakness of the night, and from an inner coldness remote from the
Continued on page 23

Death Passed Over

Cold stars and soft sea,
The slap swish of surf sounding,
Old starlight cold sparkled on bright, black hair,
matted by the sea.
Sound of the sea beating, beating, beating,
Soft sea beating;
Languid strands of long green seaweed curling;
Sand sliding, slipping into the sea;
Old stars cold;
Long white fingers of the sea stroked him,
Rolled him back and forth and back and forth and back.

Tom Berry '56

Elegy

The tide comes.
In a gray and foamy cloak to hide the dying shore.
It is swirled by the fretful wind as it rises...
Until it covers all.
Only then does it recede.
Only then will it return to its vast abyss,
Leaving behind it desolation.

The tide falls...
And shining with the moon's far-off, ghastly glow,
The shore is pitted and dead.
Ancient, ancient, dreadful in mien
Is the world I behold.
And I am alone...

Kasha Larew '56



OF CLIQUES--Continued from page 4

I said I really didn't know for sure (this is always a safe answer)--that I'd scout around until I found the best one--or I might not join at all. Fran's eyes acknowledged that she knew my type (the rugged, individualistic type.) She leaned forward until she was breathing in my face. Her lashes fluttered.

"Why don't you join my Branch?"

I said I might consider an invitation if it were filed with my secretary who was, at the moment, in China, interviewing Chou En-Lai.

Again she spoke, her voice throbbing like the beat of a Walt Whitman poem--the same constant regularity. It grated.

"Join," she whispered.

Then Tom stepped in, pulling her off me, arm by arm. Good old Tom! He knew how to handle women.

I changed to a counter-attack:

"If I were to join the Organization, I certainly wouldn't be one of the lower set--I might consider the Branch of the Disloyal Sophisticates (a branch made up largely of the distaff contingent) or the Homespun Benevolents, or possibly the Coldstream Guards--but never the lower set--those referred to as 'Them.'" Tom would have realized that this was an insult if he had had any brains; thus there was no danger. But by this time, another had entered into our deliberations. We had been joined by Barry Homes, who added his say: "I join nobody--I scorn those who are helplessly trapped

in any group" He was very satisfied with himself, a condition which Fran could not stand. She retorted:

"You are merely a member of one of the Branches--the Cynics Branch--so called cynics, that is." This remark deflated Barry, as it does all professional cynics who hate to have anyone think that they are not cynical about everything. Barry left to go back to his book.

Gloating over her victory against an Outsider, Fran remarked that she belonged to the group that affected the symbols of whichever Branch had the upper hand. It was a slip.

"The Hypocrites Branch?" I asked, smirking pleasantly. She drew back, smugly, with a slight smile, and said, in that odd manner only she could use: "Yes." She could have said "no" or anything else, and meant the same thing. But I could tell that she had been hurt. Fran soon left.

Tom, weary of this deep, philosophical discussion, went off to find a battalion of Them, in which he felt more at home.

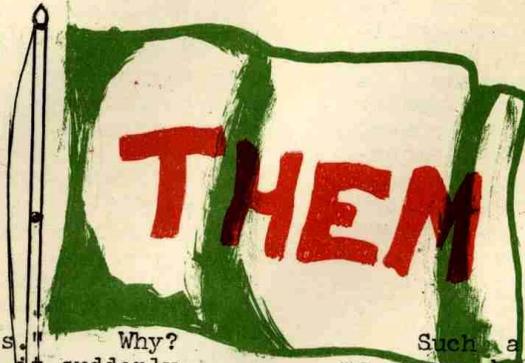
I watched them leave and others go by. I studied each one. There were those in the Branch of the Almost Sincere Ones--both intelligent and those too stupid to know the difference; there were the Uninitiated; the Unconcerned (on the surface); and the Regulars--all members of the Organization. I also saw those I could not, and did not want to classify--the special persons who somehow were close to me--as if I were vitally concerned with their future and they with mine--these stood forth in my mind. But none of these were joining me now--nor were any of

Echoing back--
Bullets on the tomb of
My dreams.

Weird ghouls--
Dancing around the fire of
My loneliness.

Drum beats--
Then sadness, interring the
Love I never knew.

Karen Jeanne Brock '55



the "Branch members." Why?
What ever the reason, it suddenly
ocurred to me that this placed
me in the most intelligent, ob-
servant, and exclusive Branch of
all--those who watch the mul-
titudes passing by--and under-
stand it all. ("What fools we
mortals be.") At least that's
what I've heard.

And wouldn't I be the sole
member of this Branch? Me and
Socrates!

Why not?

Such a thought would make
me very happy, if I believed
it.

Karl Larew '55

THE BOOTS-continued from page
15

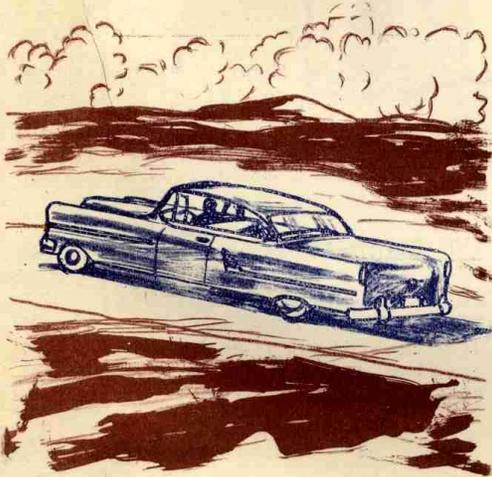
chill of the midnight air. She
stared not long at the black
waters.....the merciless fog
drifted on, blotting out all in
its ruthless tenacity.

Linda Stahl '56

First-Born-Continued from page 12 left.

It was about 10:30 the next morning when I arrived in New Orleans. There are those who will tell you that New Orleans is beautiful, that it has an Old World charm and quaintness about it. This may be true, but I don't like cities. To me they are jumbled up masses of pestilence and death, festering boils on an otherwise perfect skin. With this attitude, it's understandable that I might have been in a bad mood, but my curiosity was stronger, and the effect New Orleans generally has on me was lost that day.

When I finally located the address, I found myself in front of a Spanish-type house that stood three stories above the narrow street. There was grill-work around the door, and from the second story protruded a small balcony. Rafael's sister had married a rather wealthy man, and when he had died, she continued to live with her maid alone in the house and re-listed herself in the city directory under her maiden name.



As I rang the door-bell, I noticed a faint scent of jasmine on the slight breeze. It seemed to laden the very atmosphere with memories of finer days, and I began to wonder what kind of a woman Senora Mirandez really was. My musings were interrupted by a small pleasant-looking negress who swung the door open and asked if I would like to see the Senora. I assured her that I did, and she left the hallway. Returning shortly, she ushered me into a drawing room that was richly decorated in a style gone for many years.

During the introductions, I studied the lady before me and realized that she had once been a very beautiful woman. The beauty had flown with age, but the quiet dignity remained, and she fully realized this.

I told her of my conversation with her brother and explained that he had referred me to her. She sat thoughtfully for a moment and suddenly snapped, "What are your motives, Senor? Why do you want Conchita? I will not talk of her to just anyone!"

"Please, Señora," I hastened, "I do not wish to harm Conchita. I have reason to believe that she is the mother of the late Elias Stratford's first-born son. If I can locate this son, alive and in the law's good graces, he stands to become the world's richest man."

The Senora registered surprise at this. "That is not true," she stammered. "His will was made public, and the newspapers said that everything was left to his son, Eric."

"No, Señora," I said quietly. "I read the will. It specifically

states that ninety percent of his holdings be left to his eldest son. We assume of course, that that son is Eric, but the will did not state that son's name. If I can produce this man and prove that he is Stratford's son, Conchita will live in wealth for the rest of her life."

"Very well," she said. "I will tell you what I know. What you assume is true, Conchita and Mr. Stratford were secretly married. They left on a year's honeymoon and during the course of it, a son named Barney was born to them. Shortly thereafter, they had a bitter quarrel and he left her in a rage. They never saw each other again."

"But, Senora, aren't there any records of their marriage? Weren't they ever divorced? And where are Conchita and her son? What's happened to them?"

"Please, Senor," she said softly, "one question at a time. You will find no records of the marriage. Conchita and Mr. Stratford were married in Mexico, at a place known only to themselves. I know nothing of a divorce. As for Conchita, we were close friends when we were young. She wrote me often after she and Mr. Stratford were separated. Her letters ceased abruptly thirty years ago, and except for an occasional Christmas card, I never hear from her. I know nothing of her son."

"Where is she, Senora?" I asked.

She studied my face a moment and finally said, "I see no harm in telling you. Her letters come to me postmarked El Paso, Texas. I'll give you one of the cards if you want. And, Senor?"



"Yes?" I said.

"If you find her, do not hurt her. Do not put her name in the papers. She would not like that. Please promise me, Senor."

"Yes, Senora. I promise," I answered.

"Thank you, Senor, very much." The old woman produced a card from somewhere in the desk and handed it to me. I mumbled a "thank you" and headed for the door. When I reached it, I turned and said, "Goodbye, Senora, and thank you for your help."

"Goodbye, Senor," she said. "You are a good man. Vaya con Dios."

I swallowed an adam's apple that suddenly seemed too large for my throat and walked into the sunlight.

El Paso is a long way from New Orleans. After two days of hard driving, I arrived weary and windblown, and decided to get a good night's sleep before trying to get anything accomplished. I stopped in a fairly respectable-

looking motel, ate supper, and went to bed. The dry desert air was a welcome change from Louisiana's sticky heat, and I slept well.

Upon rising the next morning, my first official act was to scan the telephone book. There was one Stratford listed, an Agbert Q., who operated a floral shop. I had no luck there either. There were several Lopezes listed but no one who could be Conchita. Resigning myself to doing it the hard way, I ate breakfast and drove down to the city library. Here I examined the Christmas card that Senora Mirandez had given me. The envelope, as she said, was postmarked El Paso, Texas, and the card inside said "Season's Greetings, 1946". I asked the librarian for a copy of the 1946 city directory, and after a ten minutes wait, she returned and handed it to me.

Here I found what I was looking for. The first Lopez I looked up was a Conchita, 707 Cielo Blvd. I quickly copied down the address on the back of my social security card, thanked the librarian, and consulted a map of the city that hung on the wall. Having located Cielo Boulevard, I left the library and drove toward the address, my apprehension building inside me as I neared it.

About fifteen minutes later, I stood in front of an old, seedy looking red brick building that ran the entire length of the block. It was chopped up into small, sandwich-like dwellings that were one room wide and two stories high. Number 707 was third from the end, and my knock was answered by a fat, ill-kept

individual who greeted me with, "Whaddya want?"

"I'd like a little information, if it is convenient," I answered.

"You a cop or sumpin?" he countered.

By this time I was getting a little angry. "No, Mister," I said. "I'm not a 'cop or sumpin'. I'm looking for a woman named Conchita Lopez who used to live here."

"I don't know nothin' about no woman. Go away."

"Perhaps this will refresh your memory," I said icily. The five dollar bill in my hand caused his eyes to gleam, and he became all smiles.

"Sure, Mister, sure. Whaddya wanna know?" he asked, reaching for the money. I waved it just out of his reach and informed him that he'd get the money when I got the information.

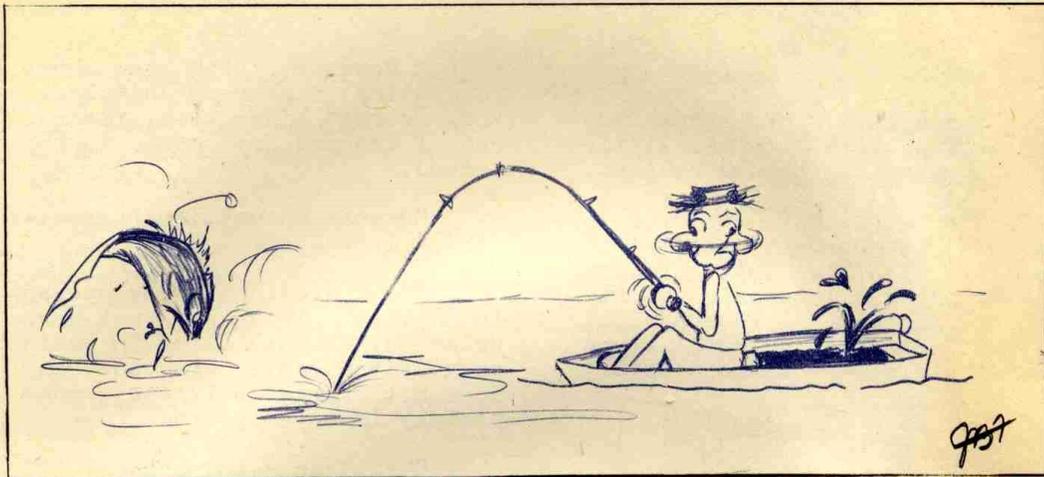
"Okay, okay," he said hastily. "This dame, Conchita, she moved out when I moved in. I used to get some mail that belonged to her, but the only address she left me was a little town called Yudalupe, down in Mexico."

"That's all you know?" I asked.

"That's it," he replied.

"Thanks, Mac." I dropped the five dollar bill in his dirty outstretched hand and walked away.

Yudalupe, Mexico, was a hard place to find. It took me half



a day in the library to even find a map that showed where it was. That evening, I drove across the border and learned from the Mexican Highway Police that Yudalupe was 1100 miles south of El Paso, that it lay in the heart of the Sierra Madre Mountains, and it could be reached by road, if one didn't have a sentimental attachment to his automobile. There is no room for sentiment in the life of a newspaperman, so I bought about forty dollars worth of gear, had my car greased and checked, and embarked on what I hoped was the last leg of this odyssey of a missing heir.

After three days of driving flat, steaming deserts and tortuous mountain roads, I entered the tiny, primitive village of Yudalupe. It was, indeed, in the heart of the Sierra Madre, and had not been affected much by the hand of modern civilization. There were perhaps a hundred adobe huts clustered together in a small green valley, with the land around them cultivated in small squares. The different colored crops being grown in them gave the effect of

a giant checkerboard.

I pulled into what might be called the town trading post and called a greeting in Spanish. An aged Mexican proprietor hurried out of the little shop and stopped, his mouth hanging open in amazement. He was obviously not used to seeing automobiles, especially those driven by blond men wearing sun glasses.

"Buenas tardes, Senor. Tiene usted aqui una Senora Conchita Lopez?" I asked.

The old man recovered some of his self-composure and stammered "N-no, Senor, no tenemos una Senora Lopez. Tenemos una Senora Conchita Stratford."

"Si, si!" I responded eagerly, "donde esta?"

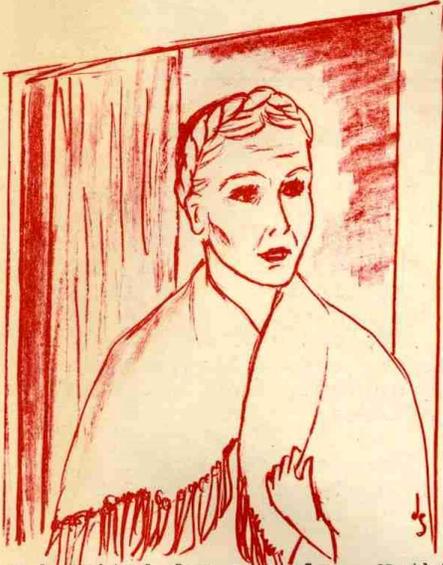
"Esta in la casa alli," he answered, pointing to one of the nicer looking huts.

"Gracias," I said, and handed him a peso. He stared at me rather confusedly and I took his withered hand and placed the coin inside it. "Gracias," I

said again.

"Gracias," he responded, and walked back into his little shop, shaking his head as he went.

The hut he had gestured to was situated perhaps a half mile up a nearby hill. Twilight was in the process of becoming night, and by the time I reached the little doorstep, several stars were visible. I knocked softly



and waited for a reply. Nothing happened, and I knocked again, this time a little louder. Then, I heard a faint rustling inside and the pad of moccasin-shod feet approached. I heard a faint click as the latch opened, and Conchita stood framed in the doorway.

She was tall, and rather thin, with the gaunt, timeless beauty of a goddess. Her cheekbones were high, and her mouth was small and delicate. Her white hair was braided around her head, and she was dressed simply in a robe and shawl. Her

eyes, however, were her most commanding feature. Jet black, they burned like twin flames, and I dropped my gaze to the ground.

"Buenas noches, Senora Stratford," I managed.

"Good evening," she answered in English. This did not surprise me, she had lived in Texas only seven years ago, and one does not forget a language completely in seven years.

"May I come in, Senora? I'd like to speak with you if I may."

"You may," she answered. "Who are you?"

I introduced myself, and after a suitable pause, she said, "Senor, I think I know why you are here. You wish to tell me about my husband."

"Your husband?" I asked. "Do you mean you were never divorced, after all these years?"

"No, Senor, we were not," she answered quietly. "My religion forbids divorce. What of my husband?"

I turned away and didn't answer her. "Please, Senor," she said.

I turned back and looked at her eyes for a moment. "He's dead, Senora."

Her face stiffened for an instant, and then relaxed. She looked the same as before, a little older perhaps, but, if possible, a little more reposed.

"Where is your son, Senora?" I asked.

"My son?" she murmured. "He is here, in Yudalupe. This is our home, and we shall live here the rest of our lives. Why do you want him?"

"Senora, your son could be the richest man in the world. He stands to inherit his father's estate, and I want to take him back to the Louisiana State Court and---"

"He will not go with you, Senor," she interrupted.

I stopped. "Won't go with me?" I gasped.

"No, Senor, he will not. Do not question me about it, talk to him. He promised to visit me this evening and he should---"

At this point the old woman was interrupted by a knock from the outside. "It is he," she said simply and opened the door. A small, kindly faced man in a black coat entered and kissed the Senora on the cheek. "This is my son, Barney," she said.

"Greetings, young man, what brings you here?" he said warmly.

"News, my friend, news," I answered. "You have a good chance of becoming the world's richest man. The entire Stratford fortune has been left to you, and you have only to return to Louisiana and claim it."

The man and his mother exchanged sympathetic glances. "Please, Senor," he said gently. "I will not leave here. I cannot use wealth or power. My work entails none of it. I'm grateful for your concern, but I cannot go back with you."

"But, listen! You don't

realize the--"

"I'm sorry, Senor," he said softly. "Please try to understand." He removed his coat and laid it on the back of a chair.

My mouth dropped open at the sight of the long, black robe and the high white collar. The rosary at his waist seemed to sparkle and dance in the flick-



D.H.

ering candlelight.

"Do you understand, Senor?" he asked softly.

"Yes, --- I understand. Goodbye, Senora. Goodbye, Father."

I turned and walked slowly down the hill toward the village. The stars shone overhead, and I looked humbly up at them. I felt warm inside.

Karl Gould '55

HI JUNIORS!

Schools in 2050

Schools in 2050 will be quite different, no doubt, from those of today.

The location of most modern schools in 2050 will be underground. They are at this location so as to be more protected if a bomb should strike.

There will be many mechanical gadgets in a classroom. Every room will have a sink, drinking fountain, telephone, radio, television, record player, tape recorder, and metal desks to prevent marking.

The teaching methods will also be much changed. Since there will always be a shortage of teachers, mechanical ones will be used for certain subjects. These will be shaped like boxes and will sit on top of the desks. They will be used for languages, history, English, music, and literature.

In the hall there will be moving belts, escalators, and elevators. There will also be a big movie screen in the gym.

My opinion of these future schools compared with schools of today is that they sound fantastic, yet who knows - - ?

Sandra Hawes '60

How to Watch T.V.

In order to watch television correctly, you must first have a T. V. set. Another thing that comes in handy is a chair, preferably a nice comfortable one with a foot stool on which to prop your feet.

Unless you are abnormal or have recently eaten something, you will find that the moment you sit down you'll become excruciatingly hungry. The best thing to do in such a case is to eat something which will fill you up enough so that you won't be jumping up and down to get something else.

I suggest a Dagwood sandwich and a glass of milk. If you are still hungry after this you'd better go on a diet.

Last but not least is the selection of the program. I personally prefer a murder mystery to help my digestion.

In closing I wish to insert one small suggestion: after you get everything together and are all ready to enjoy the educational advantages of television, be sure that your set is plugged in.

Kathi Steene '59

A Little Advice

Crickets sing the whole night through,
They have no worries like me and you.
Perhaps if we could chirp some, too,
Maybe we'd forget we're blue.

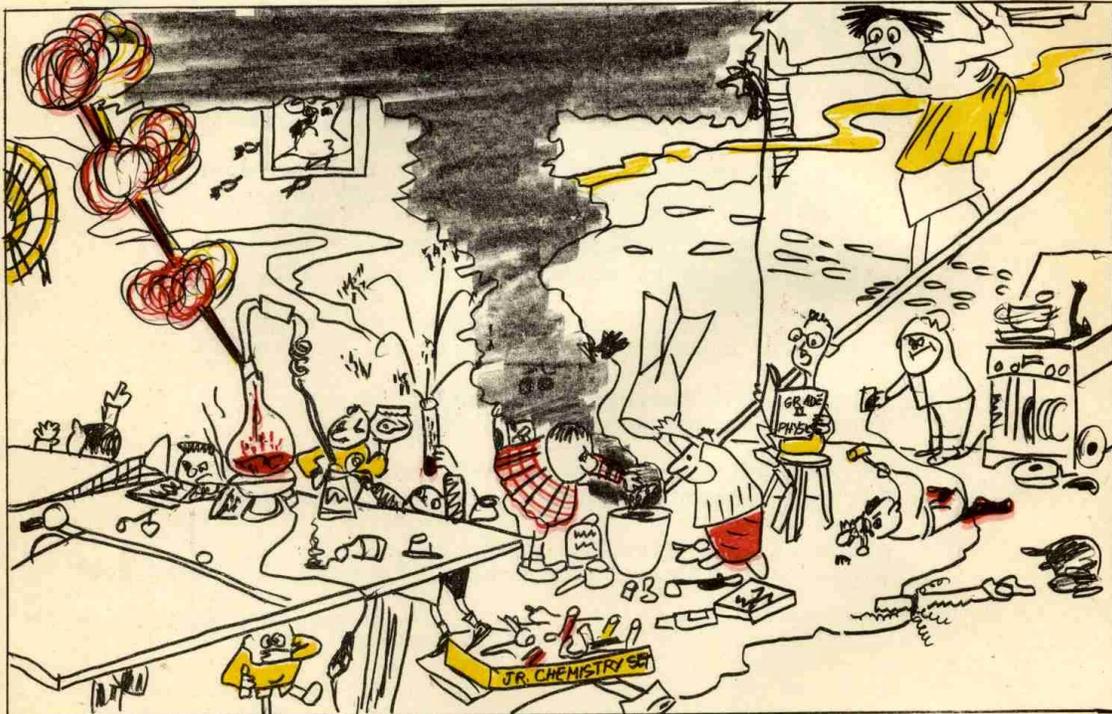
Marjorie Carter '58

Comment On Ladies Fashions

Sometimes colors are drab, other times, gay;
Sometimes you think it's November in May;
Now the waist is high, tomorrow it's low;
But there's one standard requirement, they all cost dough.

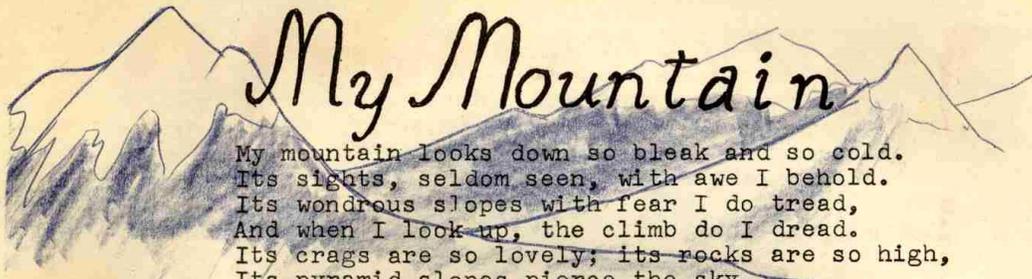
Margaret Tackney '58

NEWS ITEM: SCIENTISTS SAY "H" BOMB TOO SIMPLE TO MAKE



Filbert

BY BILL HARTMAN '58

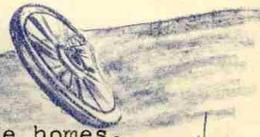


My Mountain

My mountain looks down so bleak and so cold.
 Its sights, seldom seen, with awe I behold.
 Its wondrous slopes with fear I do tread,
 And when I look up, the climb do I dread.
 Its crags are so lovely; its rocks are so high,
 Its pyramid slopes pierce the sky.
 At last at the peak with rapture I stare
 At some nameless land, aloft in the air.
 Here I shall live and here shall I die,
 By some mountain stream, far up in the sky.
 Though lonely I be, and far shall I roam,
 Here on the mountain that I call home.

Dan Persinger '58

WESTWARD



Glorious courage surely was shown
 When our brave pioneers left their safe homes.

Let's go west? they shouted from door to door,
 "Let's start heading for that far-off shore."

They started, traveling long and far,
 With goats, pigs, covered wagons, and all.

They crossed the mountains steep and rough,
 Thinking they'd find gold, silver, and such.

On they went through swamp and cold,
 Braving dangers and hazards untold.

Many times they felt loss and despair,
 But kept right on going until they were there.

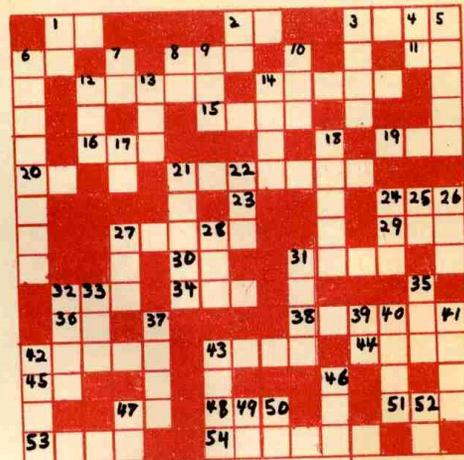
Although they lived so long ago,
 We can still hear their echoes, "Onward, Westward Ho!"

Kenneth Sullivan '60

X=WORD PUZZLE

DOWN

1. The United States (abbr.)
2. Island (abbr.)
3. Poet
4. "Year of Our Lord"
5. Woman's brimless hat
6. Rough
7. Soldier (nickname)
8. You (archaic)
9. Age
10. Welcome
12. Humor
13. Canine
17. We
18. To fish from a moving boat
21. Expressions of sorrow or pain
22. Cover
24. To trick (colloq.)
25. Indefinite article
26. Spread to dry
27. Happy
28. Fish eggs
31. What Orientals try to save
32. Containers for food
33. A fuss
35. To be aware of
37. To entertain a notion (archaic)
39. Atop
40. A sibilant sound
41. Bird's home
42. Liquid measure
43. Sound of a tinkling bell
46. Solid water
47. Neuter pronoun
49. Either this ___ that
50. Necessary in creation of English infinitives
52. And (Latin)



ACROSS

1. The United Nations (abbr.)
2. "That is" (Latin abbr.)
3. Vessel
6. Roman weight
8. Positive answer
11. Musical note
14. Grows on body
15. Aid
16. Jerk or yank
19. To take civil action
20. If (French)
21. Those who grind grain
23. Personal pronoun
24. Obese
27. Sentry
29. Unit
30. Number (abbr.)
31. To melt or fuse
32. Bird
34. Body of water
36. Paid notice (abbr.)
38. Selected
42. To delve
43. Nap
44. A number
45. Intransitive verb
47. Negative prefix
48. Negative adverb
51. To put down
52. Type of shelter
54. To crawl humbly

Stephen Vandivere '58