

# WILD ASSES

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JAMES G. DUNTON





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# WILD ASSES

BY  
JAMES G. DUNTON



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## PUBLISHERS' FOREWORD

IT cannot be said that the present much criticized condition of mind of the younger generation is entirely of the individual's own making; thousands of young men, suddenly released from the strict military discipline and upsetting influences of the trenches and the great training camps in this country, returned to college under conditions that have never before been duplicated for their disturbing and upsetting qualities; this story deals directly with this post-war period of hysteria. The publishers offer this book as a sympathetic and comprehensive treatment of the young mind in its state of flux, rendered unstable by the overthrowing of so many established conventions as a result of the World War. Written by one who was himself an undergraduate during this period and who served his country in France, this story, while it may astound some of the older generation, cannot fail to be appreciated by any of the younger.

*In these chapters the author has sought to achieve not a vulgarly appealing portrait of unpleasant conditions in American life, but an arrangement of facts in such an interesting way as to make an argument for better conditions. With the author's intent in mind, every young man and young woman, in or outside of collegiate circles, should find in this book a wealth of food for contemplation, and should be better able to analyze and order their own attitudes and activities by seeing here their own or their friends' portraits painted with photographic truthfulness.*

Of the many novels recently published dealing with college life the publishers feel that none achieves such a sympathetic attitude toward, or such a penetrating insight into the mental reactions of the huge undergraduate body that exists in the United States. Seeking for experiences

on one's own behalf and coming to one's own conclusions is a quality forever characteristic of youth, which fact was never better exemplified than in the period with which this story deals. After the inevitable apprenticeship in the school of learning whose curricula are at this time unusually hard, comes a final dawning in the minds of the characters of this novel of a proper sense of values, which forms a psychological study remarkably true to life.

*The fact that the name of a much loved alma mater of thousands of men is mentioned throughout the story should indicate only that the restless searchings of the modern youth herein depicted are general and that this great University, which gathers its sons from the four corners of the world, must be considered as a cosmopolitan city, merely the locale in which the action of the story is laid. This setting and the situations laid against it must be taken as representative of American college life in general and not as features peculiar to this particular setting.*



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*Truly this is the hey-day of the wild ass! This much-vaunted freedom, this untrammelled liberty, this mad folly of independence, this screaming dance around the three little cold-cream idols of inalienable rights, "Life, Liberty and Pursuit of Happiness," this helter-skelter machine age of unleashed inhibitions and no morals, this ruinous "every man for himself" rage!*

. . . . .

*The wild ass—and he is legion!—suffers from mental gout and spiritual thirst; he knows too much and feels too little, lives too fast, seeking emotional and spiritual satisfactions which, as Faust learned, are not to be got by any process but existence with and for men. The doctrine of individual freedom and liberty is futile in its extremes, and has been proved a million times unsatisfying and ineffectual—it has, as is apparent in this day and age, but given greater opportunities for the wild ass to grow wilder.*

*There is a theory that history runs in cycles, and according to that theory the present post-war mania for excitement is merely transitory, and will be superseded by a reversion toward the other extreme, formality and restraint, such as characterized the age of Queen Victoria.*

. . . . .

*Must we drag along in the hope that the cycle will operate, that we will find ourselves gradually tightening our system and heightening the pyramid of worthy ideals which has been so utterly flattened in the past ten years?*





---

*Enter to grow in "Wisdom"!  
You sons and daughters of middle-class America!  
Rich and poor—brilliant and dumb—  
Sophisticates and Innocents—  
Come one! Come all!  
Come, Blunderbrats and Wild Asses!  
Bask in the beams from Learning's light,  
And be culturally sunburned, if you can't be tanned.  
But ask not—lest you not have—the Price of Learning!*





# WILD ASSES

## CHAPTER I

### ORIGINS

#### TABLE MANNERS

*Scene:* A Table in a Freshman Dining Hall

*Time:* Late September, 1919

FIVE young fellows, apparently known to one another, were seated at an end of the table; there were two vacant chairs at their end. A negro waiter served soup to the five; the soup was a dark brown concoction with lumps of yellow egg in it — it looked much as rusty-piped water would look, if it had chunks of yellow egg in it. The serving was accompanied by a chorus of timely comments apropos of the substance in the bowls. Many of the comments beginning with, “This reminds me ——” ended in much laughter.

Before the five had consumed their delectable rations of the dark brown mixture, a fair-haired youth entered the dining room and came to the unoccupied chairs near the five friends. He was particularly youthful and immature, a very nice-looking boy, his fastidious manner and studiedly frowsy hair indicating that perhaps he was of a delicate, poetic nature — he looked the part of a well-cultivated æsthete.

Just as the Poetic Nature sat down, the young man beside whom he found himself looked him over from the corner of his eye, smiled to his friends across the table and said, “Have you ever heard the story about the French lady who kept a gilded palace of sin and shame near one of the American camps in France?”

The speaker was a dark-haired, older-looking chap named Riley, and there was a devilish twinkle in his eye as he propounded his inquiry.

Across the table, a ruddy-cheeked fellow, with black hair and skin the color of an Indian's, began to laugh and consume his soup with more rapidity, as if he were anxious to finish it before the story was told. Beside him, a fair-haired man of Riley's age, with clean-cut features and eyes which seemed to say that their owner, at some time or other had been through hell, smiled and looked toward the young innocent, the Poetic Nature, to whom the dusky servitor was just then bringing soup.

"Shoot, Riley," said this man, whose name was Bocker, "let's hear it! Pickett and Bratten haven't heard that one yet!" He referred to the other two members of their company of friends.

"Oh, heck, you fellows, have a heart!" This from the young one called Pickett.

But Riley proceeded, with a solemnity born of long practice, and a choice of words to fit the delicate situations of the story that indicated his having been in the recent war. With descriptive flourishes and sinking emphasis upon the most unsavory bits of the story, he told it, leaving nothing to the imagination.

The others listened, all smiling and surreptitiously watching the Poetic Nature, who was endeavoring to consume his soup, that same dark brown mixture.

When the end of the story came — and it ended with an almost un stomachable piece of realism — the Poetic Nature pushed his plate of soup slowly from him, slid back his chair, made several grimaces away from his neighbors, and left the dining hall, amid a chorus of raucous laughter and jeering comments.

"Oh, these tender natures!" cried Bocker, clicking his knife against his glass to attract the attention of a lazy-looking negro standing near.

"How about a little service here, Anthony?" barked Riley, as he —

(But first, let's see more closely who were and whence came these<sup>2</sup> five friends, whose rude talk so upset the Poetic Nature.)

### THE HOUSE OF BRATTEN

A hundred and thirty years or so ago, a few white men crossed the mountains from Pennsylvania, and set up a trading post on a little river in southern Ohio, which trading post became rather important in the life of that region, and was known to all the Indian tribes within a radius of a hundred miles. The Indians, for obvious reasons, called the place Whiskey Switch, and it was for a time true that the chief enterprise of the little community had to do with the switching off of liquor from white men's caches to red-skinned stomachs. Within a few years, however, Ohio was admitted to the Union, and the powers that were selected a site not far from Whiskey Switch on which to build the State capitol, the result of this selection being that the popular Indian bartering-place began to change its character toward more conventional and respectable standards, whiskey becoming a side line rather than the main support. Eventually even the name of the post became too unsavory in sound, and without much controversy the name was changed to Dartonville, in memory of one of the first citizens of Whiskey Switch in its palmy days, who had been dead long enough to be hated by no one, and was therefore memorialisable.

After a time Dartonville began to grow up, like so many towns along that line of the western expansion, and became the center of a population whose chief works were more or less agricultural and civilized. A stage-coach line connected the village with its neighbors, and the river was employed for a limited amount of transportation to points north and south of Dartonville. As the years rolled on, more New England pilgrims came and settled in or near the town, trade and life in general flourished, Dartonville thrived and grew.



The Bratten name stood high in Dartonville, its standing being the result of the efforts of two generations of Brattens, who had succeeded in making a comfortable income and a good name for the family by dealing in "Hay and Grain" (as the sign over the livery stable suggested). About the time of the World's Fair in Chicago, the family was one of the most prominent in the city, from a social as well as from a business standpoint. The Brattens were well established, in the manner so well known to every one who ever had the good fortune to live for any length of time in a not over-large city.

Mrs. Bratten, however, was of the kind never satisfied with existing honors or with things as they are. She longed for greater and larger fields of honor, for more worlds to conquer, and she longed with such energetic longing that her unfortunate husband worked himself to death in a vain attempt to give her the means of conquering all the worlds to which she aspired. His death left her with an income ample for all reasonable needs for herself and her two children, a daughter, who was about seven years of age at the time, and a son, aged five. The children were so small that Mrs. Bratten's insatiable ambition is to be wondered at; it is incredible that any woman with two young children could be so ambitious. But she was, and in spite of it found more than sufficient time for her children, as will shortly be seen.

Her attention, aside from that directed upon her two young hopefuls, was given entirely to the business of reforming, to which cause, or causes, she gave generously of her name, time and money. In her eyes the world was all wrong and, by concession of authority from some divinity, she felt it to be her duty to rectify all the stark, staring evils which confronted her. She was her brother's keeper, often in spite of the brother. Needless to say, she belonged, in most cases in an official capacity, to every woman's society and club within striking distance of Dartonville, and as head of the Woman's Christian



Temperance Union in her locality she had not a friend among the bartenders of the city. One cafe owner, who was more or less of a student of society, contemptuously described her as "an infernal pest, a confirmed meddler, trying to become famous by minding other people's business!" Which was, in truth, an adequate description of the lady in question.

At any rate, Mrs. Bratten became a leader among women, and was in a fair way of gaining that prominence to which she so ardently aspired. Yet she found time, as most such women do, to raise her children as according to her lights they should be raised. Lois Bratten, the daughter, required less of her attention than did the little brother Charles, for Lois at an early age showed marked tendencies toward doing things æsthetic and self-sufficient, and when she had come to high-school age had very artistic leanings — in fact, she tottered perceptibly more frequently than not, according to the neighbors and friends. Most people, in strict confidence among themselves, called her "dizzy," and even her mother was forced to admit that "Lois is *so* unlike other girls! Really eccentric almost to the point of genius." Lois was truly an unusual girl.

Little Brother Bratten was at once the object of ridicule, pity, kind advice, loving consideration, sisterly shame and maternal pride. He also was an unusual child — unusual in the sense that he was one of those awkward individuals who have suffered so beautifully as rare specimens for study and experimentation in both psychology and physiology, it being, it seemed, a cause of pride to his mother that he had thus served the cause of two sciences. But even the most modern methods of treatment for bodily awkwardness and mental backwardness were of little avail in Brother's case, for which the chief reason lay in the fact that if the treatment prescribed did not happen to meet the taste of the young hero, he was, with mild rebukes of course, relieved of the prescription. His fond parent's adoring attention

and considerateness functioned at all times — she catered to his every whim, with the result that all the learned doctors in the world could not have helped the child. It was after the discovery of some of these counteracting home remedies that one of the most eminent of American psychologists and mental hygienists was heard to exclaim, with much feeling, “O Mother Love! What sins are committed in thy name!” thereupon giving up the job and the prospect of a large fee, for, in the estimation of the child’s mother, he was hopelessly damned forevermore.

Bratten, however, grew up in spite of these ineffectual attempts at scientific treatment and of the spoiling attentions of his mother. He graduated, in over-due course of time, from the top stage of infancy, and began to develop, chronologically at least, albeit without many indications of improvement either in mind or body. He grew and grew, and then grew some more, regardless of the fact that none of the neighbors or family friends were ever able to explain how he managed to live so long under the smothering influence and care of his mother. Naturally, they all joined in judging him to be “a hopelessly spoiled kid;” but this opinion was not wholly just. Admittedly Brother Bratten was quite unlike his playmates in every way — almost, in that one outstanding characteristic was always obvious: however awkward and stupid he appeared, his desires were invariably those of the average normal boy of his age, and his troubles arose from the fact that unlike the other boys he could not seem to organize his faculties and powers to the end of satisfying his desires. And worst of all! he blundered by failing to act terribly heartbroken by his defeats and failures. This latter characteristic was practically unpardonable in the eyes of all, in view of the common habit of boys to act rather badly when disappointed in something or deprived of some expected or anticipated pleasure. Nevertheless, Brother appeared not to trouble himself in the least with what he missed

in life, and went serenely on his blundering way. Thus do we find at a very early age a redeeming feature in the makeup of this otherwise hope-depressing lad.

Still folks called him "spoiled," and in course of time a choice variety of uncomplimentary nicknames were attached to him, each one descriptive of some phase of the general awkwardness which was peculiar to him. All of which he survived without visible ill-effects, until one day (he was old enough to roller skate) he came home from playing with the boys in a neighboring yard and abruptly asked his mother, "What's a brat?" whereupon Mrs. Bratten, unable to answer definitely, demanded to know where he had heard such a term, and learned that her dear offspring had been called "brat" by no less a person than Mrs. Carr, the lady who ran the select gentlemen's boarding house on the next corner. The fond parent was distracted and enraged; she literally "hit the roof," and proceeded to make such an indiscreet fuss and furor about this incident that within a few hours the entire neighborhood was solidly agreed that "Brat" was the best name that could be found for poor little Brother. Thenceforth he was called Brat by every one who knew him, and gradually came to take the cognomen for granted.

So as Brat Bratten he continued to exist, much to the ingrown disgust of his mother and the shame of his sister, until he went away to an exclusive school to prepare for college. Then what the home folks had been unable to determine in his sixteen years, the over-wise and observant new schoolmates quickly decided. It was left for a dubiously clever novitiate in a German class to use, after surveying Brat's discouragingly futile efforts in various directions, the one word in the English language most fitting and appropriate to the unfortunate Brat. "Blundering" was the word, and in short order "Blunderbrat," having the special virtue of a Germanic sound, became young Bratten's name. The recipient of this honor, in his blundering wisdom, docilely took on



the ready-made title, and proceeded to live up to its two literal meanings with remarkable success, this being the first real success of his young life.

Throughout the time spent at that school he was known by no other name than Blunderbrat, and so truly did he seem not to mind it that eventually it became a term of endearment and friendly greeting, which carried no odium at all. Brat blundered along on his uncaring way, played football a little because he was a husky boy, swam a little, tried to do something in track and baseball, became a not very good student but a moderately well-liked member of the school community, did or tried to do everything that he was supposed to do (according to his earlier formed habits) and evaded or tried to evade doing anything that was counter to his inclinations. He learned but little, but seemed to get ahead just the same, and came down to Cambridge in the late summer after his graduation from the school, with a pretty fair notion of what he wanted and how to get it.

He wanted to get into Harvard (chiefly because his mother had talked Harvard to him since he was a mud-pie baker) and his way into Harvard led through that famous tutoring school at Harvard Square, "The Widow's." With a little extra treatment and attention, the tutors pulled him through his exams, and he found himself, the Blunderbrat, a member in good standing in the oldest and most revered of American colleges. Being himself, he was not in the least surprised or elated over his success, where so many others whom he knew had failed.

Nor was his mother surprised. She accepted his progress into that great institution where "the Crimson in triumph flashes," as a matter of course — there had never been a doubt in her mind but that Brother would be admitted; she had always counted upon it as a fact. So the business of reforming went on without interruption, except for the brief pauses in which Mrs. Brat-



ten took occasion to pilot the course of their domestic affairs.

“Brother boy,” said she, just before the young hero departed to take up residence in Cambridge, “you are quite a man now, so act as a man should! I know you will, but——” and she went on to recount all the maternal worries which sometimes occupied her mind, including the dangers from lewd and lascivious women, liquor-drinking men, and bad companions in general. “And don’t forget Ellen,” she added, as if the mere mention of Ellen’s name were enough to clinch her argument. “If you just remember to play fair with Ellen, who will be waiting for you, you will never do wrong!” And her son quite agreed with her.

He quite agreed with her — the vision of Ellen would surely keep him straight, if anything would, for Ellen, whose full name was Ellen Louise Carver, was by all the standards of conduct and ancestry the first young lady of Dartonville, the daughter of wealthy old Colonel Carver, one of Ohio’s most prominent Republicans (in a county of Democrats) and descendant of a long, traceable line of aristocrats, born to the blood somewhere in Cromwell’s England. Ellen was as aristocratic as she could be and still live in Dartonville. Her friends were few and well chosen, and Brat’s mother had been more than pleased with the arrangement which Mrs. Carver and she had always more or less taken for granted — namely, that Brother and Ellen would some day join hands and hearts to carry on the traditions of the two old families. To Brat this arrangement had always seemed quite all right — he accepted his election to this office in the same spirit as he accepted everything else in life, and he did what he was supposed to do in cultivating Ellen’s friendship, and cementing their relationship in many little ways.

Brat liked Ellen, and Ellen liked Brat, but there had been few thoughts of love in the mind of either. To Brat, the whole business of being sentimental was absurd

and foolish, and he never doubted but that Ellen's little sentimental sallies were more affected than real, for he thought that she would naturally feel toward the matter as he did. Ellen, however, felt differently; she liked Brat very much, and she was aristocrat enough to appreciate the responsibilities of their position and the desirability of their marrying, but she was not so sweetly simple and altogether puppetish that she failed to have the normal girl's little sentimentalities. She often wanted Brat to act more like a lover than a paid companion — she wanted some romance in the affair, realizing the while that Brat was utterly incapable of things romantic. Yet she continued in her efforts to make him so.

“Now, Brother,” she said, when Brat came to say good-by to her upon the occasion of his leaving for Cambridge, “you'll write to me? You'll answer every letter? You'll not forget and go out on parties with your friends? You'll be absolutely true and faithful all the time until you come back to me?” Ellen twined her arms about her big man's shoulders, and asked these questions with an affectation of deep feeling over his impending departure from Dartonville. She knew what his answer would be.

“Of course, Ellen,” Brat replied, impatiently, after the manner of the brusque man that he was. “Don't be foolish — of course I'll remember everything, and you know I never go to parties anyway! And I'll answer every one of your letters — I'll write just as often and as long as you do, so don't worry!” Brat always felt uncomfortable whenever he found himself in a situation having in it elements of amative warmth. Much as he thought of Ellen, he was impatient to be gone.

But Ellen made him promise many things, very solemnly and very self-irritatingly, before she gave him the final farewell kiss and embrace which sent him off to the train.

Yes, Ellen would keep any man straight, thought Brat to himself, en route to the railroad station. But girls

were such darned crazy things — always thinking of something unnecessary — still, he supposed, Ellen would be as fine a wife as any other girl, so why worry about it. And so, being himself, he didn't worry or even think about it, until it came time to write to her from Cambridge.

### THOMAS ALFRED RILEY

“So you're Bratten, eh?” demanded the tall, dark-eyed youth who welcomed Brat to the rooms which he was to occupy for the coming year. Brat had burst in, tired from his over-night journey from Ohio, scarcely wondering at all as to whom he would have for roommates. He knew that the suite in Persis Smith Hall was a three-man suite, but in typical Brat fashion he had not stopped to consider the possibilities in this regard. Now, accosted by this chap, who looked several years his elder — looked more like a senior, thought Brat — he was only able to answer in a laconic affirmative, staring the while at this man who apparently was to be his roommate, judging from the air of possession with which he surveyed the study with its desks and chairs and bare walls.

“So you're Bratten?” continued Riley. “Well, I'm Tom Riley, and you and I might as well get acquainted, because we're going to have to put up with each other for about ten months, from this moment henceforth, as it were.” He walked over and extended his hand to the newcomer, exclaiming, “I'm damned glad to meet you, and I hope we get along O. K.”

“Same here,” assented Brat, taking the outstretched hand and squeezing it more than was necessary, while he looked about the room, anxious to get settled.

“I'm all set,” Riley went on, “moved in yesterday. So maybe I can help you get straightened around.”

“Yes,” agreed Brat again, throwing off his coat and hat. “My trunk will be out sometime this afternoon, and these bags are all full of junk that must be put some-



where; have we any bureaus or dressers or cupboards or anything else to put things into?"

"Sure," laughed Riley, "there's a bureau in your bedroom — it'll hold about three collars and a dozen handkerchiefs if you're careful! They don't seem to be over-generous with the furnishings down here, do they?"

"I should say not — from the looks of it," returned Brat, as he started into the adjoining bedroom.

Riley stood looking at the door through which he had vanished. "Seems like a good kid," he said to himself; "has prep school written all over him from hat to toes, but may not be so bad after all."

Riley's first impression of his roommate was really satisfactory. He liked young Bratten's looks — and Riley was one of the kind which judges much by appearances and by first impressions. "First impressions," his old father had said to him many times, "are the thing! If you go on your first impression, or first impulse, you'll do the best thing every time!" And his son had come to agree with this principle. So he thought to himself, after this first meeting with his new companion, wondering about many things but instinctively taking a friendly attitude toward Brat.

Riley wondered just how different this boy would really be from himself — apparently, Bratten was from an entirely different mould, a plutocrat probably, from one of the tony prep schools — well, if so, he would be entirely different from Tom Riley.

For Riley had none of the background which Bratten's very appearance and manner indicated. Riley came from good old Irish stock, of the highest order — as he often said, "All the Irish were kings, so we're all of royal blood!" His father, however, had not had the good fortune to be able to carry on in the kingly manner, and had brought up his family on a carpenter's wages — and carpenters, during the time in which Old Man Riley was concerned with the business of raising a family, were not the commanding financiers that post-war conditions have

set them up to be. Consequently young Tom had not had all the "advantages" of education, social position and allied affairs of youthful existence. He had attended the public schools, had gone to work as a telegraph messenger before he entered high school, and had bought his own clothes and helped a little at home during the high school period. The spring of his graduation had seen the United States throwing itself into the Great War, and it had required the most extreme measures on Old Man Riley's part to keep his son in school until graduation, after which there was absolutely no restraining him longer, so he enlisted in the Ambulance Service, and after a few months of preparatory training found himself in the north of France. In the course of his two years of service he did duty in many sectors and in many kinds of work; he had had his share of the so-called horrors and pleasures of the business of war, and had, by the time of his discharge at the age of twenty, been directed by the heavy hand of discipline into doing everything, from emptying rank G. I. cans and peeling potatoes by the bushel, to bearing bloody stretchers and rendering first aid to less fortunate creatures, even to bartering with Parisian "petites," who accepted pieces of soap and cigarettes as mediums of exchange. He had gone through the best and the worst of the war and had escaped unscathed, except for a few periods of sickness following some unavoidable rendezvous with gas bomb and pieces of shrapnel; he came back to the States to all appearances hale and hearty, but for many months after leaving the service his movements and his peace of mind were handicapped by spells of physical torments, the cause of which lay in his experiences in France.

Then he came to Harvard. As he put it, "Uncle Sam is the best damned uncle any man could have!" For Uncle Sam, mindful of the condition of ill-health and unrest prevailing among his erstwhile warriors, assumed the burden of repaying, in part at least, the debt which he owed to the many disabled veterans, by giving these men



an opportunity to go to school and college, and so better equip themselves for the struggle of life. Much to Old Man Riley's profane gratitude, his son was one of the first to benefit by Uncle Sam's offer. So he came to Harvard; but for the life of him, he could not explain exactly what he expected to gain by this. For the time being, he was satisfied with his being there, exposed to the higher educative processes for which John Harvard's gift to New England has become famous; in due time, he felt, he would begin to learn something of value and would become sufficiently interested in some profession to want to make it his life work. For the time being, he was content to live and engage in the usual trivialities of pursuing fleeting happiness.

So he stood in the study of their rooms in Smith Hall, and waited for his just-met roommate to reappear; but Brat did not return to satisfy his curiosity until he had satisfactorily disposed of his clothing, and arranged his bedroom to suit his tastes. Appearing finally in shirt-sleeves and with tousled hair, he smiled broadly at the Irishman, now sitting in a small-town sheriff pose with hat over eyes and feet on desk.

"Where do you hail from, Bratten?" asked Riley, casually.

"Ohio," answered Brat.

"No — I mean, what school?" pursued the other; to which query Brat finally replied by giving the name of the exclusive school for boys with much wealth and lots of family which has made its small-town locality renowned throughout the East. Riley acted not at all awed by the announcement, but when Brat asked, without intentional sarcasm, "Do you know anyone up there?" the Irishman had to cough before he could answer in the negative by saying, "No — guess not — don't know many fellows in school the last couple of years — been in the army and sort of lost track of all my friends."

Brat said nothing to this, and Riley fished in his

pockets for a cigarette, offered one to Brat, was surprised at his refusal, and lighted one for himself. Blowing a lungful of smoke from his nose and mouth, he proceeded to ask many questions aimed towards learning more about his roommate, but Brat was non-committal, and Riley was forced to rely upon his surmises instead of information such as Brat should have offered. At last the question "Would you like a drink of rare old cognac?" brought such a prompt refusal from Brat that Riley, feeling that he had done more than his share toward breaking the ice, decided to keep still and go his own way. Which he did — although he and Brat talked over the problems of how and where to register, pay their college bills, open accounts, buy books and attend classes, and Brat seemed not distant or uppish at all during these discussions. However, Riley spent many moments in studying his roommate, for there was much that baffled him in this young fellow, who seemed to want to be friendly, but also appeared to want to stay his distance.

#### JEAN LOUIS BEAUVAIS

Their unknown roommate, the third occupant of the suite, did not put in an appearance until the following day, when Brat and Riley returned from the College Office to find a picture of dejection gracing the top of the small desk in the study. At first sight, Riley thought he must be a large man, his head and shoulders indicating that he was strong, muscular, and well set-up; but when he slid lightly from the desk and stood on the floor, he surprised the Irishman by being much too short to fit the previous impression.

"My name is Beauvais," he announced, extending his hand and smiling broadly, in such a way that Riley at once decided upon liking this newcomer.

Brat replied to the greeting, as did Riley, and soon the three were talking things over much as if they had known one another since childhood.

“Gee-ripes,” exclaimed the newcomer, after much discussion had brought them to the subject of his tardiness. “I almost didn’t get here at all! Went to Montreal from home, expecting to stay a couple of days — got into a little card game on the day I was supposed to leave, and lost damned near everything I had; it took me three days to recover enough to come down here, but here I am broke but happy!” He laughed heartily, as if the whole procedure of going broke and being barely able to get to College in time for registration were a matter of no importance, but merely humorous. Brat saw nothing funny in the idea, but he smiled sympathetically. Riley thought it a good joke, similar in many respects to situations in which he had himself figured, so he could smile with real sympathy at Beauvais’ story.

“I haven’t even got enough money to get my trunk shipped out from North Station!” laughed Beauvais. “And all my clothes are in it, except a couple of dirty shirts and a pair of knickers in my bag there!”

“Gee, that’s tough!” agreed Riley, and then added, “I can let you have a couple of dollars, if that will help any.” He dug into his hip pocket, pulling out a well-worn wallet, and handed Beauvais two crisp dollar bills, almost before the latter had had time to answer his offer.

“I’m sure much obliged to you,” said the short chap, accepting the proffered bills and straightening his hat preparatory to going out for his trunk.

“Oh, hell — everyone goes broke once in a while — I know how it is!” Riley laughed. “I’ll walk along with you; maybe I can help you.”

“Sure — come on,” answered the little man, and the two went out laughing, throwing a “See you later!” in Brat’s direction.

Soon after their departure, Brat’s attention was diverted from his work at his desk by the appearance of a boy whom he had known at prep school.

“Hi, Brat!” this man exclaimed, bursting into the room. “Noticed on the room list that you’re living here,



so thought I'd stop in for a call! How are you? Did you have a good summer?"

"Fine, Pick," answered Brat, smiling genially. "Went home this summer for a while, then came down here to The Wid's for a few weeks. Everything's fine by me! How about yourself?"

"Oh — fair enough," replied the other, glancing around the room and adding, "Who's living with you? And where's all your furniture?"

"Why — " began Brat, "I don't know just what's going on here yet. Am living with a fellow named Riley and another named Beauvais — don't know much about them. We haven't thought about fixing up this place;— looks as if it needed some furniture or something, doesn't it?"

"Lord, yes;— I spent a hundred dollars on fixings for my room."

"Where are you living?"

"Why — right across the hall from you — living with that fellow with the bad leg, Bocker — you've seen him around probably?"

"No — don't think so — where does he come from?"

"Oh, he's a disabled veteran — lost his leg in France. Seems like a nice fellow." The visitor was apparently proud of his being thus honored by a hero's company, and acted as if he expected Brat to be impressed.

But Brat failed to register any such feeling, his next remark being, "It sure will be good to have you right across the hall — seem more like home being near someone you know."

"But how about these roommates of yours?" insisted the other. "Where do they hail from?"

"Don't know exactly," answered Brat. "Riley just got out of the army, I guess, from the way he talks — before that he went to some public school. This other fellow, Beauvais, just got here today — comes from down Maine somewhere near Canada — he's a French-Canadian, I guess. They're both all right, I guess." Brat's state-

ment was made in such a tone as to imply grave doubts about the verity of his guessing.

“Well — it’s a good thing we’re going to be so close to each other. Won’t mind the *hoi polloi* so much,” laughed his companion. “Oh, by the way — you’re going out for Freshman football, aren’t you?”

“Oh, sure — I suppose so.”

“Well, there’s a meeting to-night about it — you’d best go read the notices in the dining hall. I’m going out for the *Crimson* and the *Lampoon*, and I think I can make a managership in football, if I can find time to do it. I’m going to try it anyway.”

“That ought to keep you busy all right.”

“Well — everyone tells me that’s the thing to do — get started right — do everything you can your first year and you will have easy sledding from then on, so I’m going to go out for everything from football managership to debating! Ought to make a couple of them anyway!”

“Gad!” laughed Brat. “Don’t go out for debating! That’s beyond the pale here,— nobody but the Jews go out for that, according to what I’ve been told.”

“That so?” the other rejoined, much interested. “I’ll chase around and ask Mark Wooding about it before I try out for it then; it doesn’t come until later anyway, so we should worry right now.”

“And they tell me you want to do everything possible in the football manager competition — you have to work like hell to make the grade.”

“Oh, I don’t mind that; you just have to do everything they tell you to do, and you have a chance to meet all the big football men; knowing them comes in handy, I should think.”

“Yes,— they say that’s the way to get along here.”

“Well, I’m not worried about not getting along!” the other stated, with a suddenly assumed air of independence. “I don’t care a damned bit about that part of it; but one must do *something*, you know.”



Yes, Brat knew that one must do something, but he also knew, as he said to himself, that the fellow who had just voiced his uncaring disregard for "getting along" would be the hardest of all workers in that particular line, for Brat knew what he had done at school by the same methods. He merely smiled knowingly, therefore, and the talk soon drifted to other topics until finally the visitor took his leave, saying that he would drop in later that night to see the roommates whom Brat had drawn.

SCOTT STEWART BROCKER  
AND  
WINSLOW TWICKENHAM PICKETT III

Early in the evening Brat left his room to make a social call upon some school friends who lived in Gore Hall, which is located on the Riverway, the furthestmost one of the three huge Freshman dormitories. After his leaving, Riley and his companion remained in the study smoking and talking about many things, including Montreal, New York, beer, wine, cider and Italian red wine, but never mentioning at all the subject of courses of study or other matters pertaining to their impending college career. Suddenly their happy story-telling was interrupted by a knock on the door, which when opened revealed the figure of a blond youth of exceptionally clean features and with a smile on his lips that was very winning. "Hello!" he said, still smiling.

"Hello!" replied Riley, while Beauvais sat silent. "Come in!" continued Riley.

The stranger came in, stepping with such a noticeable limp that both Riley and Beauvais were fascinated by his walk across the room to a chair. Arrived there and throwing out the leg which apparently caused the limp, he sat down heavily and removed his hat, then said, "My name's Brocker — my roommate told me a little while ago that one of you fellows went to school with him — Bratten, he said!"

“There are three of us — Bratten isn’t here now — did you want to see him about something?” Riley wanted to know this man better and was much relieved when the other answered.

“Oh, no — I just wanted to get acquainted with you,” he said. “I live with Pickett, across the hall — and Pickett said he knew Bratten, so I came over to get acquainted. What’s your name?”

“Mine’s Riley,” replied the Irishman, “and this is Beauvais.”

“Well, mine’s Brocker, and I’m glad to meet you both!” He started to get up in order to shake hands, but finally sat back again, saying, “You’ll excuse me, but I’ve got a game leg here and the damned thing doesn’t work any too well!”

“Nothing worse than bum pins!” exclaimed Beauvais, sympathetically.

“Well, I’ve only got one!” laughed Brocker, hitting his bad leg with his knuckles, causing a crack which sent shivers up and down Riley’s spine.

“What’s the matter with it?” asked the Irishman, as he offered a cigarette to the visitor.

“Not much,” answered the other with a laugh, “not much now — except that it’s artificial!” He laughed again, and then, noticing the obvious discomfort of his hosts, he said, “Oh, I don’t mind it much — I’m getting used to it now — anyway, that isn’t what I came over here for. Were you fellows in the army?”

“Yes,— ambulance corps!” answered Riley.

“Navy,” answered Beauvais. “What were you with?”

“Machine gun, Yankee Division.”

“Good outfit,” commented Riley. “They did some great work.”

“Best damned outfit in the army!” declared the other. Then with a laugh, “We won the war!”

“Yeh — so did we all, I guess!” laughed Riley. “But we didn’t come through as bad off as you — that’s damned tough!”

But Brocker very apparently did not care to discuss his case any further, so the conversation shifted to other topics of more immediate importance.

“Cripes Almighty, I had to get out of my room — that’s why I came over here!” Brocker suddenly explained. “Young Pickett has been trying to entertain his mother in there for the past two hours, and it was unbearable! Gad, that woman ought to be choked — she doesn’t even let that kid do his own toilet!”

“Why, what happened?” asked Riley.

“Just a mamma’s darling, I guess,” replied Brocker. “She came in and found his desk covered with a *La Vie Parisienne* and a couple of packages of cigarettes and a pipe; she hit the roof immediately, and all the kid could think of to say was that some of his friends had left the stuff there. He swore he never smoked. She had to smell his breath before she was satisfied. She must be crazy; that kid smokes more cigarettes in a day than I do in two; he’s trying to be a regular fellow with the boys, and just then she pops in and lights on him like a ton of bricks! Lord, I thought he was a hero of many escapades by the stuff he’s been telling me, but after listening to his mother’s questions for about five minutes I decided that he isn’t quite grown up yet. Gad, she had to go through all his clothes, look through his bureau drawers and inspect the place generally before she’d believe anything he told her; and then she came back and delivered a long maternal lecture on morals, health and what-not else. Cripes! I went into the bathroom to see if there were any of those triangular clothes for children hung up in there — I didn’t know but what he’d been hiding something from me too!”

Riley and Beauvais laughed heartily, and the former finally said, “I’d like to meet this kid! I have a good picture in my mind right now, just about what he looks like, I’d bet!”

“Me too!” laughed Beauvais. “And this place is full of them, I notice.”



“Yeh,—rosy boys!” muttered Brocker. “You’d think this was a kindergarten after a look at some of them!”

“What’s this fellow’s name?” asked Beauvais, suddenly.

“Winslow Twickenham Pickett the Third,” answered the other. “Comes from a long line of rare old aristocrats, an old New England family of the first water—and I think he’s still in the first water! But he seems like an intelligent kid at that—he’d be almost human, or as much so as one of these products of fashionable finishing schools for boys could be, if it weren’t for his mother! Cripes, I’d be tempted to slaughter, if my mother chased after me like that,—the poor kid don’t know whether he’s going or coming when she’s around.”

So the three fellows talked on, discussing more of Winslow Twickenham Pickett’s characteristics, and then changing to an explanation, chiefly by Riley, of the nature of his other roommate, Bratten, which Riley ended by saying, “He’s sort of funny—modest, bashful, self-centred or plain snobbish, so that you can’t tell just where or how he stands with you, but he seems to be a good fellow, of the usual type which you just described.”

Shortly after this Brat came in and met Brocker. Both appeared to be pleased, and Brat joined in the discussion quite easily for some time when he finally bade them all good-night and retired.

About midnight the other three new friends submitted to the growing hunger pains within them by going up to Jimmie’s lunchroom for a bite to eat, and then back to bed.

“See you all at breakfast!” was Brocker’s parting comment, and these words became before many nights the usual thing, for the occupants of the two rooms in that entry of the hall saw one another at breakfast every morning, and were very much together throughout the days of their first fall in Cambridge. The doors to the two suites were always open, and no one of the five occupants, excepting Brat, could ever be certain of where or on whom

he would find his clothes or any of his other possessions; the two suites with everything they contained became a sort of community before many days had passed.

“And a hell of a fine family we make!” as Riley put it. This was not malapropos of the state of affairs there, for the five students thus thrown together were of entirely different types and different natures, having different backgrounds and different aims in life. Yet there was a sort of two-class difference between them; Pickett, Bratten and Bocker were of excellent old families with high standing names in New England history, and Riley and Beauvais were just the opposite. But of the five, Riley soon demonstrated that he was by far the cleverest; Beauvais was the happiest and most congenial; Bocker felt better in the company of these two than in that of his two blue-blooded cousins; Pickett, with much wealth and an insatiable ambition to “do things as they were done” in college, exercised his well-developed talents along many lines of activity aside from studies; and Bratten made the most of his knowledge and position, and soon got the habit of enjoying the company of every one of the other four men in the little community. A fine family they made.







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*Why come? you ask. Don't be absurd!*

*A rose by any other name may be as sweet,  
But Learning by no other name is so exalted!*

*Come to be drunken!  
And as Knowledge is Freedom,  
Be drunken with both—have faith in both!  
And for that faith, your degree shall make you free!*



## CHAPTER II

### ACADEMIA POST BELLUM

HARVARD and her sons served nobly the cause of Freedom before the United States entered the World War in 1917, many illustrious sons — and some not so illustrious — gaining high honors and splendid decorations for their services to the Allies in aviation, ambulance relief and in the famous Foreign Legion of France. During the War, the great old Yankee university was turned inside out, and all her facilities were utilized for military and naval purposes. An army training-school for students intending to become officers was organized and a radio school for naval students was established. These two projects were developed with a view toward coördinating as far as possible the academic avenues of education with the military and naval training programs, but the latter phase of wartime Harvard was really of supreme importance during the period of its life.

With the armistice came another upheaval and reorganisation, and an immediate attempt to bring the University back to its pre-war system of work; nevertheless the college year of 1918–19 was more or less of a loss from the academic point of view, as the second half-year allowed but little time for anything other than reorganisation. In order to enable students whose higher education had been retarded by the War, to complete their degree-requirements with the least possible delay, the Summer School of 1919 ran in two sections, thereby making it possible for returned students to gain two full credits toward their degrees. Cambridge, around Harvard Square, was crowded with impatient war veterans returned for their college degrees, and with fresh young prep-school graduates trying to anticipate part of their

college work by passing courses in the Summer School. In the rush of it all, a near approach to pre-War teaching conditions was made, and the University was ready for the greatest year of its history.

The incoming Freshman class in the fall of 1919 was the first after-the-War class, as such, and the personnel of this class, as well as of the College at large at this time, was most unusual. When Brat and his friends came to Harvard Square in the late summer and early fall of 1919, they found a motley assortment of ex-sailors, ex-soldiers, ex-marines, ex-students, delayed students, students aiming toward taking War degrees (on a basis of three-fourths college credits and one-fourth War service); and students, like Brat, coming in from high schools and prep schools to enter college according to the usual procedure of examinations. The out-of-course war-service candidates for degrees were mixed in with the young boys just come from school; men of twenty-three and-four years of age were taking courses with boys of seventeen. Many men who before the War would never have thought of going to college, but who were taught by experience in the army and navy that a college education was useful and practical, were admitted to Harvard without the customary entrance examinations—some of these, indeed most of them, had been out of school anywhere from two to seven years. Many were ex-service men who had suffered wounds, injuries, disease or other disabling misfortunes in the service of their country and were being sent to college by the Government. Many had come home from the War just in time to do duty in Boston during the police-strike, which resulted in an immediate recruiting of volunteers to serve as protective "Mud Guards" for the distressed city; they came to college with the pictures of crap-games on Boston Common and window-smashing robberies along Boston's main business thoroughfares so fresh in their minds that they were ready to laugh at all serious pretensions, even the pretensions of eminent Harvard educators. Many



had never known how to study, and the rest had quite forgotten most of what they once did know about study and school life. But old and young, bright and dumb, all were thrown together into a sort of melting-pot, so that Harvard, and especially what was to be the Class of 1923, contained at that time a rather broad cross-section of American society,— a composite group of would-be and forced-to-be students, come to her for the educational tanning which every college and university is expected to give all comers.

It is the way of college life that where there is a nucleus of congenial minds and a convenient rendezvous, there will be a gathering of kindred spirits; and so it came about that the five Freshmen, Brat, Riley, Beauvais, Pickett and Brocker, formed the nucleus around which a crowd gathered. It was an interesting crowd, too, for the most part representative of the year at Harvard as described above. Their rooms soon were made the "hang-out" for a dozen or fifteen fellows of many tastes and varying temperaments, some rich, some poor, some clever, some dull witted, some ambitious, some lazy, some with heavy ancestral weight, others with no weight at all; this crowd in which Brat found himself was a little of everything,— a representative group of Freshmen at Harvard in 1919.

#### THROUGH FRESHMAN EYES

Brat could have found many men and many things of interest if he had but gone out of his way a little to follow up the opportunities which were offered him. But Brat did not go out of his way for anyone or anything, unless there was something to be gained by doing so, it being quite sufficient for the time being in his mind that he had gained admission and was now a member in good standing in Harvard College. He met many men, in classes, in clubs, in eating halls, in his own rooms, and in the course of the various activities which he was advised to

take up. He continued much as he had done at school, doing the things he was supposed to do, the things which were almost certain to bring him to the top of the heap at the end of his college career. He was not a social cultivator — the other party had to make any advances toward intimacy, confidence or friendship; Brat merely accepted the offerings or refused them.

Brat's attitude toward college life very often excited Riley's wonder and curiosity, for, as the Irishman said, "Here he is at the end of the schoolboy's rainbow — and damned if he doesn't act as if he never thought anything of it!" Brat very obviously did not think anything of it — going to college was merely a matter of course with him; it was his work, the thing which was to occupy his mind for four years; consequently he saw no reason why he should bother his head as to causes or reasons or motives or anything else; his one concern was to pass in his studies, and to engage in a few activities which had been chosen by his advisers as most likely to be profitable.

Toward the other members of the gang which made a headquarters of their rooms, Brat maintained himself in an unusual position. He was both on the outside and on the inside; his real friends, the men toward whom he looked for advice and help, were of an entirely different calibre from his Freshman friends; they were the successful college-man type, being for the most part earlier graduates of Brat's school, with whom he quite naturally fell in as soon as he set foot in Cambridge. On the other hand, however, he belonged to this fast growing and well integrated group which centred around Brocker and Riley; they were nearer to him than his advisers, and the fact that he saw them every day, upon arising in the morning and retiring at night, brought them very prominently into his life. He was a man of habits, and the habit of liking these fellows and enjoying their company grew on him as every other habit did, with the result that, whereas he started the college year quite well armored

in the fashion which he had always followed, leading his life according to the old beacon about "He goes furthest who goes alone," he came to a point of uncertainty about his idols and his illusions—although he never could have told himself as much. This uncertainty merely manifested itself in his changing attitude toward his college life, and toward the connections in Dartonville which had heretofore seemed so supremely important.

For one thing his mother was constantly lecturing him in her letters about the dangers of bad companions. "You can never know until you are older what vile influence rowdy companions are, my dear boy," she had written several times. "They will lead you down to the ruts from which you can never raise yourself. So be careful at all times of your company. Do not have anything to do with any but the best class of young men, the college leaders, the young men who come from the best families. Do not trust appearances in choosing your friends. Trust only their records and their family standing; ninety-nine times out of every hundred the son of a good family will prove a good friend and a good influence." Thus and many times similarly did Mrs. Bratten seek to advise her dear son, and the dear son, as had for so long been his wont, tried diligently to follow his mother's advice.

But Harvard is a hot-bed of democracy. Just as soon as he registered in the College, Brat was thrown in the position of having to live with two fellows who were from anything but the best families; and before he quite realized what he was doing, he found himself liking his two roommates much beyond anyone whom he had ever yet known. Riley and the French-Canadian were "real" men; there was nothing artificial and pretending about them; he knew that he could always look to them for any kind of help that he might need, and he even felt like extending himself to help them in case they should need him.

At the very first he wrote to his mother, in regard to them:



“My roommates are a fellow named Riley and another named Beauvais. I don't know anything about them, but they are fine fellows, and I like them very much already. Across the hall live Winnie Pickett, who was at school with me, and a young chap by the name of Brocker, who lost one of his legs in France.

“Everything is going all right down here. I will make the Freshman football team, I guess, since I have played in one game already and am on the first squad. Several upper classmen have already asked me about joining clubs next year. None of these are honorary clubs, however — these honorary clubs elect their members in Sophomore and Junior year. I guess by that time I can make them.”

Shortly after this letter had been sent to Dartonville, Brat's mother answered in a long letter telling all the news of Dartonville, and further lecturing the “dear boy” upon how best to conduct himself at college. She wrote of the doings of his former schoolmates and playmates — especially of the ones who had ridiculed and made fun of him in his earlier days: one was a truck-driver, another a plumber, another a clerk in his father's dry goods store, another an undertaker's assistant, and another was completing a course in a commercial college; just one of his old playmates was attending college, a college of which not one of Brat's Cambridge friends had ever heard. Brat smiled over the contents of this letter, for he knew that his mother was trying to make some point by telling him all this about the “kids” of the neighborhood; he knew that he was supposed to be gratified by the suggested comparison of himself at Harvard and these other boys at their so ordinary occupations. But he was not particularly gratified, it was too bad they all could not have come to Harvard; he hadn't had much trouble doing it.

This, however, was not his last impression of that letter. Eventually he did come to feel gratified as his



mother had wanted him to feel, and he even smiled pleasedly at the further bit of news about his sister Lois. "She is working day and night in some dramatic training, aiming toward a stage career, of which I certainly do not approve; but then she enjoys it and she does meet some exceedingly interesting people." Lois was just like that, thought Brat — always trying to do something of that sort; she'd never be satisfied to be a common, ordinary human being. Still, Brat could smile at the thought, for Lois had never made any great effort to approve of her younger brother, and Brat knew it, although he had never cared much whether she liked him or not. And he still didn't care particularly.

Toward Ellen, Brat was determined to be properly attentive and ever true. When he set foot in Cambridge, he had in the back of his mind the conviction that Ellen Carver would some day be Mrs. Charles Bratten, so that was all there was to that! He proceeded to live accordingly, and although Ellen's letters came thick and fast, he did his best to answer them all in good time, and he also tried diligently to carry on in the proper manner whenever, as soon became very frequently the case, he was in company with girls in and around Boston. He wrote to Ellen and, as most letters go, he was forced before very long to tell her everything that happened, because he had to write something, and he had never been very clever at writing sweet nothings even to Ellen. He told her about his friends, his studies, his activities, his hopes, his fears — everything that happened to be occupying the stage of his mind at the time of writing. And Ellen probably enjoyed the letters almost as much as if they had been full of the fire of ardor and devotion. In return she told him the news of Dartonville, and assumed much the same position as his mother in reminding him of his responsibilities and obligations to those at home, all of which poured over Brat's habit-hardened back much like the well-known water over the duck. Furthermore, the habit of writing letters grew on him, until the mere

thought of writing to Ellen resulted in his getting out the stationery to complete the act.

His roommates soon noted the regularity with which Brat wrote to "the little lady at home," and what had been suspicious curiosity as to his reasons for walking the straight and narrow path of virtue and honor changed to one of admiration for his will-power.

"Boy, I hand it to you!" declared Riley, upon the occasion of Brat's asking him to post a letter for him. "I wish to St. Ignatius that I had some nice little lady to keep me straight. That's the only way to get anywhere in this world. I'm going to find myself one here *tout de suite*, and then watch my smoke!"

He took the letter which Brat had asked him to drop into the mail box, and Brat smiled after his departing figure. He was never entirely certain as to whether the Irishman was joking with him or not. At this moment he had an idea that Riley really meant what he said. At any rate, when the attitude of all the intimates had changed — on account of their recognizing the fact of Brat's having a "connection" at home — Brat's position was much easier. He was not asked to go on wild parties up in the Billerica woods or down at deserted shore resorts; he was not plagued for reasons for not attending the many risqué functions which other members of the gang promoted; no one insisted upon his taking part in crap games or card games. He was placed in a niche and left there, while the others went about their business of going on parties, chasing "chippies" and wide-eyed schoolgirls, consuming "god-awful hooch" and contriving to pass in their courses by one-night stands.

Brat was often intrigued by wondering what the others thought about many things of their life together. He could never quite make out whether Riley were in earnest when he took it upon himself to rage and rant against people and things. He never could quite understand Bocker's antipathy for "aristocrats and hand-shakers." He did not know how Beauvais ever expected to get

through college by smiles and general good-heartedness. Of the five, Pickett was the only one whose position he could fathom.

Winnie Pickett was more of his own color. He had more money than was good for him, but he had the right idea about college values; he did the things that meant something, and very seldom allowed himself to be dragged out on wild parties with the gang.

"Not that I don't enjoy them," as he told Brat upon one occasion, "but there's so darned much else to do that's more important. Now there's that party at Genevieve Kimball's this Friday — I can spare only one night this week, and I'd be black-listed forever if I cut that. And I've got so much to do, I don't know whether I'm going or coming."

Truly Pickett was a busy man, for his idea of college life was enough to keep any man busy. He went out for everything possible, from glee club to football managership and worked so hard at his "interests" that at exam time he could be nothing but the best of the tutoring school's customers.

And he was enthusiastic over his interests — so enthusiastic that Riley, who had had some newspaper experience in the army, finally agreed to go out for the *Crimson* when the competition started. Pickett also entered the competition, and for two weeks they were running neck and neck, chasing news and serving time at the desk in the *Crimson* building. Then, apparently without warning, Riley dropped out, and gave no explanation for his quitting, until later, when Pickett rushed in, all excitement, demanding to know what the idea was.

"Oh, I decided to quit; too much chasing around for me!" calmly replied the Irishman.

"Well, you're a fine one!" exclaimed the other. "You would make it sure if you'd stick — they think you're good over there."

"Well, I've quit!" stated Riley, with conviction. "I stood as much of that damned handshaking prep-school



bull as I could, and if that's what you have to do to 'make it' I don't want to make it!"

"What do you mean, handshaking bull?"

"Oh, you know what I mean — chasing around doing errands for a bunch of yaps, jumping every time they cough, smiling at their simple jokes and doing all the rest of that competition rigmarole! I stood enough of it, but tonight I was over there hanging around the table, and that simple-minded Berlicher, who was sitting there reading the *Transcript*, suddenly opened up with the suggestion that I run over to the Waldorf and get him a piece of pie and a glass of milk! Can you tie that?" Riley's tone implied profound disgust.

"But I don't see anything wrong with that!" declared Pickett. "You have to expect that sort of thing, that's the custom; the Freshman candidates have to serve the editors, and do everything they can for them when they're on duty at the office."

"Well, it may be the custom in the eyes of you kids just out of school — that's what I say: it's just prep-school stuff, and I'm no prep-school kid! I took one look at that mouse-faced snob with his feet up on the desk, and then I walked out to get the air. When I came back he demanded to know where the hell his pie and milk were, and I simply told him that I had never said I was going to get his meals for him. Cripes! he was tearin'! You'd 'a' thought I'd committed murder, and he started to tell me about 'the customs' of the place."

"Well, then you haven't quit yet?" asked Pickett.

"Quit?" Riley laughed. "Why I called that damned fool every choice variety of simpleton and ass that I know of, and in the end I said that when it got so bad that a pie-faced kid with wet ears could have the nerve to ask a man with a couple of game legs to go get him pie and milk, I was ready to quit; and he was so damned blue in the face when I got through that I think he was glad I did quit! The poor damned yap!"

"But dammit, Tom," argued Pickett, who felt much



as if an idol had been crashed in his face, "you've got to do things according to Hoyle here or you can't get along! Gee, I have to do a lot of things I don't like, but I do them, knowing that everybody has to do the same things before they make anything. You'd better come back to the 'Crime!'"

But Riley never went near the *Crimson* building after that, and Pickett was from that time on the logical enemy of the Irishman; Pickett was the typical prep-school boy come to Harvard to make a name for himself, and Riley soon declared his wholehearted opposition to "all that sort of bunk!"

To which Brocker, who was by now called Scotty and Brock as nicknames, fully agreed, and Beauvais, now called The Beau by his friends and The French Canuck by those who did not like him, said he did not think much of the idea himself. Eventually, as the weeks drew on and the football season, with Brat on the Freshman team, came to a close, Pick and Brat went together more and more, while the other three took their pleasures wherever they could find them, and paid as little attention as possible to "the better things of college life."

They were all loyal Harvard supporters, especially during the football season, which was a great one for the *Crimson*, but Brat and Pickett being more or less on the inside by virtue of their participation in the various circles in which the athletes moved and lived, were more restrained in their enthusiasm over Harvard's victories than were Riley and Brock. Beauvais took all victories in the same spirit — which was one of disregard; all games were the same to him, for he could have a good time before and after any of them, be it with Boston College, Princeton or Yale. But Brock and the Irishman, usually with a few drinks of poisonous bootleg whiskey to stimulate their enthusiasm, knew no limits in wild betting and cheering, and otherwise inordinately celebrating victories and prospects of victories.

After the Yale game, life in Cambridge settled into

more of a routine than before. Text-books saw more usage, and reports and theses received more than usual attention. Pick and Brat attended many social functions, through the acquaintance which Pick had among the younger set in and around Boston. Brat was taken up and very much liked by every one. He knew very well how to conduct himself in the best society, and he was handsome, in his big, husky way, more than enough to attract attention in any gathering. He found himself too popular with the young girls, who enjoyed the company and attentions of one of Harvard's "coming men"—as Pick described him. And Pick was clever enough to take advantage of Brat's popularity to see that he was invited to every possible kind of party. In Cambridge, it was soon taken for granted that Pickett and Bratten would be on the "inside" during their college career — they "belonged."

Brock was on the fence. Pick asked him many times to accompany them to various kinds of entertainments, but after the first time, Brock managed to decline all such invitations. That first time had been a party at a fashionable school some twenty miles outside of Boston. Brock met many very nice girls, pretty and interesting, however foolish and kiddish, but his enjoyment of the evening's festivities was seriously lessened in that he could not dance.

"I would like to dance," he told Brat, as the two stood talking and surveying the floor filled with twinkling toes and swaying couples, laughing and joking in obviously happy moods. "I'd like to, too damned well!" Brat thought there was some bitterness in the way Brock talked. "But I can't swing this damned foot around unless I'm half plastered — and this isn't that kind of a party!" He laughed loudly, as if the whole idea were that the joke was on himself.

At any rate, despite the fact that he had met several pretty and alluring girls through Pick and Brat, Brock refused all invitations to go on any so-called "nice"

parties thereafter. "There's no point in my going when I can't dance, can't do anything, in fact, except talk to people; and that neither interests them nor me."

"But it does, Scotty," remonstrated Pick once. "I've had more than one girl tell me how much she enjoyed your company — even though you don't want to dance, they like to talk to you."

"No — they just say that, Pick." Brock was thoroughly convinced that he was a bore, due to his maimed condition. "And I don't want people's sympathy or pity. I don't want to feel that any one is putting up with me just because they have to, or feel that they ought to! All those girls would much rather be with some chap who can dance and play around with them — so I don't want to go and have to keep realizing that all evening!"

Instead he went with Riley and Beauvais and the several other members of the crowd who patronized near-by roadhouses and secluded camps and East Cambridge bootleggers, for, as he said, "I can dance when I'm half plastered, and I can almost forget that I'm only half a man!"

Indeed he did seem to enjoy these parties, especially because in nine cases out of ten the parties never turned out as expected, and Riley, his boon companion in everything, was forever ready at hand to make things seem pleasant and happy whether they were or not. Riley was a brick, in Brock's opinion, the best man he'd ever met — and a damned clever boy, too. His feeling this way toward the Irishman he could never have explained, except by telling himself that Tom had taken an interest in him at the very first, when he had dropped into Cambridge still shaky from his experiences in France and in the hospitals. He had come back to the States minus a leg and shattered in mind, suffering, according to the doctors' explanation, from a kind of delayed shell-shock. After eight months in various hospitals, he had been released just in time to go to Cambridge to register for



the college year, the Government experts thinking that the cure for his condition might be found in his having something to occupy thoroughly his time and attention.

Brock's memory contained a huge gap. He remembered clearly the crashing in of the dug-out and the explosion of the shrapnel almost within arm's length of him. After that he remembered nothing, except as he had been told of the intervening time by others, until two months later, just after it had been found necessary to amputate his leg in order to give his body a chance to recover its health. As a result, the months following that operation had been full of hallucinations and deliriums which had quite made a wreck of his mind. He was erratic, nervous, self-conscious, irritable — and at the fag-end of this delayed shell-shock he had come to Cambridge, fully aware of the condition of his mind and body.

Nevertheless he was determined to make the best of his situation. As he said, many, many times to himself and several times to Riley, he did not want sympathy or pity — he merely wanted to be given a chance to do something, to get somewhere, so that he need not think of his one-legged condition as a handicap. He did not want to be slapped on the back and acclaimed a hero — “I wasn't any hero! Any one else sitting in the hole of that dug-out would have been hit the same way; nothing heroic about it!” All he desired was to attain some peace of mind, free from the torments which had filled his every waking minute and many of his sleeping hours.

Thus he had come to Cambridge, and at the psychological time Riley had come into his life. Immediately the Irishman's breezy and care-free way of looking at things, and the carping attitude which he soon began to take toward the ways of college life, were as balm to the wounds of his suffering companion. Riley never in so many words expressed his sympathy or feeling or understanding for Brock in his predicament, but Brock



needed no direct statement of the Irishman's feelings to know that here was the sort of friend that men can tie to. It seemed that throughout those fall days, when Brock's mind was gradually coming back to a state of controlled suppression of wild fancies, Riley was at all times sufficient unto his needs — he could always give reasons for doing or not doing things, which carried conviction with them; so that before long Brock began to develop along much the same line as his companion, except that he was several years older, and the whole comedy of college life struck him with even more effect than it did the Irishman.

Before Christmas vacation had come, Brock was really on his feet, and could control himself and his thoughts and fancies much as he pleased, except when under the influence of liquor, which was not seldom. He had many spells of dejection and utter discouragement. He was forever realizing his handicap, and reacting to this realization in his own peculiar way. The whole University was soon his friend, but he resented the attitude which every one took toward him, that is, every one except his Irish companion. The officers of the college who had to do with the administration of college regulations and requirements went out of their way to be considerate of him; whenever he failed to attend classes and could give no good excuse for so doing, they usually ruled in his favor, and tried to arrange his work so that he could achieve the maximum results with the most convenience. The Government agent who had charge of his training program was at all times solicitous for his comfort and welfare, and joined with the college authorities in trying to get him straightened out into a course that would lead him to ultimate happiness in life.

But of it all, the only help he really had came from Riley. He resented the proffers from these others. He resented the feelings behind the offers. He did not want to be a marked man — marked for sympathy and consideration. And Riley was the only man, officer or

student, who accepted him as he was, and did not try to do things for him or get him to do things for himself simply because the things would be good for him. Riley helped him to make the best of his time in the way of finding entertainment, and, if the authorities and the Government agent had taken the same attitude, Brock's resentment would have been directed into other channels, and he would have developed in more desirable fashion than he did.

However that might have been, he looked upon the life around him with a cynical smile forever playing about his eyes. The young kids who rushed around so busily doing something that mattered not at all, crying heroes' names when the heroes were no better than themselves, living by age-old rules of social conduct, drawing social lines between themselves and the Jews-without-money and between themselves and the Jews-with-money, growing snobbish and stiffly aristocratic in places where every one was as good as his neighbor — it was all so unnecessary. What did all these damned foolish things by which all these fresh-tinted prep-schools boys seemed to live, matter? And why should they rush into the company of other white men, and try to establish themselves by swinging a heavy line of artificial chatter about nothing much at all, and in tones conspicuous for affectation? And why all this rush to make this team or that team or this paper or that club — after which the nose was to be hung on the wires which carry telephone messages? And why all this worshipping of eminent professors and deans and intellectual heroes — they were nothing but flesh and blood, probably good fellows who'd take a nip themselves behind a curtain!

He envied the French Canadian his easy attitude toward the life around him. To Beauvais, nothing mattered except his own comfort. All he asked for in this life was to have enough money to be comfortable, and not have to work too hard. And for this condition of mind,

Brock envied him, for Brock could not hope in his mind to ever feel that way toward life.

But he grew stronger in his mind, despite the many liquor parties which he and Riley promoted, and by Christmas time he was quite himself — as much so, he thought, as he'd ever be.

Yet he worried about something all the time; in his condition he had to have something to worry about; and when the troubles of his own mind ceased to worry him he turned to thinking about the question of why he should go to college.

“I don't really see what good all this clap-trap will ever do me, Tom,” he said to his friend upon one occasion. “It all looks too damned simple and childish to be useful! Why sometimes, when I consider the fact that I have been almost insane around here these past three months, I wonder whether it's me that's crazy or all these other normal people. If being out of tune means being insane, then I'm sure as hell insane, for I'm way out of tune with this whole business of going to college!”

But Riley merely laughed at him, and offered him a cigarette to occupy his attention, saying, “Sure — so are we all! All out of tune! Don't you know, Scotty, that every man who ever uses his head at all comes sooner or later to the realization that either he's crazy or everybody else is? I don't doubt at all but what many a genius has been cooped up in an insane asylum, just because he was out of tune with the community! Maybe that's where we'll end—we're probably geniuses, as the Latins wouldn't say!”

Riley laughed again, and Brock was forced to smile, for whenever he suggested something too serious or too near to his own condition, Riley invariably proceeded to carry the idea to such extremes that it became ridiculous and laughable.

“We're a fine pair of genii!” he muttered, after the laugh, whereupon they proceeded to lay plans for a



party on the following night which would demonstrate their genius for practical things.

#### GALOSHES AND OTHER MATTERS

Some sage once opined that all Freshman years were just alike — meaning that the experiences of work and play and unforeseen incidents cover the same course in the case of every Freshman. That sage was correct in his opinion. Every Freshman year is just like every other Freshman year, and especially is this true of the long, hard pull through the winter months. In almost every case there is just so much play and so much work, each of a more or less definite, routine nature. The Freshman of 1924 goes through the same process that the Freshman of 1919 went through, probably the same that the Freshman of 1910 experienced.

Some other sage passed the opinion that a man's college career is largely determined by what he does in his first year. That opinion also approaches the truth. And it is probable that young Pickett had come in contact with such an opinion, as indicated by his whole-souled pursuit of "the things that count" immediately after his settlement in Cambridge. He was determined to get ahead, and from the first he did get ahead.

His case, and those of his friends, are somewhat in line with that thought expressed by Baudelaire to the effect that "Life is a game: some play to win, some to lose and some indifferently." Pickett was wholeheartedly playing the college game to win. Brat, too, played to win, but in a different way; Brat's attitude was more passive than active; his was an habitual attitude of avoiding the shore whereon reclined the temptations which might reach out and snatch him from the current of progress; he merely rode the stream, knowing that the stream would carry him through the wilderness to the open sea whereon he wished to sail. But the main distinction between Brat and Pick lay in the former's passivity and the latter's activity. As Riley put



it, "I can readily understand how his father became so wealthy — I'll bet he never did anything in his life except make money! And that's just the way his son goes about getting ahead in college."

For Riley did not belong in either Brat's or Pick's category. He was smilingly indifferent to the whole business. He was playing the game neither to win nor to lose — he merely enjoyed sitting in and watching others go up and down, the latter movement being illustrated by the observable indications of the attitude of his crony, Brock. Brock was playing the game to lose — he was pre-convinced that he could never win, college values and standards being what they were, and he could not, like Riley, smile at the goings-on. He had to be active, even if his activity brought losses upon himself. And Riley sometimes thought that Brock enjoyed his activity quite as much as Pick, although in each case the activity led to widely different ends; and, looking from Brock to Beauvais, Riley could never quite decide whether it were better to be ever worrying and active detrimentally, as Brock was, or unruffled and floating, as the French Canadian always appeared to be. Beauvais' attitude was somewhat near to Riley's own, but Beauvais was not as clever as Riley, and his feelings were more natural, and not dependent upon his reason. He played the game because he enjoyed it, win or lose; he was happy if he seemed to be winning, and he cursed good-naturedly — but with the air of "I never expected to win" — when he appeared to be losing. As far as disposition and comradely feelings went, the ways of the world bothered him not at all. As Riley said of him, "The Beau could go through hell and come out without a single blister!"

All of which is by way of describing the different paths taken by the different members of the five-sided group of Freshmen. They were all playing the same game, but each played in his own peculiar way. And the game, which began in September, carried on into the

winter months so quickly that no one, except the men of Pick's type, who turn every minute to some purpose, could understand how the time managed to fly so swiftly. The winter found the others still playing the game half-heartedly, dancing while the Pickett type were feverishly sewing on the hats which later would collect the coins.

Winter never comes to Harvard Square before Christmas, it being apparently a law of nature that no snow can be deposited there in any quantities until after Christmas-to-New-Year vacation. Brat was therefore led to believe that the Christmas holidays in New England would be mild and altogether enjoyable, which resulted in his finally writing to his mother, among other items, the following:

Pick has invited me to his home for the holidays, and I think I shall accept, unless you absolutely want me to come to Dartonville. But it seems like so long a trip for so short a stay that I'm not over-crazy about coming home, regardless of how much I want to see you. There's not much to do anywhere — if I stay around here, however, I can do some work on the five or six reports and themes which I have to write, they being due right after the vacation. I should like to see Ellen, but I guess she'll survive whether I come home or not. So, unless you especially want me, I'll go to Pick's and postpone my home-coming until June.

Mrs. Bratten approved of Winnie Pickett; she was entirely willing for her son to forego his trip home. So Brat went to Pick's for the holidays and enjoyed a very good time, for there were several other prominent fellows there, and in the course of the ten days' vacation there were many parties and many nice girls for passing entertainment. Brat enjoyed it all in his usual fashion, and quite excusably forgot or neglected to do any of the work which he had planned for the vacation.

College re-opened the day after New Year's, and almost immediately the Mid-Year Exams became the center of all interest. To the Freshmen these were monstrous things — an entirely new experience; no one knew exactly what they would be, how difficult or how easy, nor how the instructors marked them; and the very uncertainty of the situation stimulated every one to unheard-of amounts of studying and attending classes. Even Brock succumbed to the spirit of the time by sedulously going to every class for three weeks and Beauvais found himself so busy all of a sudden that by the time the exams began, late in January, the French Canadian was entirely played out with the fever — so played out that he almost flunked out of his requirements.

The exams came. Crap games and card games were banned. Parties were put in the offing — “provided the work is finished,” which it never was, for invariably the night-before found every man with a burden of uncovered work to go over before the following morning.

Certain courses were common to them all, the requirements for distribution and concentration of studies working out so that every one of the five was taking the General Survey of World History, and either French or German, besides having to take the General English course which was prescribed for all first-year men. For science, Riley, Brock and Brat were taking Zoölogy, and Pick and Beauvais had a course in Chemistry. Brat and Pick also had Economics, and the others were wrestling with the “theories and ideas” of ancient philosophers. By the time the exams started Riley exclaimed, “I never saw so damned many books and papers in one room in all my life.” For they had, among the five of them, collected every available piece of information that might be useful in any one of the eight courses which their combined schedules embraced, and this mass of material was entirely beyond any possibility of being covered. But the night-before witnessed an attempt to cover everything, the attempt usually ending in exhaustion at



four in the morning, or an all-night stand, with frequent recourse to black coffee and many cigarettes.

The English exam was the last to come, and of the five Riley was the only man who in any way excelled in the writing of English as the English instructors demanded it. He was not worried over this exam — indeed, on the night-before he seriously suggested that a wild celebration “with beaucoup liquor” would be in order; but his suggestion was grunted down, and the Irishman was induced to spend his time tutoring the others who were less fortunate in their talents. There was a long list of books which they were supposed to have read, a textbook of grammar and rhetoric, one-half of which they were expected to know thoroughly, and a composition of five hundred words which they were required to have planned out and ready to write during the hustle of the examination.

Riley began at the beginning of the course and covered everything in the program. He outlined the books which were to have been read, explained in brief the high points of the rules and illustrations given in the textbook, and then gave a long lecture, in the vulgar tongue, on the fine art of writing to pass examinations.

“Just use common sense — that’s all there is to this stuff. Whatever the hell you think of, write down before you forget it. Whatever the subject is — and there’ll be ten or twelve to choose from — pick one that you know a little about, and then divide it into three or four parts or sections, like, if it’s ‘A Perfect Day,’ divide it into Morning, Afternoon and Night, and then proceed to write everything that happened or could have happened under those three headings. Five hundred words isn’t much, and anybody can rattle off a composition that will pass, if they don’t lose their head and don’t forget what they’re doing. The main thing is to write everything that comes into your head — it doesn’t make much difference whether it is directly relevant or not — write it!”



Thus spake Tom Riley, and he was answered by Brock, saying, "Humph—pure bull!"

"Sure it's bull—that's what they want!" continued Riley. "That's why I say that—just write everything, just as you'd say it, and if you happen to think of a grammatical rule which makes a certain statement difficult or grammatically wrong, just twist it around and say it some other way. That's all there is to composition—writing whatever you think of."

They took his advice next morning, the product of their efforts being a collection of essays and arguments which completely baffled their instructors as to meaning or end; but the writers passed, even the Beau, who wrote on "The Death of a Lumberman" with such reckless abandon that his instructor was not sure until the very end whether the composition concerned was a criticism of a wild northwest movie, a description of a bootlegging episode along the Canadian border, or an attempt at polyphonic prose after Miss Lowell. The instructor took occasion to comment upon it in class by saying, "I enjoyed that game very much, Mr. Beauvais!" And Beauvais knew not whether to be insulted or elated.

After this wise was the first obstacle in the chase surmounted and passed. No one went on probation as a result of the Mid-Years, and a great celebration was to be expected, the more so because Pickett had wagered a party with Riley that the latter would not get better than a C in his Zoölogy. Specifically, the wager proposed that Pickett would go on a party at any house which Riley chose. When the results came in, Riley was the proud possessor of a B, probably because he stayed up all night before the exam when the others had retired early. Pickett was game; he agreed to pay his bet as promised, and finally argued so convincingly that Brat agreed to accompany them. A taxi was procured, and the party of five set out for Boston, the Irishman having a hazy idea of a suitable and reasonable place.

Arrived there, they found that the birds had been

forced to fly to parts unknown, through the machinations of several unbribable police officers. Much disappointed, Riley bethought himself of another possibility, and the cab proceeded to that address, only to discover that there was no one at home. The Irishman knew of just one last chance; the cab took them there, Riley descended and disappeared in a dark doorway, and returned after twenty minutes, cursing everything in general and the oldest profession in particular, explaining that the parties refused to let the crowd come in because they had had some trouble with the police too recently to let them take any chances.

“Well — guess we don’t have to pay our bet!” laughed Pickett, who really could not have stated truthfully that he was sorry.

“The hell you don’t!” declared the Irishman. “How about the taxi driver? He ought to know some place!” So the driver was questioned and finally persuaded to assist them. They rode to another place in the far end of the city — no one at home. Another long ride back to the South End — too late. Thence to Commonwealth Avenue — parties had moved. Finally to an apartment house in Cambridge — no answer to the bell.

“That’s about all I know, boss!” the driver informed Riley, who was by this time much disgruntled.

“Well, take us home!” he ordered, after which he set upon Brat and Pick with many choice epithets, not because he had failed to find a way for Pick to pay his bet, but because he was just beginning to realise that the taxi fare, not mentioned in the wager, was his own consideration.

“Nineteen dollars and thirty cents!” he exclaimed in dismay when the meter was read to him. “Cripes almighty! that’s what I get for trying to lead you virtuous jackasses astray!” He paid the fare and they went to their rooms.

“Verily the way of the intended transgressor is hard!” laughed Pick as a parting remark that night.

The Irishman slammed his door and swore to Beauvais that he'd "get him right some day!"

### JUBILEE

No matter what one does, time will pass, and the date which seemed yesterday to be so far distant and unattainable suddenly becomes today.

"Ye gods!" exclaimed Riley, at the beginning of the second semester. "Now we start in to do the same thing we've just finished doing — another half year just like the first; this is a heck of an existence!"

To which Brat replied, "No football in the spring — I've got to find something to do." Meaning that he would probably try for the track team, since he had never developed any talent along baseball lines, and his awkwardness had always kept him from even trying to play tennis.

But when the spring season really opened, someone called his attention to the possibilities of rowing as a good solid, respectable sport; so Brat reported for a try-out at the boathouse, and eventually came to enjoy rowing very much, and made sufficient progress to warrant the coaches' encouraging him to remember the fall training in his sophomore year. Some time after he had started his rowing activities, the spring training for future varsity football candidates began, and from that time to the end of the college year Brat had quite enough to occupy his free hours.

In the meantime, Pick had made the "Freshman Red Book," the annual publication which served as an elaborate summary of the year's class activities, containing pictures of all the teams which represented the class during the year, the record of their successes or failures, and the photograph of every member of the class, with a note giving the high spots of the individual's scholastic, military or naval, fraternal and athletic career. Pick won out in a competition for business manager of the publication, and by virtue of his office immediately became known to every member of his class.



But the first of June came upon them, and two days before the Final Exams were scheduled to begin, the Freshman Jubilee was held in Smith Hall, so close at hand that Brat, Riley and the others could not have ignored the party even if they had wanted to for the sake of their studies, which of course they did not. Indeed, the Jubilee represented a problem to Brat. He had a hazy idea that he should at least invite Ellen down for the occasion — in which case he would have to ask her mother or his mother or sister to come with her, and there would be certain demands upon him to entertain them for at least a few days afterwards, Final Exams or no Final Exams.

Said Riley, in regard to this, "Don't be foolish! Why make that girl come way down here for nothing? This damned Jubilee will be nothing but a mob scene, absolutely stupid; and then you'd have no time to entertain them, unless you want to flunk that Psych. coming the first day of the exams."

Said Pick, "Let Ellen stay home — she can see the sights down here next year or later; it would be too inconvenient for this party. I know a girl whom you'll like, and who'll help you to enjoy the night's entertainment without tying you down in any way. Better let me fix it up for you."

Said Brock, "I'm going to bring two chorines out to the bloomin' affair, and somebody's going to have to dance with them unless they pass out before the dancing starts. Now, Brat, why don't you tag along with me and meet a chorus girl for a change — it's all in an education, you know."

Said Beauvais, "Brat, you better go with Pick! I'll take care of Brock's friends from the chorus."

In the end Ellen was not invited. Brat soothed his conscience by writing to his mother and explaining at great length how inconvenient her coming down would be. Ellen replied with many comments of a very light nature, all of which convinced Brat that his worries had



been in vain, because she had never heard of the Freshman Jubilee, did not know that it was the only considerable social affair of the first year at Harvard, and consequently would not have anticipated it with any great enthusiasm. "And anyway," she had written, "I think I'm coming to Boston to school next year, so you will have plenty of opportunities for showing me the town then." Which last was news to Brat, such news as he did not really know how to take — he wondered vaguely if Ellen would not be much better off in Ohio.

The girl with whom Brat found himself as a result of Pick's efforts was the daughter of a lawyer from Malden, whose last name Brat never bothered to remember, but whose first name he knew to be Elizabeth — the daughter's, not the lawyer's. She had been raised on prep-school boys and college undergraduates, Brat soon discovered, and she knew almost as much about Harvard as did Brat himself — which, of course, was rather disconcerting. Brat almost agreed with Riley, whose comment upon her contained some suggestion to the effect that he "never cared much for girls who know everything from the social register to the telephone book!"

However, from the very first meeting, Elizabeth liked Brat — and made the mistake of saying so, which showed that she really did not know so much as Riley imagined. The result of her frankness manifested itself immediately in Brat's feeling uncomfortable; if there was anything he disliked, it was to have some sweet young thing begin to drop potent little remarks which he could never be sure were not attempts at sarcasm or irony or ridicule, or some other undesirable form of wit.

Elizabeth danced well, which made not the least difference to Brat, but caused him to wonder when she exclaimed, in the early part of the evening's festivities, and after she had consumed only two small offerings of liquid refreshments, "Oh, dear, dear Brat! It's too dreadfully hot to dance—can't we go out somewhere and do something else for a while?"

To which Brat, wondering, replied, "Surely — anything, anywhere!" And he led her from the hall wherein the dancing was just beginning to assume the proportions of a wild orgy of abandon.

"Where do you want to go?" he asked, when they had attained the open air.

"Oh—anywhere," she replied, hanging upon his arm as if she were thrilled to tears. "Have you a car here?"

He had — or rather, he had the key to Pick's car, which was parked in front of a near-by dormitory. They went to it and got in.

"O-o-h — this is comfort!" crooned Elizabeth, sinking into the deep cushions of Pick's expensive coupe. "Got a cigarette, dear?"

Brat had no cigarettes, because he never smoked, but he was always eager to oblige, so their first destination was a drug store in the Square, where Brat purchased for her a box of highly perfumed cigarettes.

"Now take me anywhere," she sighed, as she lighted one and lay back against his arm, which was not around her.

"Check," he submitted, and proceeded to take her for a ride. Down past the scene of the Jubilee he drove, along the boulevard to a bridge which crossed to Commonwealth Avenue, out to Brighton and Newton, across to Watertown, thence to Belmont through the woods.

"My dear Brat! — what *are* you trying to do? Show me all of Massachusetts?" Elizabeth, as said before, liked Brat's handsome bigness, but she expected at least some indication that the feeling was mutual.

"Knew a fellow got arrested in this woods last week — just for parking along the road, too!" Brat smiled at her as he dropped this bit of information.

Elizabeth thought for a moment, then, inhaling deeply from a newly lit cigarette, ventured, "Well, I'm sure, Brat dear, that you will never need to worry about getting arrested."

"Hope not!" Brat smiled back at her. Elizabeth had

a sudden impulse to wrap herself around this big ape, who insisted upon being so excruciatingly nice, but distant.

They rode on, into Arlington, down Massachusetts Avenue into Harvard Square, and returned to the Jubilee, Brat smiling while Elizabeth simulated a few well-directed pouts.

The first persons whom they met upon their reëntering the quadrangle of Smith Halls greeted them effusively. Brock and Beauvais and their chorines, having suddenly realized that their supply of internal varnish was painfully low, were setting out for a new supply. Beauvais insisted upon introducing the ladies of the chorus to Brat and Elizabeth, and further insisted that the latter couple accompany them on their quest.

“Can’t do it, Beau!” Brat persistently refused. “We have the next dance with somebody, and Elizabeth wouldn’t like to cut it.”

For a moment Brat thought Elizabeth intended to accept Beauvais’ invitation, despite him, but she murmured her agreement with him, and they finally managed to get away from the inebriated quartet. Afterwards Elizabeth remarked, “I can’t understand how you fellows can stand that kind of girl!”

And Brat rejoined, “Tom Riley always says that one doesn’t go to the millinery store to get groceries.” Which remark, so totally at variance with Elizabeth’s impressions of Brat’s powers of observation and expression — even though the expression was second-hand — startled her into silent submission while they danced the next dance together.

Thenceforth during the evening they exchanged many dances, so many indeed that Elizabeth began to suspect that her escort was purposely promoting these exchanges, and the suspicion served only to arouse still higher her desire to captivate this man, who so exasperated her by his air of indifference. As the evening wore on, and as she danced with more and more of Brat’s seemingly end-



less supply of men, she came to the conclusion that her partner was the most sober of any partaking of the festivities. She noted several other harmless-looking individuals, who appeared too young to have been bitten by the liquor-bug, but of the really desirable men whom she met, Brat was by far the steadiest on his feet.

Pick had disappeared entirely — her last recollection of him being that he was in the company of Riley and that both were too happy to be considered sober. Finally, when she noted that Pick and her girl friend had not reappeared, she began to wonder, and at the first opportunity suggested some of her curiosity or anxiety to Brat.

“Lord knows where they are, Betty,” replied Brat, when she asked him where they might have gone.

“Maybe they’re over in your room!” she suggested.

Brat agreed that maybe they were, so a few minutes found them at his door, through which were coming no sounds whatever. They entered and found the place deserted.

As they stood there in the study looking out across the lantern-filled quadrangle, the voice of a girl, which Elizabeth recognized at once as her friend’s, carried to them clearly and disturbingly.

“One more drink and I’ll dance on the table!” the voice was saying. “One more drink and I’ll either dance or pass out!”

“Brat!” cried Elizabeth, as if she were shocked. “Where is she?”

Brat smiled. “Don’t worry—from the sound of her voice I should say there’s not much danger of her dancing on any table.”

He led her out and across the hall. The door was locked, and when he knocked, all was silent — so silent that Brat had to laugh as he said, “It’s Bratten! Let me in!” The voices broke out again and the door was opened.

The room was a study in disorder. Riley, with his



girl in his lap, was sitting in a big arm-chair beside the center table, on which resided several empty bottles and one that was partially filled. On the settee before the window was stretched the form of Elizabeth's friend; she looked very bleary eyed and unbecomingly flushed of face, and upon seeing Elizabeth, sprang screaming to her feet and ran into the adjoining bedroom. Elizabeth could only stare after her.

"Making too much noise, Tom!" declared Brat. "Where's Pick?"

"Ah-ha-ha-ha — Winnie Twickenham has taken the count!" Riley laughed uproariously at what he considered a very excellent joke at Pick's expense. "He's in the bedroom; don't bother him—he'll be all right later!" Riley continued to laugh.

"Later nothing!" Brat had a sudden impulse to do something, as if inaction would surely bring disaster to them all. "You'd all better come on out and get the air!"

He went into the bedroom, followed by Elizabeth. There they found Pick stretched unconscious upon the bed and, sitting close beside him, was his girl.

Elizabeth succeeded in rousing her friend and proceeded to lecture her severely upon forgetting herself in such a fashion. But the girl was beyond the influence of lectures. All she was able to offer in reply was something to the effect that she would not move from her Pick no matter what happened.

"He's dead, and it's all my fault!" she wailed. "He got drunk just because I did — and now I can't wake him up!"

"But why did you do this?" demanded Elizabeth impatiently.

"Just 'cause Pick did!" she answered, "And everybody else was drinking, so why shouldn't we?"

Brat tried to rouse Pick, but met with no success. Pick was entirely unconscious. After several attempts had failed, Brat said, "We'd best go and leave him here. You

girls come along with me, and if he doesn't come to pretty soon I'll take you home; but we can't stay in here!"

"Why not?" demanded the girl, "I refuse to leave my Winnie like this! If he can't go, I won't!"

"But, my dear young lady," Brat argued, "if a Yard Cop or one of the matrons should happen along by here, the whole crowd of us will get pitched out — and Pick would get kicked out of college as sure as you're living!"

But the young lady was adamant; she would not move. Brat began to lose his temper. He determined to carry her out, if need be, but when he tried that, she emitted such an ear-shattering scream that his determination was immediately quenched.

"Can't we get out the back way?" asked Elizabeth.

Brat thought for a moment. "Yes, we can go through the next suite and out through the window. Let's go and see if there's anyone in there."

They went out into the hall and tried the door into the rear suite. It opened easily, and they peered into the dark room. Apparently no one was there, so they returned to Pick's room to get him and his stubborn, all-too-loyal companion.

"Come on," said Brat to the girl. "If you insist upon going with Pick, come on!" And he picked up the prostrate figure in his arms and walked out, the girl following under Elizabeth's supervision. As they passed through the study, Riley decided to accompany the procession, and staggered into the rear suite in time to help Brat put Pick's inert body through the window to the ground below. The girls followed, and Riley was halfway out himself before he remembered that part of a quart still stood on the table in Pick's room. He went back for it.

Back in the room, he decided to have a drink before leaving. He had one, smacked his lips satisfiedly, put the bottle in his hip pocket and departed, closing the door behind him.

As he opened the door into the rear suite, he noticed that the light in the bedroom had been turned on, and in

the half-shadow of the study a vision of girlish loveliness suddenly confronted him. Hurriedly mumbling apologies, he climbed through the window and soon found his friends camped in the shadows at the corner of the building, waiting for Brat to bring Pick's car around for them.

The six crowded into the spacious coupé, and Brat drove for two hours before Pick and his companion were in such condition that she could be taken home and he could be talked to. Riley's girl was next deposited at her home, and then Elizabeth, who made Brat promise to let her hear from him without fail before too many days had passed. Riley, Pick and Brat were safe in their beds at five-thirty in the morning. Brock and Beauvais were not at home.

#### AT THE QUARTER-POST

"Caty-Q-Cripes! What a headache!" grumbled Riley as, late in the next afternoon, the day before his first Final Exam, he tried stubbornly to make sense out of a set of Psychology notes. He looked through the door and across the hall to the picture presented there; Pick, with a huge towel around his head, was diligently engaged at his desk, but his frequent changing of the towel, squirming in his seat, sorting and re-sorting the papers before him, all indicated that he was making very little progress in his studying. Riley could smile at this picture; he had seen to it that Winslow Twickenham Pickett III went under the table—almost disgustingly so, in the opinion of many of his friends.

That afternoon Pick had recalled the fact that one of his mother's best friends had served as a patroness of the previous night's Jubilee; and he recalled very distinctly that he had met her under very embarrassing circumstances — although he had not known at the time that he should feel embarrassed. Next day, however, he knew all too well that he should have been utterly ashamed of himself. Not only for that, but he had been hilari-



ously intoxicated throughout most of the evening, and he could not determine in his mind whether his reputation was thereby absolutely ruined or merely badly twisted. And oh!—such a headache he'd never before suffered in his whole life!

He looked across toward the smiling Irishman. "You son-of-a-gun, Tom Riley! I hope your children are dope peddlers or bootleggers!"

"Oh—oh—don't make me laugh, Winnie!" answered the other. "My head splits wide open every time I breathe!"

"I hope it breaks into a thousand pieces!" growled Pick. "'Twould serve you right!"

"Why — what's the matter with you?"

"Well — I'm off the liquor! Believe me —" Pick removed the towel from his head, the better to emphasize his declaration, "the next drink I take will be in a padded cell, when there's nobody at all around to watch me — or to help me drink!" This last was aimed directly at the Irishman, but he only laughed and held his head.

Sometime later Brock and Beauvais returned, looking rather the worse for their night spent away from their rooms.

"I'm off this drinkin' business!" announced Brock the moment he entered the door. "Don't anyone ever set a drink before me again. Anybody could buy me for two cents this minute!"

"Why — what's the matter, Scotty?" asked Riley.

"Oh, nothing; but that liquor must have been poison. I've been on the verge of death since about eleven o'clock last night, and I don't relish the feeling! I'm cured of that stuff, believe you me!"

Riley laughed. "That's one way of learning, Scotty! That's why they give us so much liberty here at Harvard — they figure that if a man has any sense at all he'll learn to avoid these mornings-after! But how were the chorines?"

Brock looked at Beauvais and the French Canadian



looked back at him before he ventured, "Well — they were good sports, but — well, they wanted us to start banks in their stockings, and personally I'm opposed to all that sort of thing!"

"Opposed!" laughed Riley. "But where have you been then?"

"You'd never guess!" stated the Beau, by this time divested of coat and hat and comfortably ensconced on the couch.

Riley tried several guesses, but finally gave up. "Where have you been?"

"In a Turkish bath since three o'clock this morning!" announced Brock. "And I was insulted three times while we were there!"

"Which is the price one pays," said Riley, smiling significantly at his one-legged friend, who returned the glance with a heavy pillow which almost rendered the Irishman speechless.

After dinner that evening the two rooms were scenes of frenzied studying for exams. Recollections of the Jubilee were banned, except in the mind of each one where the constantly thump-bumping pains continued to carry on much too predominantly for comfort. Regardless of the headaches and the sickly feelings, the studying went on throughout the night and to the wee small hours of the morning, and after much black coffee and several bad-tasting cigarettes, the examination was taken.

For the following three weeks the Finals were the chief concern of everyone. Tutoring schools were over-crowded. The dormitories were flooded with printed reviews and brief summaries of courses. The College Library received more attention than it had known for a year. Seniors, supposed to have been wearing their caps and gowns since the early part of May, seemed almost suddenly to multiply by hundreds; caps and gowns were to be seen everywhere around the Square, and every examination-room contained its quota of the robed figures.

Most Freshmen were eager to finish their work and be

free to go their ways for the vacation; Commencement and Class Week had no pleasures for them. Brat, Riley and their friends kept studiously at their books until their last exam was over, by which time the memories of the Jubilee had so subsided as to permit of Brock's suggesting a liquid celebration on the occasion of having finished the year.

"Count me out!" said Pick, without consideration. "That Jubilee taught me my lesson!"

"What are you howlin' about?" demanded Brock. "For the love of Alice of Old Vincennes—you got off lucky! You weren't the only one that was plastered that night—the whole place was reeking with poison hooch! And you didn't get in any trouble over it, did you?"

"No," laughed Riley. "Pick can still remember that headache, can't you, Pick? But say, have you heard the latest about that party?" Apparently no one had heard it, so Riley continued, "The kid in the office was telling me this afternoon that the patronesses complained about the goings-on down here—a couple of yard cops found women in several rooms; one cop walked in on an intimate little party up in the top of one of the Halls—and some kid's father raised hell with the office because his son damned near died from poisoning! They're raising Cain about the whole affair, and this boy tells me there won't be any next year; the Class of 1923 has apparently put the kibosh on all such festivities; fellows like Pick here, who can't hold their liquor and don't know how to behave with nice girls at nice parties—that's the kind that queers things for us good fellows!"

Even Pick smiled at this light castigation. Riley was forever casting aspersions upon Pick, and the odd part of the situation was that Pick enjoyed this little habit of Riley's immensely.

But as to the Jubilee, a chorus of questions and arguments followed the bit of news reported by the Irishman. In Riley's opinion the whole thing was a farce, and might just as well be discontinued. Pick and Brat seemed to

be sorry that their class had been the cause of its being in disfavor. Beauvais and Brock did not care particularly one way or the other: all parties were the same to them.

Said Riley: "Well—the fact is that where classes are so damned big, a nice congenial party is impossible; they can't run a party for seven hundred men and make it a roaring success from any point of view; it will either be terribly stupid, with a cop at every window, or it will be wild and woolly in spots. Naturally, our Jubilee was in spots, and those spots stood out for all to see—no wonder the patronesses complained! I felt like complaining myself at a lot of things I saw going on!"

"Yeh—me too!" chimed in Beauvais, looking at Pickett very hard. Beauvais recalled that Pickett had very cleverly ignored him the night of the Jubilee and had evaded introducing him to his fair companion, "just as if," as Beauvais told Brock, "my girl, the blonde chorine, were as drunk as his girl was!"

"Anyway — here we are at the end of the first lap!" said Riley, who had been informed of the slight which the Beau had suffered, and wanted to change the subject before unpleasantness arose. "Three years to go! And the first year is supposed to be the hardest; according to Hoyle we're supposed to have been working like holy hell here for the past nine months in order to initiate ourselves into the royal crimson clan, so that we can enjoy the coming three years as befits Harvard men; — guess we ought to have a drink on that, eh?"

But they had no drinks that day, Riley and Brock not even regretting the lack because their anxiety to get away from Cambridge subordinated whatever thoughts of liquor they may have had at various times during the day.

Brat left the following day for Ohio; Pick went to New York; and the night train to Montreal carried three tired but happy musketeers of pleasure in the persons of Riley, Bocker and Beauvais, the French Canadian having promised the other two a fortnight of thrills and excitements

such as they all hoped would make a good preparation to their return to Cambridge for the opening of Summer School early in July.







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*Sophomoric? It is an age of sophomoric!*

*It is the heyday of the Wild Ass—  
Of him who suffers from mental gout and spiritual  
hunger,  
Of him who thinks too much and feels too little!*

*Sophomoric are the earmark of the species!*

*Said Riley: "Womankind could once be divided into  
three general classifications: the lady, the drudge and  
the prostitute; but now to these must be added the Human  
Mule—a total racial loss! Man breeds mules by asses!"*

*Is there a difference between "being wise" and "having  
wisdom"?*



## CHAPTER III

### THE AGE OF OMNISCIENCE

ALTHOUGH the Freshman year in college determines to a great extent the course of the individual's college career, the fruits to be reaped in Junior and Senior years being directly consequent to the sowing of seeds in the first year, the Sophomore year is in many respects even more important than the first. To be a Sophomore means to be better than a Freshman; it means that the man has successfully weathered the academic storm for one whole year, and has of necessity embraced certain universal experiences which should have—whether or not they actually have—made of him a better, stronger young man, more qualified and more confident of his ability to sit in the company of intelligent men and women.

Confidence is the key-note descriptive of the Sophomore. To say that one's utterances are "sophomoric" means that said utterances are the product of an immature mind; and the inference is that if the individual thus speaking did not have an impossible over-supply of self-confidence and self-esteem, said utterances would never have been uttered at all. As the first year of college is primarily one of work and routine, so the second year is one of expansion—and the limits of one's expansion at that time are drawn only in one's imagination. Sophomores are expansive, and despite what Lord Byron so catchily wrote about the Tree of Knowledge not being the Tree of Life, in the average Sophomore there can be found a composite illustration of both trees coming to bear fruit at the same time. The Sophomore knows everything; his powers are unlimited, his tastes unchallengeable, his ambition unsurpassable, and his self-satisfied vision of life's commonplaces and phenomena

enviable in its unrivalled clarity. If there is in this world any such thing as almost complete serenity, the college Sophomore has it.

But it is a transient state of mind or condition of well-being, and the year moves so swiftly to an end that the individual hardly becomes used to this serenity before he is roughly shoved along, by the passage of time and the operation of college regulations, into that more restless state of being a Junior. College graduates in their recollections of undergraduate days invariably ease over their Sophomore year—the second year always seems least memorable after graduation, which is perfectly natural from the human standpoint: people who have arrived at the age of discreet self-respect are reluctant to confess that they ever were so arrogant as to have equated or elevated their ego to the level of Plato's omniscient and omnipotent self-moved Mover.

Yet the Sophomore age is an important age, be it ever so forgotten, for, once passed, the fruits of the twin trees of knowledge and life become more abundant and taste more delicious when blended. The man is much better off for having been a Sophomore.

Granting all the foregoing, while at the same time recognizing the great dangers of this age of omniscience—that there are some individuals who never outgrow their sophomoric—in the case of such an individual it can hardly be said that the man is better off for having been a Sophomore; 'twould no doubt have been better for himself and better for the unfortunate people with whom he comes in contact, had he fallen by the educational wayside somewhere before the attaining of his Sophomore year in college.

But then, as Riley frequently remarked, "There are some people who'd be a damned sight better off dead—and their friends would be immeasurably benefited!" So that is no argument. The Age of Sophomoric Expansion must remain a delightful and beneficial stage of growth.



## THE GATHERING OF THE GANG

Beauvais came to his rooms on the afternoon of the Saturday before the opening of college, and found Brock perspiringly engaged in the task of getting settled.

"Mr. Beauvais, I believe!" exclaimed Brock, welcoming his friend with open arms. "And how the hell might you be, young feller?"

"Keeripes, I'm glad to see you, Brock!" returned the other, continuing to shake hands vehemently while he talked. "I've been around here for a week, and am just about ready to commit suicide! I haven't been able to find anyone that I know — until today, and then you and Brat both blow in."

"Brat? Where is he? His stuff isn't here yet?" Brock glanced around the room, thinking that he might have failed to see evidences of Brat's presence.

"Oh — he's been around for football practise for a week or so, I guess, but he wasn't living here. I just happened to meet him up on the street — said he'd been staying up with another football man and would be over today or tomorrow. And here I've been all alone ——"

"And I suppose he didn't come over here because he figured there'd be no one here yet, eh?"

"Guess so," replied the French Canadian, as he removed his coat and set in to help his roommate straighten around his books and clothes and other belongings.

While they worked, Brock was wondering about this coming back to college. He had half-expected to find his friends entirely changed after the summer's vacation. It seemed somehow that they should be different — he felt different, himself, and was much surprised to find the Beau practically unchanged.

There is a vast difference between a Freshman and a Sophomore, and Brock's feeling this difference was not unusual. The young man grows enormously in the three months between the two stages of his educational growth. He feels larger, stronger, more capable, more confident,

much like an old-timer in respect to his college, and Brock, feeling so, was naturally surprised to find that everything appeared to be just the same as before, even unto the Beau.

The Beau, on the other hand, was not troubled by any such meditations upon meeting Brock, nor did he bother his head about his feelings when Brat and Riley made their reappearance. Brat seemed a little larger physically and a little older in his manners, and Riley appeared to be a little too quiet; but aside from these casual observations, the Beau was ready to proceed from the point at which they had parted three months before.

But Brock considered his roommates in a different light. He had been wondering about many things, during the several weeks just passed. He and Riley had attended the Summer School, done little else but work, go to the beaches every other day or so, see a few shows and talk to a few of the summer students who came from distant parts of the country. After that, Riley had gone to Cape Cod for his vacation and Brock had gone home to rest up. It was there that he had fallen into the habit of speculating disinterestedly upon the conditions of life around him, his friends, his studies, his physical handicap, and many other related and irrelevant matters. He felt that he had a different outlook on life; the very fact of his having but one leg gave him a view of the business which was denied these other whole human beings, and he could not refrain from his contemplation: he looked at life through his dark glasses, and wondered at people's actions and ideas.

"I'm just the same, Tom," he told Riley, soon after the business of registration and schedule-making had left them all to pursue their routine of work and play. "Just the same, except that I never feel so shaky as I did last year — things aren't worth getting excited about, as I look at them now."

"Well," began the Irishman, who was thinking that perhaps this feeling of "things not being worth worry"

was worse than his former attitude, "I don't know just how I feel right now. It seems good to be back here — what gets me is the way other people act; everyone seems to be so damned unnecessarily crazy and wild these days!"

"Yeh — that gets me too; everyone's shell-shocked, I think; nobody seems to know where they're going, but they're on their way!"

"I met Pick today in the Yard. I can't decide whether he's got the right dope on everything, or whether he's just a damned fool kid, full of prep-school ideas." Pick was not living with the others, it having been the express desire of his mother that he live with the scion of an old house whose members were very dear friends of the Picketts. No one of the four fellows who had lived with him in Smith Halls missed him so much as Riley did; the chronic antagonism between the two had afforded enjoyment to both, for each rather respected the other's ideas and abilities.

"And I don't know how to take Brat," Riley continued. "I never expected him to come in with us this year—I thought sure as anything that he'd go up with some of the 'big boys' to live."

"Brat's all right, Tom!" rejoined Brock, "I think he really preferred living with us." Which was, had he known, exactly the truth of the matter. Brock, Riley and Beauvais had found and leased the suite of rooms on Holyoke Street and, not expecting a favorable reply, asked Brat if he was coming with them. To the surprise of all, Brat said he wanted to do that, provided they could all live comfortably together there. Brat could not have explained the decision to himself, but the fact was that he really enjoyed living with these fellows, liked them all more than he had ever liked any other people in his life, and also, being a man of habits, the mere fact of having lived with them for one year made it seem perfectly natural for him to continue living with them. Pick had offered him a place in the rooms which he expected to



have, and several other of the more prominent classmates had asked him to join them, and actually showed surprise when he informed them that he guessed he'd stay with the same fellows in his Sophomore year. And it would never occur to him to regret his decision.

"Wonder when we're going to meet his little lady from Ohio!" Riley was merely thinking aloud when he said this. Ellen had come to a college just outside of Boston, and Brat had been spending with her whatever time he had free. Riley had an idea that Brat had already taken Pick to meet her, and it was an entirely human impulse which prompted him to ask the question which he did of Brock.

Brock, however, refused to even be bothered by wondering. The mention of woman had recalled to his mind that he had some little troubles of his own to worry about. Unbeknown to his friends, he had met through a former soldier pal a young woman some two or three years his elder, who had left more than a passing imprint upon Brock's impressionable mind. Although he did not know anything definite about her character, he suspected that she was not any heroine of morality; that is, she was not exactly a loose lady of pleasure, but he had an idea that she had been none too discriminate in her pleasures in the course of her young life. This feature of the case was of course all very well in so far as Brock's morals were concerned, but there was another side to it which was proving too frequently disturbing for his peace of mind.

The truth was that Brock liked this Dora entirely too well, and he knew down in his heart that he shouldn't. He could not respect her. She was pretty, pleasant in disposition and rather clever at many things; but Brock was disconcertingly convinced that she had been living her life after the fashion of Cæsar's wife, who was all things to all men. He was almost certain that she had been rather promiscuous in the bestowal of her affections, and the realization of this side of the case continued to



make Brock feel that he should not think so much of her as he did.

At the time of the conversation between himself and Riley, he had known her two months, and at his last meeting with her she had informed him of her intention to move to Cambridge, in order that she might be nearer and more convenient to him. Therefore was Brock disturbed by Riley's reference to woman in the person of Brat's Ellen.

Brock and Riley were chronic observers, being in that respect the opposite of Brat and Beauvais, but between themselves there was a difference also: Brock continued to see the life around him through the spectacles whose glass had been made black by his physical disability, while Riley's interest in other things and other people, their motives and their aims, was the result of a natural curiosity which thrived in the atmosphere and environment of his undergraduate position. And whereas Brat's serene unconcern arose from the nature of his habits — his principle being always to do what had to be done and not worry about unnecessary things — the Beau's attitude was one of complete indifference; all he asked was the opportunity for "Life, Liberty and Pursuit of Happiness," and he was confident that happiness of all kinds would be his. Other people's affairs mattered not the least to either the Beau or Brat, but they were of tremendous importance to their two roommates.

The college year moved on, without any great events or disturbing misfortunes in the lives of the four roommates. Brock and Riley continued in their station apart, being more and more upon the observation platform, watching the passing show as it came before them. They watched Brat's development and progress.

"I can actually see the son-of-a-gun growing!" was Brock's comment upon one occasion, after Riley had remarked upon the measure of success which had been Brat's in football — he having, as a Sophomore, succeeded in making the first squad by sheer hard work and

doglike perseverance. They watched Pickett's development, too, and Riley was still unable to decide whether Pickett had the right idea about college life or not.

"He never studies — never does a lick of work until the night before a quiz or exam; and then he goes to The Wid's or some other tutor and runs through the whole thing."

"And he isn't clever!" exclaimed Brock, without intending a disparagement of his former roommate. "He merely uses his head in everything — works like the devil at all these outside activities, and manages to get by his courses on nerve and tutoring help. But, though he isn't clever, you have to hand it to him for getting along; he'll be a big man some day."

"Well, I wonder," thought Riley. "His case isn't a very good commentary on life's arrangement, if he gets ahead by the way he works; he doesn't do anything that helps anyone else or even himself; he's always rushing around, busy as hell about something that really doesn't amount to two whoops in hades ——"

"Yet he's getting along," finished Brock. "And Brat's getting along too; he's making the best clubs, and he knows every son-of-a-gun in the college who amounts to a damn — yet he does not chase around after them. He doesn't cultivate their friendship—he just 'knows' them, that's all; but they know him, and probably because they haven't any black marks against him either socially or otherwise, and because he's doing the things that have always been traditionally the 'things to do,' he's remembered and boosted along with the rest of the 'uppers' who are supposed to be the leaders of the college world."

"Well, I'm glad he's making the grade!" commented his companion very sincerely.

Brat made the grade in many ways, even in his affairs of the heart. Riley at first wondered just what effect Ellen's presence in Boston would have upon Brat's connections among the many friends to whom Pick had introduced him, but Brat very shortly demonstrated his ability

to pilot his amative craft safely past all rocks and reefs, although he did have several moments of uncertainty. Ellen was still the future wife in his mind, and he conducted himself accordingly, for the most part, it being very difficult, he found, to change the habits of straying which had been fostered by his one year under Pick's guidance. He had been exceedingly popular with the girls whom he had met, and the last of the long line, Elizabeth, had been quite upset and her heart quite conquered by Brat's indifferently nice attitude toward her. So upset, indeed, that before the summer had passed, her letters to Brat in Dartonville were beginning to have some effect upon that worthy's attitude toward her.

When he returned to Cambridge for the pre-season football training, his first free evening had gone to Elizabeth, and she tried to make the most of it, for, had she admitted it, she was actually head over heels in love with this master of indifference, and she wanted more than anything else to bring him low before her. But Elizabeth through the mail and Elizabeth in person were two different things to Brat; her letter-writing had been developed to a fine art, so fine that Brat had really been touched by some of her thrusts, and really wanted to see her when he came back to Cambridge. But, after a summer of Ellen in the environment of his young lifetime of habits, he was too well armored for Elizabeth to make any great progress against his heart, when he did finally see her again in person.

That first meeting was not successful, from her point of view, but the very fact of its not being very successful served merely to stimulate her to greater endeavors in Brat's direction, with the result that during the weeks following she contrived by fair means and foul to see him more frequently than should have been the case, had Brat been in complete control of his affairs.

Finally, when Ellen arrived in Boston and required Brat's attention, he absolutely avoided Elizabeth, not really because he did not want to see her — he was getting



the habit of that by now — but because the connection between himself and Ellen subordinated all other considerations in such directions.

About all of which, Brat began to wonder — showing that he really was beginning to develop at last. He recalled, not long after his return to Cambridge, that all girls seemed to be full of this “love” business — they all talked of it sooner or later, either flippantly or seriously, and it seemed to matter much more to them than he had ever before suspected. He began to wonder just what it was all about. He wondered if he really loved Ellen, in the way that he should — she was no doubt a wonderful girl, sweet, pretty, modest, unassuming, altogether lovable, as he imagined the girl one loves should be lovable. But then — he wondered whether he really felt that she was the all-important female being whom God had placed on this earth for him — “Damn foolishness!” he invariably told himself whenever his thoughts wandered thus far.

If Riley and Brock had been omniscient observers they would have noticed the causes of the change in Brat — a change which, though slight, was nevertheless of great importance, for it indicated that the Blunderbrat was at least growing up by a few degrees. But Brock and Riley only noticed that Brat was making pretty much of a college success of himself, even by the middle of his Sophomore year, and Riley’s comment upon learning that Brat had finally broken off all relations with the girl from Malden — this just before the Mid-Years — was, “Well, it’s about time he quit wasting his time on her! She never made any dent in his marble heart anyway, and she should have known it! I guess Brat isn’t polygamous by nature — he’s a one-woman man, and Ellen’s the one woman, it appears!”

Perhaps Riley would have been more curious regarding Brat’s affairs had not Brock’s troubles suddenly pyramided before him, demanding all his attention.



## RELATIVITY

Since his coming to Harvard some fifteen months before, Brock had been growing steadily stronger, and more able to maintain a stabilized perspective of his troubles and their relation to the other things of life.

This improvement stopped when he met Dora, and gradually Brock began to fall into his old attitudes. His relations with Dora were of the usual kind between a man and such a woman and served to weaken the vitality and self-control which he had succeeded in developing during his one year at Harvard. She was like a weight, pulling him back as he struggled to climb out of the slough of despond in which the War had left him. As the weeks passed, and she came to demand more of him and to depend more and more upon him, he found himself slipping farther and farther away from those joys and satisfactions which he had hoped might some day be his.

"Funny how much alike Dora and Ellen seem," he said to Riley one day, some time after the Mid-Years had been successfully passed by them all. He had been startled upon the occasion of his first meeting with Ellen by the marked similarity between Brat's girl from home and his loose lady of love.

"Yes, they do look somewhat alike," agreed his friend, "but they're of entirely different breeds, Scotty." Riley was entirely frank with Brock in respect to this woman who, Riley suspected but was not absolutely certain, was responsible for the retrogression which was lately so noticeable in Brock.

"Entirely different breeds!" said Brock over and over again to himself, in the days that followed. Yes, they were entirely different somehow. Brat's Ellen was so gentle-mannered, so human, and yet not prudish or stiff in her niceness, while Dora — well, she was common, too common! Why, he asked himself, had he ever let himself into such a thing? Why couldn't he have had an Ellen instead of what he did have?

The more he thought of this, the more he determined that it all was wrong and could not go on. He did not want this woman hanging upon him the rest of his life!

He envied Brat his calm serenity, and he envied him his Ellen! Before long he began to envy every one, even Riley — he resented the operations of fortune which gave them everything and him nothing — he envied them their sound bodies, by thinking of his own mutilation; he decided that they had been friendly to him out of pity for his being thus different and handicapped; they looked down upon him; they thought him foolish, too.

Once started, there was no stopping the train of his morbid self-attacking investigation. His imagination ran on and on to all the most horrible possibilities, and finally, after several drinks, he one day told Riley very bluntly that he “felt like telling the whole shebang to go to hell!” He was at that moment at the very brink of utter demoralization, but Riley had no way of knowing this, so the Irishman took the easiest way by agreeing with him absolutely, saying, “You and me both, Brock — I’d just as leave throw up the whole business!”

Brock’s reaction to this, however, was not what Riley had expected. He flew into a rage, and hurled the most filthy invectives at his chum; he cursed him as a false friend; they were all laughing at him behind his back, while pretending to like him so well; why should they like him? — he didn’t blame them — he didn’t care whether they wanted him or not; they could all go to hell! —

He ran on and on, cursing in the vilest terms this Irishman, who was a hypocrite and a cheat, a fraud and a weak-kneed sister; and when he tired of that attack, he was forced to go through the whole argument again by the sudden entrance of Brat and Beauvais, whom he cursed in even worse terms than he had employed against Riley.

No one answered him; Riley, after several futile attempts at calming him, tried to go about his work,

disregarding this human volcano. Brat and the Beau were speechless — they could not have talked had they wanted to, and a sign from Riley warned them to keep quiet.

Brock was wild-eyed by this time and, with a final curse upon them all, ending with his previous command that they “all go to hell and stay there!” he lurched out of the room and slammed the door behind him, still muttering and grumbling to himself as he stumbled down the steps outside.

“What’s the matter?” asked the Beau excitedly after the grumblings had died away. “Is he drunk?”

“I don’t know what’s eating him!” stated Riley, and then he proceeded to tell exactly what had happened.

“He’s gone out of his head — that’s certain!” declared the French Canadian. “Hadn’t we better try to get him back here?”

“No — let him go!” Riley spoke with authority on matters concerning Brock’s streaks. “Let him alone — he’ll come to and come back; I guess he’s half plastered.”

So they went about their own business, and tried to forget Brock and his imaginary troubles.

On the street Brock was pegging his way toward the Square, still grumbling to himself and almost crying in his rage. The world was all wrong! He had stood this as long as he could — it was all a joke, and why should he worry about it? — every one was a damned fool! Why should he care about what other people can or cannot do? — Why? — Why? — Just because he couldn’t do the same things — he was a cripple, half a man — no girl would marry him — every one pitied him — every one always thought of his wooden leg every time they thought of him — it’d be the same all through life — all through —

Brock’s mind was like a seething volcano. It had been churning these things, these injustices, these inequalities, over and over ever since the moment when he came out



of ether after his operation. He had succeeded in submerging the rumblings for so long that now, once started, there was no capping them.

His sufferings had been long drawn out. While the work and associations of college life did serve to subordinate his sensitive feelings somewhat, at the same time this very subordination and repression aggravated them into greater violence. He hated college and the whole scheme of living which college boys represented. He loathed the work in his courses because none of it seemed to lead toward any end — and he wanted results! He had given everything that he had, enlisted when he was just a kid, had come back half shattered in mind and in body, and he wanted something definite, something to replace what he had lost. He wanted to get somewhere — he knew not where. He wanted something — he knew not what, nor where to seek it; but he knew he wanted something, and if that something were given him he would be supremely satisfied. But college was not giving it to him, nor was it leading him toward finding it. Every one just wandered along — no one knew what it was all about or whither they were going.

Properly motivated, Brock's mind was keen enough to master the most intricate of mathematical problems and philosophical propositions, but without adequate reason for mastering any particular problem or proposition, his attention could not be concentrated toward that end. Toward college life in general he had maintained an attitude of disinterested observation; he felt that he was in this life but not of it, for he could not enter into the various activities over which the younger boys, fresh from preparatory schools, waxed enthusiastic; he was detached from all these enthusiasms by virtue of the fact that he was unable to bring his mind back to the point of youthful enthusiasm for things—the point at which he had left when he entered the service of his country. He had tried to give the game a fair chance, and he felt that he was only failing as the days went by.



He had been constantly questioning himself, morbidly analyzing his person and place in life and abnormally restless, wanting something which he felt that he could never get from college. When it was necessary to study to pass an examination or write a thesis, he studied sufficiently to meet the requirements, but at all times he had this feeling of uselessness, this constant temptation to laugh aloud at the whole scheme of things which people appeared to hold so important, which men seemed to live by. It all grew on him as a huge, colossal joke—people kidding themselves into valuing things which really had no intrinsic value, exalting people who had no virtues worthy of exaltation, and, of course, in the back of his mind there was ever present the conviction that he was wasting his time in college; he was getting nowhere; his work was leading to no end; he had nothing to look forward to, except wandering through life on one leg of flesh and one of wood and paper and leather straps. He had often told Riley, "There never seems to be anything ahead except the rest of my life, which doesn't sound very good to me!"

It was in the spirit of such feelings that he had let himself into the relationship with Dora, who, pretty and nice to all outward appearances, was, underneath, of the commonest clay. Indeed, the better Brock knew her, the stronger was his conviction that she was blacker and more unseemly than clay could be. However, she had succeeded in fastening herself upon him like a horrible drug, and she continued to make the most of the opportunity to get him entirely under her sway; she really subjugated Brock's mind by the sheer force of her physical self, the drug which she administered to him. Her own attitude Brock never would let himself understand—she had never seemed to notice the fact that he was different, only half a man; she acted as if that were a mere nothing at all, of no importance whatever to her. And therein probably lay the real germ of the odious situation—Brock saw in Dora the woman who liked him

for himself, regardless of his being, as he said, "only half a man."

What Brock did not know, however, Dora and her mother, who was her confidante, readily admitted to themselves. Brock came of excellent family, would go through Harvard, be a success in some line of work, have a good income—he would be altogether a desirable husband, and Dora had seen too many men to think that good husbands fall out of the heavens whenever one asks for a supply.

But what had really set Brock off was the constantly recurring thought of Brat's Ellen being so like his Dora—and still so unlike her. The similarity had struck him at a very bad time; he was just beginning to tire of Dora, and wanted to break away from her somehow. The vision of Ellen, recurring to him in that state of mind, made even lower the depths of self-abasement to which Brock was gradually descending. Riley's companionship had not helped him in this, for Riley had from the beginning tried to get him to break away from Dora, and Brock could not talk to him about the matter now, five or six months afterwards. Yet he needed some one to pour out his worries to, for he was mentally adrift, without a tangible prospect, object or project in his vision.

He had turned to the first alternative which presented itself to him. He determined to be rid of Dora and her fawning mother for once and for all—he would break away completely. He set about doing this. He tried to evade them. He would not talk to them when they called on the telephone. He would not answer their letters. He ignored their existence entirely.

As a result there was a blank in his life—for Dora had been occupying quite a place there. He sought solace in hard study and regular hours, hoping to find something of interest there. But he could not be satisfied with aimless studying and schoolboy plugging. For want of something to fill up his mind and time he naturally

turned to the usual devices of pleasure, drank more rotten bootleg whiskey than was good for him, chased more women than he could possibly entertain satisfactorily. And all the time he lost more and more of his self-respect, sank further and further into the mire of utter hopelessness; he went the round of idle pleasures for no reason at all, entertained himself by making the dodging of Dora into a game, in which he was forever the hare and she the persistent hound. The worse he became, the more he laughed; it was all so utterly foolish! He didn't like whiskey and gin! He didn't care especially about the pleasures contingent upon female companionship! Indeed, he didn't care a damn about anything! But he kept on dodging Dora and establishing a questionably enviable reputation in Harvard Square as the wildest, drunkenest student that had ever trod across the Avenue.

A few weeks of this sort of life went a long way, and at the time of his flying into the rage at his room-mates, he had just come to the depths once more, tired and disgusted with the wild life he had been leading, and not certain but what he'd better go down to see Dora again. His mind, still churning all the injustices which had been accumulating without opportunity for disposal, exploded to the infinitesimal flame of Riley's half-hearted agreement about telling "the world to go to hell!" And the cause of it all lay in his morbid effort to keep his troubles to himself; if he had discussed more frankly his worries and his feelings, with Riley or with his advisers, his mind would have traveled back to a normal level. As it was, it was a whirlpool of hot, volcanic débris.

The physical body beneath this headful of grievances, grudges and resentments for self-made injustices—Brock's body carried on, while his mind whirled incongruously, grotesquely, aimlessly, from persons to persons and things to things, and he pursued his grumbling, muttering, gibbering way down the Avenue away from Harvard Square.



He vaguely decided to call upon Dora, and avail himself of her ever open arms for comfort and solace.

But neither Dora nor her mother would answer his knocks upon the door of their apartment, and, feeling vaguely that every one and everything were conspiring against him, he fell to kicking the door, crashing it with his fists and calling frantically to Dora to let him in. But the door remained closed and his knocking unanswered, and he grew so exasperated by his failure that he stepped back, the better to consider how best he might break in.

His noisy efforts, fortunately, had attracted the attention of people in neighboring apartments, and presently a young woman, after watching him for a few moments, ventured to tell him that the ladies who had been living there had moved away a few days before.

"Where did they move to?" demanded Brock, his whole frame quivering so that the informant for a moment wished she had not spoken to him at all.

"Why—I don't know for sure——," she said hurriedly, "but I heard them talking about Norway Street."

Brock did not thank her, but turned on his heel and stumbled down the stairs and out of the building, and without looking to left or right he turned again down the Avenue and set out, still muttering and with eyes bulging, toward Boston.

Through Central Square he went, on past that architectural beauty which is Tech, on across the Harvard Bridge, across Commonwealth Avenue, past Massachusetts Station, and turned into Norway Street, with not the least idea in his head as to what number he should seek.

Just around the corner he stopped and appeared to consider a weighty problem; finally, cursing and snapping his fingers impatiently, he turned into the first doorway and proceeded to study the names on the mail boxes. Finding no clue there, he went on to the next entrance and repeated the process. Thence to the third, and the fourth, and on down the length of the street and



back again on the other side—and without success. Either Dora did not live in any of these houses, or she was living with some one else, or her card was not in her mail box. Wherever she was, Brock did not know where to look for her.

Here was a definite problem; his mind came down to earth to master it, and by a very short process of thinking he recalled the name of a mutual friend who would, no doubt, know exactly where Dora was. With a cry of delight he lurched into the nearest drug store and sought the telephone booth. After much arguing with operators and supervisors and informations, he succeeded in getting his number, only to learn that his party was out and would not be back until late in the afternoon.

Brock left the booth with a string of curses which brought every soda and drug clerk in the place to attention. They watched his progress through the store and out to the street with gazes of mingled curiosity and contempt. But Brock minded them not at all.

He turned again down the Avenue and pegged on until he stood in the shadow of Symphony Hall, where once more he stopped to consider. He decided to walk down town—he felt like walking; he could walk till hell froze over—he could walk till that damned wooden leg fell off; he was just as good a man as the next one.

So he walked, struggling on in a half-daze through Copley Square, along Boylston Street's shop fronts, past the corner of Boston Common, to the corner of Park Square, where once more he stopped, this time from physical fatigue, for he was almost exhausted.

He looked across the street and his glance fell upon a sturdy bench beside one of the walks which go like plain ribbons across the Common's green. He decided to go there and rest for a moment, then try Dora's friend again.

As he stood on the edge of the sidewalk, waiting for the traffic to pass, he heard the tapping sound of a walking stick behind him and felt suddenly a light blow on the side of his leg. Startled and ready to do battle,

he whirled about, with a curse upon his lips which turned to an inaudible gurgle, for behind him, one hand outstretched with pointing, feeling, guiding fingers, and the other hand holding loosely the top of a cheap cane, Brock saw a spectre, with staring, colorless eyes in a thin, bony face.

"Blind!" concluded Brock instantly, and then, as he perceived the ragged hat which set upon the other's head, he muttered, "You poor devil! You're worse off than I am!"

There came a pause in the traffic at this moment and Brock turned, anxious to be across the street, but his turning was interrupted by a light, pleasant, "Please," which floated from the mouth of the spectre behind him. Abruptly Brock turned again, almost falling in the street in so doing, and, laying his hand upon the blind man's sleeve, said, "Come on, old timer!" and led him safely across.

"Is there a bench near?" asked the man, as they reached the opposite curb.

"Sure—I'll find you one!" Brock wondered at the pleasantness of the other's voice, the gentleness of his manner. He led him over to the bench which he had previously seen and the man sat wearily down, saying, "Very good of you, my friend—thank you!" And he smiled.

"Guess I'll sit down for a while with you," said Brock, whose eyes had not left the other's face for more than a glance since they had arrived on the Common side of the street. A finer, more striking face, Brock thought, he had never seen except in pictures; the features which had at first seemed ghostlike or as those of a spectre, hideous and repulsive, now seemed to glow with the warmth of life, and the smiles which punctuated the other's expressions were so inviting, so openly genuine, that Brock was completely taken in, entranced by this human vision who appeared so gentle and serene despite his monstrous handicap of blindness.

So Brock sat and watched his companion, now and then asking questions, then again answering some, talking of the weather, of the birds, of automobiles, of buildings, of different kinds of streets, different kinds of people—and Brock was conscious of a growing relief. This man, who was going through life without being able to see, talked feelingly of the green of the grass, the chill of the day, which reminded him of the whiteness of the snow which lay in a thin covering over the ground about them, the blue of the sky—he talked of these and many other visible things which he could not actually see through his eyes but could enjoy in his imagination. And he seemed to mind his handicap not at all—life was life and the world was the world to him just as if he could see as well as he could feel and hear.

Brock's headful of churning, milling thoughts had suddenly come to order out of its chaos. He compared the other's plight with his own, and felt utterly ashamed of himself for ever having considered himself unfortunate; how much worse off this blind man was than he! And yet this man could be serene and happy in spite of his troubles. This and many similar thoughts ran through Brock's mind, and he became again sane, the health of his mind rejuvenated by meeting this man who was much worse off than himself.

He was silent for a long time, silent until the blind man suddenly began to pull his coat about him and knock his shoes with his cane. "Well, must be up and about my business, friend!" he said, smiling that terribly gentle smile again. "Sitting here is very pleasant, but we all have babies, and all babies must have shoes, and we can't buy shoes by sitting on the Common admiring the clouds and worrying about our troubles, can we?" Again that smile.

"What do you do for a living?" Brock asked the question impulsively, sorry at once for having asked it.

"Me?" laughed the other. "I play the piano in an orchestra; you should hear me!——" and he gave Brock



the name and address of the eating-house where he played, adding, "Would like to see you again, so do come in! And again, many thanks, friend, for the helping hand." He was by this time on his feet and started up the path.

"Can't I help you?" asked Brock, after him.

The other turned and with a laugh asked, "Do you mean, can you help me play the piano or help me here?" tapping the walk with his cane. "I'm afraid that perhaps you can play the piano better than I—so I might lose my job if I took you there—and about here, why I know this Common as you know the inside of your mouth. But thanks, friend—don't mind my jokes! Good-by!" And he strode away, after a cheery little laugh, whistling happily as he tap-tapped his way along the path.

Brock looked after him and smiled, and the longer he sat there looking after the departing figure the broader the smile grew; he could not keep from smiling to save himself—he wanted to cry aloud his joy! For he was not smiling at anything in particular, but at everything in general—at himself, primarily, because he was such a damned fool, so absurdly self-conscious and conceited about his misfortunes. "Why dammit all, any one'd think by the way I act I had a monopoly on all the suffering in this world!"

Over the rise of ground across which his recent companion had gone, Brock could still see the top of the jauntily set, battered old hat, and, as it gradually dropped from his view he swore at himself happily, and said, "Hell! if that man can be blind, and still be so damned happy and congenial, I can be as much—I'm a son-of-a-gun if he's got anything on me!" And this he said with much feeling, for he was genuinely and wholeheartedly relieved; the world was not wrong at all, and he purposed to see that his little world was especially beautiful and well arranged from that moment.

His thoughts, now logical and healthy, ran on, until the chill of late afternoon prompted him to go on his way. Then he recalled his intention of calling Dora's



friend, and for a moment he considered what this might mean to him — but only for a moment; then he came to the conclusion that as far as he knew, Dora had suffered on account of the way he had treated her, and she had really always treated him with what seemed to be wholly sincere regard. “I’ll make that right, at least,” he told himself, as he started toward a pharmacy across the street.

He called and finally got the information he desired, so set out for Dora’s new address without delay. En route, he began to collect his thoughts, recalling the incidents of his day of madness, and he was thoroughly ashamed, so ashamed of himself that he was certain in his mind that he could never again look his roommates in the face; he had burned that bridge behind him, and the realization of this fact weighed so heavily upon his heart that long before he reached Dora’s he was ready to break down and cry — “cry like a baby, dammit!” as he told himself.

But he went on to Dora’s — and, once with her, was strengthened in his determination to stay away from his friends in Cambridge.

Back at the rooms, as day after day passed and Brock’s absence continued, his roommates wondered and later worried about him. Their worries took several avenues. “It’s hard telling where the devil he went to,” said Riley, for perhaps the twentieth time since Brock’s day of madness. “He may have gone home, drunk and crazy—he may have gone to Dora — may even have married the woman by this time; he may have had an accident, got run over by a street car or something — he may be down in some South End dive — God only knows what’s happened to him!”

“Well, he hasn’t been around here—we know that,” was Brat’s comment.

“No, and it seems darned funny, because he must be sober by this time, he’s been gone over a week now!” Riley was becoming more and more disturbed.

Finally, when two weeks had passed and Brock still failed to appear, Riley decided to look for him. He tried Brock's home first and, having visited his friend's people at various times during the first and second years, had to disguise his voice and give a fictitious name when he asked if they could tell him where Brock might be located.

"Why, we haven't heard from Scott for over two weeks! He is in Cambridge, I think—probably very busy," his mother informed the Irishman, ending by giving him their address and telephone number. Riley thanked her, and decided at once that all was not well with his friend or he would have at least called his folks on the telephone.

He knew Dora's old address, so he went there at once, it being about a ten-minute walk from Harvard Square. There he finally learned from the neighbor woman who had suggested Norway Street to Brock, that Dora and her mother had returned a few days before to get some articles which they had left in their apartment. "And I'm sure," said the woman, "that they are living somewhere on Norway Street, but at what number I haven't the least idea."

Riley thanked her and went on to Norway Street, where he went through the same procedure that Brock had followed two weeks before. He walked the full length of the street and back, examining all the names on the mail boxes and bell-buttons, but at the end he had not the slightest clue to Dora's new abode. He walked across Massachusetts Avenue and stood rather dumbly on the corner of the street, watching the passing throngs. It was late in the afternoon, and the traffic was growing heavier and heavier along the Avenue, so heavy that finally Riley decided to re-cross in order to gain a more commanding view of Norway Street. He had an idea that perhaps Brock or Dora or her mother might appear and thus lead him to their new apartment. One of Boston's largest movie palaces near by was beginning to disgorge

its afternoon audience, and the Irishman, with one eye trained on the houses along Norway Street, watched with the other the faces that came out of the theater.

The crowd was dwindling to a line of stragglers, and Riley was on the point of giving up any hope of help from that quarter, when suddenly he saw before him the object of his search, and beside him, clinging to his arm, walked Dora. Impulsively Riley stepped forward, anxious to greet his roommate, but before he spoke another impulse stopped him and he waited for them to pass, thinking that perhaps Brock would halt when he saw him.

But Brock—Riley was not certain that Brock saw him, but he noticed that he quickly averted his gaze—walked by him without so much as a nod of recognition. Riley stood staring after them, considered a moment and followed closely behind them.

He caught up with them as they entered an apartment house some little distance down Norway Street—a house which, Riley recalled, he had inspected very closely without finding any indications of their living there.

“Scotty!” greeted the Irishman, slapping him on the back and murmuring a “Good afternoon!” to Dora.

Brock hesitated a moment, as if he did not intend to answer his greeting. Dora said a perfunctory word or two, and finally Brock murmured, “How are you, Tom? What can we do for you?” His tone implied that he did not relish this meeting at all.

“Why—I just wanted to see you, Scotty—would like to talk to you——”

Brock looked to Dora for an answer and she finally suggested, “Let’s all go upstairs—you may as well be comfortable while you’re talking.”

So they went upstairs and into her apartment, where they fell into a conversation about inconsequentials and unnecessaries, characterised chiefly by many strained silences and ultra-polite questions and answers. Dora’s presence served as a wet blanket upon whatever enthusiasm Riley and Brock might otherwise have felt. Riley



said to himself that he wished she would go about doing something, so that they might be alone, but Dora showed no inclination to do anything other than take part in their conversation. So they talked about things that did not matter, avoiding sedulously any reference to the subject which was uppermost in the minds of both the men, and which Dora knew to have been the reason for Riley's call.

Finally Riley decided to talk about it, regardless of Dora's persistent presence, so he said, "The college office will be sending out notices for you, Scotty, if you don't attend some of your classes! You haven't been to a class for a couple of weeks, have you?"

As a matter of fact, Brock had not been near a class, and had been trying in vain to readjust his life with the idea of not going back to college at all, much to Dora's distress and avowed opposition.

"He absolutely refuses to go!" she exclaimed, as if she had spent many impatient moments on this account. "He makes me tired—he might as well go back and finish his work, no matter what he intends to do; but no, he wants to stay as far away from the college as he can get!"

Brock started to give his version of the case but stopped without saying anything definite. The truth was that the idea had developed in his mind that he had made an awful fool of himself in and around the Square and the college, and in consequence of this he thought the easiest way for him would be the way which did not lead back to his friends and his classes. Beside, he knew how every one looked upon Dora, and the fact that he had returned to her—with excellent motives, at first—would make him feel even more ashamed in the company of his friends at the Square.

"Oh, what's the idea, Scotty?" asked Riley, as if the other's attitude was utterly foolish. "You can never get drunk without talking about quitting college! And you know darned well you really want to stick and fight it out—so come on back and forget about that stuff!"



"I haven't had a drink for three days!" announced Brock, belligerently, proudly. "Anyway, I can't come back now without a lot of trouble; how the dickens could I explain my absence from classes? The dean would be on my neck in a minute; and I'll bet he knows already I've been on an awful spree, so whatever I might say would just make me out a liar."

Riley guessed that Brock really wanted to return, that he was arguing merely to be consistent, and he said, "Forget it—you come on with me and I'll get a letter from a doctor saying that you've been sick for the past two weeks under his care. The dean will never bother to ask anything about it—the college doctor'll fix it all up *tout de suite!* Now, what d'you say?"

Brock, however, continued to argue, bringing up all sorts of irrelevant little obstacles, which the Irishman patiently explained away so thoroughly that at last Brock agreed that he might come back, at which Riley looked at Dora, expecting a smile of happiness, but saw instead an expression of worry—probably, thought the Irishman, because she thought this meant losing her Scotty again.

"Fine!" he declared, looking back to Brock. "When will you be up?"

"Oh, I'll come over tomorrow morning and fix it up," said Brock.

Riley thought that the sooner he came the better off he would be, but Brock would not consent to go back with him.

"I'll be over tomorrow!" was all he would say, explaining that he would have to call up a business house in town with which he had been trying to get a job, so finally Riley gave up his argument, and after a few more generalities, departed.

The next morning the Irishman cut two classes waiting for Brock to appear, but at twelve o'clock he declared with some heat that he guessed Brock had been joking, and would probably not come back at all. Having said this to Brat and the Beau, he departed to attend his

twelve o'clock class, feeling much put out by Brock's non-appearance.

Just before the one o'clock class bell sounded, the door of their room flew open and disclosed to the view of Brat and the Beau their prodigal roommate, who continued to stand speechless and leaning upon his heavy cane while he stared dazedly into the room.

For several moments no one spoke and Brock made no move to enter. The Brat said jokingly, "Cripes sake, Scotty, come in and close that door before we all catch pneumonia!" The Beau laughed, saying, "Scotty, you old son-of-a-gun!" and Brock swayed unsteadily into the room and sat down in the nearest chair.

"Whew-pee!" he sighed, removing his hat and throwing it with his cane in the general direction of the waste basket. "Whew-pee! Hadn't had a drink for three days until I met a fren' from the army—fellow's in the army same time I was but never saw'm till today! Never saw him 'fore 'n ma life—had to come all way back here t' meet that man—and he's bootlegger! 'N here I am, ready to be stujent again!" He laughed inanely, and his roommates laughed with him, for they were almost speechlessly overjoyed to have him back with them again.

When Riley returned and discovered Brock his unmingled joy at seeing him there in their rooms again was cut short by the maudlin condition in which he had returned. He fell upon him then, and cursed him out as of old in no uncertain terms, and when he had finished, Brock merely smiled sheepishly at him—he really enjoyed hearing the Irishman burst into these fiery fits, even if he himself was the object of the tirade.

"You're absolutely the damnedest man I ever saw," Riley wound up. "How in holy hell do you think you can convince the doctor you've been sick in bed for two weeks when you blow in like this?"

"I no know!" muttered Brock. "You said you'd fix it up."

“Fix it up? I will, all right! Have you got a drink on you?”

“Sure—brought you a pint!” Brock’s eyes sparkled at this proof of his own good intentions. He drew from his overcoat pocket a pint bottle, almost full, and handed it to the Irishman. “There y’ are!”

Riley took the bottle, pulled the cork, sniffed of the contents and crashed it into the fireplace as if he were absolutely disgusted with his friend. “Now,” he stated, pointing his finger at Brock, to emphasize his points, “you don’t get another drink today, nor tomorrow, nor the next day! By cripes, you’re going to college, if we have to tie your hands and feet and carry you to classes, but we’re not going to carry you up there half-cast every day! No more liquor until you’re all straightened out at the office and in your courses! D’ you understand, you dumb ass?”

Brock nodded his head in the affirmative and mumbled something to the Beau to the effect that “Tom Riley sure is one hell of a guy to treat me like this!” But down deep in his heart he enjoyed the abuse which Riley heaped upon him, and the domineering attitude which the Irishman assumed toward him—so unlike the considerate, condescending, pseudo-hearty back-slappings of other people.

So Brock came back; but he soon found that he had lost most of what he had previously gained, for he once more had Dora burdening him and his experience of the past few weeks had left him much worse off in many ways. He could not go on from the point at which he had left his affairs; he soon got into the routine of work and play which was necessary for meeting the college requirements, but the strength and health of his mind had been much reduced, despite the little lesson in relativity which the blind man on Boston Common had taught him.

In one way he had gained much from that lesson: as the weeks passed, bringing chilly spring and its “fever”



to them all, Brock steadfastly refused to let himself indulge to any extent in self-pity—and that had been his greatest weakness before that day of madness. He still had streaks and fits of despondency and discouragement, due to the fact that he could not seem to raise any hopes for the future, or any worthwhile ends for his college course. The business of living was an awful tangle in his eyes. His relations with Dora grew increasingly dissatisfying and worrisome, for the physical similarity between Brat's so-nice Ellen and his so-common Dora still persisted in his mind and he hated himself with every thought of it.

During this time, as the Beau went on his happy-hearted and carefree way, and Brat continued to succeed in everything he attempted, Brock and the care of him served Riley in a way such as Brock would never have believed, for the truth was that Riley had been in a dangerously unsettled mental state when he came back from the War and, had he not come to the point where he had constantly to think of Brock and his troubles, he would probably have developed in much the same way as Brock was developing. He would have felt hopeless and aimless, had he not the picture and example of Brock's worse condition ever before him as a warning.

As he told the Beau that spring, "You know, Beau—by craps, when I begin to get upset and worried about everything, wondering what it's all about and feeling like kickin' hell out of the works and beating it for parts unknown, Brock comes along and pulls some damned fool trick which checks me right up short! And he's such a damned fine man and it is so damned tough on a young fellow like him, that I just say to myself, 'What the hell are you kicking about?' and proceed to go about my business as if everything was perfectly all right!"

"I think that way myself sometimes," agreed the Beau. "I feel like tearing out and getting so drunk my eyes would cross—but if I do, Brock will, and I figure why the devil not let well enough alone!"



“Brock was saying the other day that no mother ought ever to regret that her son lost his life in the War—he said the man who died at the height of glory and full of a great cause was a lucky man! He said he wished he’d been killed in that dugout, instead of wounded as he was—the worst part of life is having to live on after the high spot is passed.”

“Yeh?” The Beau smiled, uncertain as to what his roommate was driving at.

“Brock meant that he would have preferred to have been killed at what was probably the greatest point in his whole life—for he can’t see anything higher ahead of him—and that’s what’s wrong with him these days—his spirit is still soaring around that pinnacle, while his body has to live in this commonplace workaday world, full of dizzy flappers, money chasers and stupid pedants!”

“Well?” said his companion, really absorbing the spirit of Riley’s thinking. “I’d just as leave tell him I’m glad he lived long enough to come here with us!” Which was as near to an emotional expression as the carefree Beau could come.

“Guess we’ve all gained by knowing him!” concluded the other. “And I wish something would happen to give him another pinnacle to anticipate—he’s losing under the present arrangement just because we’re gaining; he can’t benefit by knowing us as we benefit by knowing him; he needs something, and damned if I know what it is!”

“If that damned woman’d lay off him, he’d pick up again!” declared the Beau, and abruptly changed the subject to more pleasant topics.

On through the pleasant days of spring the omniscient sophomores lived lazily, studying now and then, going on parties now and then, worrying a little over big things and a lot over little things now and then, each following his own line of growth and development. Brat made the clubs that count, was appointed to class committees, went the rounds of social and academic activities, went contentedly on his way with Ellen near at hand. His habits

grew on him; he would have been almost able to admit, had he been asked, that he liked his roommates better than he had ever liked any one in his life; he never had to bother his head over agreeing or disagreeing with their ideas or their plans, but went along unruffled in his routine, laughing at some of the futile things they attempted, smiling at Riley's fervid harangues against people and things, wondering sometimes at Brock's ideas and his chronic troubles—together a peaceful, gradually developing college success, who without expending such time, money and energy as Pickett did to make his way, nevertheless had not cause to envy that young perseverant his successes.

Early in the year Brat had made several ineffectual attempts to bring his roommates into the circle of his more prominent friends, but they were not welcomed by the members of that circle, chiefly because Riley was a natural-born "outsider," and all the petty pretensions, affectations and inconsequential features of most of these "uppers" (as he called them) grated on his nerves, and were absolutely indigestible in Brock's system. As Brock told Brat, "Sweet rosies and pet princes and god-awful handshakers, a bunch of parrots chock full of their own importance—think they're under surveillance every moment they're on the street! I can't stomach the atmosphere of immature gall that's about them! They don't mean a damned thing in anybody's life, and they're too damned stupid to realize it!"

"Aw, Scotty—come off it!" Brat would answer such verbal portraits of his friends. "There are a lot of good fellows around and you know it! Pick's all right, isn't he?"

"The worst one in the bunch!" exclaimed the Beau, still mindful of the incident at the Jubilee the previous year.

Brat smiled and hurried on to name several other friends, chaps who really were clever, intelligent and human, with none of the piggishness which Brock so

deplored. And Brock agreed, "There are a lot of good fellows around, of course—but what I object to is the slews and slews of parasites, hand-shakers, hangers-on and social shadows that flit around here so damned importantly, speak to you one day and snub you the next, just because they're trying to appear busy as hell, with not even time enough to nod to friends and acquaintances on the street!"

"Sure, Pick's a good kid in most ways, and so is Bartlett and March and a lot of others; but their friendship costs too much to be worth cultivating; they're good fellows, but, except in cases of accident, their friends have either been born their friends or they are made because there's some mutual benefit in the friendship—which is all very well, of course, but what have I got that could possibly be of any value or benefit to any of those people?"

"One's personality — the inimitable worth of one's self!" declaimed Brock, striking an Ed Pinaud hair tonic pose which was almost a sneer and which brought the conversation to an abrupt termination.

June came, with its final exams, in which each of the four managed to make passing grades. Other matters drifted along in not unnatural ways—Brat and Ellen, still the matter-of-course lovers, went to Dartonville by the same train, just before Harvard Class Week started; the Beau, whose academic record was dangerously shaky, causing him therefore much mental unrest, left for his home in Maine immediately after his last exam, promising Riley and Brock to return for summer school, if his grades, when he received them, were so low as to endanger his promotion to the Junior Class.

"Otherwise," said the Beau in his farewell, "we'll all get drunk in September—and don't lose all your money so you have to sell our furniture!"

"Bring back something good!" was Riley's parting word, and the Beau, carrying more baggage than any other single man who ever came to Cambridge, disap-



peared in the interior of the taxi which he had called to take him to North Station.

Brock and Riley saw Brat and Ellen off to Ohio, then dropped into an Italian joint in the North End, where they ate spaghetti, although they could not roll it successfully on their forks, and drank much red wine, although neither of them could really enjoy the miserable stuff; after which they went back to Cambridge, fairly well warmed internally, and spent the better part of a dollar in making telephone calls with the intention of stirring up something of interest to excite themselves. Brock could not call on his Dora, as was his custom when the wine had flowed freely in and around him, for through the machinations of Riley's genius, he had told Dora he would not be in Cambridge until September, and after much explaining and arguing had succeeded in making her believe this fabrication, with the result that on this night of Brat's departure his crippled roommate was unusually exhilarated, almost unrestrainable in anticipation of his impending freedom.

In the end, after many calls had failed to establish any interesting connections, he and Riley wandered to their oddly hollow-sounding rooms and went to bed, their minds turning over, as the last topic before they bade each other good night, the realization of the fact that, as Brock said, "We've been here where the Crimson in triumph flashes and her sons to the jubilees throng, for *two* years—we'll be graduates before we realize we've been Freshmen!"

And Riley's last words "Tempus sure do fugit!" were apropos of the same thought.







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*Old Man Experience! Only to the music of his fiddle do we really trip the toe of learning.*

*Said Riley: "Men live by women, but the flapper lives by men—they are her raison d'être! She ceases to exist except as regards men."*

*"Cheapen women and you cheapen life! But the flapper and the 'good sport' are cheap—in the estimation of every man who benefits by their little generousities and relaxations. The party girl cannot call forth respect from any man who can suspect that she does with every man what she does with him!"*

*"Emerson said, 'If you want something, pay the price and take it.' But these excited flappers of elastic morals usually give up a lot of things that are not necessary to get what they think they want—they pay a dollar-and-a-half check with a fifty-dollar bill and never miss the change at all! They are so wise—to the ends of their noses; the really clever girl realizes that the law of compensation applies to herself and acts accordingly . . ."*

*Apollos and Aphrodites may be the wildest of wild asses.*



## CHAPTER IV

### TYPES AND EXCEPTIONS

FRESHMEN are generally supposed to know nothing—and to realize that they are in a state of ignorance; what they do not know, however, they confidently expect to learn by the time they become Sophomores. Freshmen are supposed to work and learn, and their ignorance should be blissful, since work does conduce toward peace of mind, even though the worker may not happen to know what the work is all about.

Sophomores are graduated Freshmen; they know all there is to know. They move in an atmosphere of omniscience. Toward Freshmen, those puerile neophytes, they maintain an attitude of patient condescension and calm superiority; toward upper-classmen they are inwardly admiring and envious, but outwardly blasé and importantly assuming; as for everything else in the college world and outside, nothing matters.

Juniors are not graduated Sophomores: the Junior is really an upper-classman, entitled to his doubts about all the world that's about him. He does not broadcast the fact of his being a Junior: he assumes unconsciously that his very nonchalant air and intelligent attitude toward things will disclose the fact to even the most casual observer. But the Junior has no overdeveloped sense of his own knowledge of life, for it is generally the case that in a man's Junior year he begins to have real, genuine doubts about himself and about all that other people are supposed to know; he becomes a critic, sometimes outspokenly, sometimes quietly, wonderingly, but he is a critic with leanings toward skepticism.

Rules, to be proved, require exceptions, of course, and the exceptions which prove these generalities about the

stages of mental development of undergraduates can be seen in the case of Brock and his friends, for Brock's second year at Harvard was anything but a peaceful sophomore development; the troubles, self-inflicted to be sure, and the mental unrest which so nearly ruined his college career, were exceptional in that Brock's troubles did not come from any feeling of the omniscient patience which usually develops in Sophomores; his difficulties arose from his inability to consider himself as a being endowed with unlimited powers. Brock was a unique college figure, and the fellows who were his friends were each traveling a different avenue of development, for Riley and the others could profit by Brock's example much better than from the examples and teachings set forth by their instructors. So it was that, although Brat continued to advance along the natural course, with very few indications of ever arriving at any startling or disturbing realizations or wanderings, he and Riley and the Beau came into their Junior year strengthened by the companionship of Brock and more readily skeptical about the whole procedure than the ordinary run of Sophomores could be—for even the Blunderbrat was beginning "to show signs of being a living organism," as Riley once opined.

"Disguise our bondage as we will

*'Tis woman, woman, rules us still."*

—Moore's "Sovereign Woman."

After a summer spent in the greatest bore that was ever invented—a summer school—and at several seaside resorts, Brock returned to his studies in September anxious to see some one. To himself he admitted that he wanted to see a girl whose features were those of Ellen, and also to himself he admitted that he would probably see only Dora. He had spent a good summer. Riley had conceived the idea of finding as many different types of girl as he could for Brock to meet, hoping that in this way he might break down the domination which



Dora—who, in Riley's eyes, was unspeakably impossible—seemed to wield over his roommate. Brock had succumbed to the treatment, had gone on many little parties with the various girls whom the Irishman brought together, and had tried to interest himself in every one of them.

"But, Tom," he admitted, in talking over some of their parties, just after the close of the Summer School, "most of them are so utterly crazy—dizzy—foolish—interested in nothing but all-night dances, roadhouse parties, petting parties in parked cars and all the rest! Honestly, it's hard to carry on a conversation—and enjoy it—with a girl whose ideas are all affectations, and whose curiosity about things that matter is all make-believe! I'm getting so I don't bother my head about whether they like me or not—I don't worry at all as to whether they want to be friendly, intimately so, with me as I am. They just don't matter to me, that's all!"

Which was good, according to the Irishman's way of looking at the matter. "You should be able to get a lot of good work done this year, feeling that way about the fair damsels," he said.

This Brock fully expected to do, regardless of whatever influence Dora might seek to have over his destiny—and he admitted that he would like to see her, or Ellen—but every time he thought of his liking for Ellen he felt ashamed of himself for feeling that way about Brat's girl, Brat being a friend of his. "Now if I had never known Brat at all," he said to himself, jokingly, "I might press my suit there, but, as is, I can't and remain a white man." So he intended to see Dora just by way of accepting a substitute.

Brat also returned to Cambridge looking for something, but Brat did not know just what it was that he wanted. He had spent a dull summer in Dartonville. Ellen had been seriously ill practically all the time. He had stuck pretty close to home, although he did go on several little parties which had been promoted for

him by his sister Lois. All in all he had had a dull summer—he missed “the gang” and the associations in Cambridge which he had grown to consider as part of himself, his life.

Ellen’s illness had prevented the two from having any of the good times which might otherwise have served to break the monotony of the days, and her illness had lingered on so long that it had been decided by her mother and the family doctor that she was not physically strong enough to go back to school in September; so Brat had returned to Boston alone, but not even sorry that Ellen was not with him. “She’ll get well and be perfectly happy around home,” he told himself, wondering in the next instant what excitement the gang would have planned for the opening of college. He almost felt like going on a party—but then he wouldn’t, because he had given Ellen his usual promise to make her know that everything was still all right. He still accepted the imposed connection with Ellen as a matter of fact—she’d be his wife some day, and they’d settle down and live just as every one else lived.

As it happened, there was little temptation for Brat to forget his future wife for the sake of a little excitement in Cambridge, for after he arrived, his attention was immediately taken up by the football training activities, and before many days had passed, his energies were also rather well taken up in this way, for the practice sessions were strenuous daily affairs, and Brat was in none too good condition after his lazy summer at home.

After the training season was once started in full swing Brat fell into his groove, and went on his routine way of living, which was not difficult as long as the football competition occupied his time and attention. Beside, Riley and the Beau failed to tear out on any wild celebrations upon the occasion of College’s reopening, for the Beau returned with bad news from home which affected considerably his financial situation, and the

thought of Brock's going out of his head under the influence of liquor also served to restrain their otherwise wild impulses toward excitement.

So the fall moved on. Brat made the 'Varsity in the early games, and also made a "final" club, membership in which added prestige to his name around the Yard. He had been proposed for this club by Pick, who even in his Junior year was assuming the proportions of a leader and presiding genius in various activities in the college. Pick now and then, very infrequently, dropped into Brat's rooms and passed a few minutes with his friends of Freshman days, but these visits only proved to him and to Riley and Brock that they really had but very little in common, and that their friendship was entirely too superficial to amount to anything for either party.

It seems to be universally true that time will pass regardless of whatever efforts man may take to retard its passing, and there is such a thing as an over-burdened man, temporally speaking. Every man must do something, if only to develop a fine ability to do nothing. One's day must be passed somehow, and in the case of college undergraduates, if they do not pass their time in following the flowing bowl and the flapping frocks, their energies must be turned into other channels, either their college studies or such extra-curricular activities as athletics, publications, musical clubs, or that more widely cultivated form of play known under the generic term "gambling," which includes such indiscreet practices as are provided by Ethiopian square-marbles and pasteboard tickets for sleepless nights.

The Beau's financial condition precluded his taking any too great interest in either the flowing bowl or these latter mentioned indiscretions, and he soon found himself in the sad predicament of having to choose between studying and going to work to earn money wherewith to buy tickets for his customary pleasures. He chose to study at the beginning of the year, and, before



he quite understood what possibilities were contained in this rash choice, he discovered that Riley and Brock also had turned studious—chiefly for want of excitement. Their studies proved not so bad after all, and brought before them many things of interest which they had never believed to be existent in college textbooks.

“By George,” exclaimed Riley, in the course of a casual survey of the routine of college work, the chief consideration in which had been the question of how to go through college doing nothing at all, “I think some good man could dope out the whole college program of studies and summarize the contents of every course in about five or six curricula, so that any man taking any one of those curricula could walk right through college to his degree by attending his classes and boning up on the summaries which had already been prepared; and all this hurry and flurry before exams would be eliminated.”

Brock quite agreed with him. “I know for one thing,” he said, “that I’ve had at least three courses in this place which required three lectures each week for eighteen weeks, and which could have been as thoroughly and satisfactorily covered in less than half that time; there’s a hell of a waste somewhere, and it’s not in the so-called snap courses, either.”

“Oh, hell!” exclaimed the Beau, interrupting; “there ain’t no such animal as a snap course any more. Cripes! I signed up for this Fine Arts course, and thought I had an understanding with the instructor that it would be easy—maximum results for minimum efforts! and that son-of-a-gun has loaded us down with reading for his asinine quizzes, and he gives a quiz every week!” The Beau was quite put out by this evident breach of good faith on the part of an instructor in a course which every one had always, from time immemorial, considered to be a “snap.” “Why, it’s a shame! I spend more time on that blooming Fine Arts than on any other subject, and I haven’t the least interest in the stuff!”



"Serves you right!" returned Riley. "You never see me picking snap courses—I learned my lesson a long time ago; took a Music course in that first Summer School, and figured no one had to do any work—remember, Brock? We both got the lowest possible D's for the course and the instructor thought it a good joke on us!"

"And it was—a hell of a fine joke!" commented Brock.

"But it taught me that lesson which you're learning now, Beau—which is, that it's much more economical and gratifying to choose courses in which you might possibly find something of interest to you!"

"But what good does that do?" demanded the irate Beau. "Even then you're liable to catch a crab and find yourself up against the toughest kind of a course!"

"Even so," said Riley, "you at least have the satisfaction of studying something you can enjoy by force of interest. In courses that you're interested in, anyway, there's more likelihood that you'll do a little studying now and then, and it won't seem like work!"

They talked about these undergraduate problems very often during the early weeks of that fall when the Beau was financially broke and Brat was spending every afternoon at the Stadium. They all became more interested in the workings of the College, the various lines which the individual could follow both in college and after graduation, the practical value of their courses. Brock could sometimes see in his work something that he might like to follow up after graduation; sometimes it was a bit of detail connected with one of the professions; at other times it was a section of reading concerned with some phase of business administration, industry or commerce. They all began to look forward rather than backward, thinking of what they might do after college days had passed; there was never any question in their minds about earning a living, for at that time Harvard Square was flooded with money, and business everywhere was flourishing, so that the three

students could not conceive of anyone's not being able to make an adequate income. Their chief consideration was in regard to doing the things one might want to do.

For the three, this was not entirely and at all times true; for the Beau very often had slight qualms about this question of earning a living. His allowance from home had been suddenly reduced, and he had come to find his financial shoes more pinchy than comfortable, so pinching, indeed, that on one occasion he burst out in righteous indignation over a very slight detail which concerned him not at all.

The detail was a bit of news in the *Crimson* to the effect that some widow of a millionaire banker had died, leaving her entire fortune to Harvard University to be used as the authorities might consider best. The Beau read this when he had not a nickel in his pocket. He exploded, "How in the name of all that's sacred do these rich old women get that way? Why in the name of rolling fat don't somebody leave some money to be divided among us poor sons-of-guns that need it?"

His questions were directed at Brock, who answered, "But it *will* be used for the benefit of the students—indirectly. They will probably build a couple of dormitories—which we need—or get more instructors to feed the flock—or establish some new loan funds for worthy students."

"From all of which we get nothing; we can't eat dormitories or instructors—these old birds who die and leave money for buildings give me acute, shootin' pains where pains are preciousy inconvenient! Why the devil don't they lay out their money and call in all the worthy students to help themselves?"

"But you can go over there and borrow some money if you need it," replied Brock. "If you're broke, go see the Dean and tell him a hard luck story. He'll let you have seventy-five or a hundred for a year. Why don't you do that?"

“Yeh—he’ll probably throw me the hell out of his office for having nerve enough to ask him!”

“Well, it’s worth trying, isn’t it? You never can tell.”

The Beau considered the matter for a moment, then, reaching for his hat, declared, “By Cripes, I’m going to try him!”

He slammed the door behind him as Brock wished him luck, and turned back to his book.

Half an hour later he returned, tore off his hat and coat and exhibited a check for twenty-five dollars. “And I had a fine time getting that much!” he exclaimed disgustedly. “That dog-goned man says I’m the worst loafer in Harvard College, might just as well go out and go to work as keep on loafing around here, and he wouldn’t believe that I’m studying now. Said he’d heard so many such fairy tales that he could not be expected to believe any of them.”

The Dean had also told him that if he did not get down to business and make better grades his connection with the University would be short-lived. “Your classrooms are not playgrounds, Beauvais!” he had said, “nor are your instructors mere entertainers; they have their work and you have yours, but it’s part of their work to see that you do yours, so get busy.”

But the Beau was indignant over the meagre generosity which produced only twenty-five dollars—even though that amount was just twenty-five dollars more than he had had for some time. The French Canadian knew that it would not last long, and the next check from home was a long way off, and would not be large enough to cover the intervening debts. He vaguely understood that he was up against a problem, but he had not conceived the least idea of any solution. He continued, however, to exist.

During that fall, the interests of each of the four roommates were centered in the materials of education, financial, intellectual or athletic. The Crimson went



through another successful football season, and the student body learned to take Harvard victories for granted. Brock and Riley and the Beau gave their whole-hearted support, paid more attention to their studies and coöperated in trying to solve the Beau's financial problems. Brat had little time for anything other than his football, a few classes and his regular letters to and from Dartonville—which were entirely a matter of routine with him before many weeks had passed. Ellen was, in Brat's mind, the same "something to be reckoned with later on, but not now"—he knew that she had recovered satisfactorily from her illness, was able to attend a few social functions, travel a bit and was altogether her usual, complacently happy self again. Her letters told him all the home-town news, and his answers were chiefly attempts to rival the newsiness of her epistles.

By the time of the Yale game, the ordinary life which the roommates were leading had begun to get on the nerves of the various members; things were going entirely too smoothly to be interesting, regardless of all Riley's talk about "the intellectual satisfactions in life." Vague in the mind of each there was an idea that "along about Yale game time an awful splurge would be in order."

Harvard-Yale game is a term to conjure with. To different people it recalls different scenes, different feelings. To the 'Varsity man at Harvard and at Yale, however, it means, among other important associations, the end of a long hard pull, a two months' draw in harness, and it means the signal for the breaking of training—all the rules and regulations prescribed by coaches and trainers for the duration of the football season can then be forgotten, laughed at, toasted, cursed, utterly disregarded. It is the signal for most men to tear loose from their confinement, to seek the flowing bowl and other means of celebration. Win or lose, the Harvard man has some kind of a party on that night; if Harvard wins, all's well and the party is a celebration; if Yale wins, the world's upside down and the sorrow must be



drowned. The whole University world is pervaded by the feeling.

A little splurge, usually, and back to the books, feeling much refreshed and straightened out, ready for the long grind to Mid-Years. Foolish, perhaps, but at the moment, the impulse is almost a group madness; every temper is tuned toward breaking loose, toward throwing restraint and restriction to the winds; the spirit of the time points in only one direction—a wild party, the wilder the better for all concerned, for the wilder it is, the better as a tonic, and the more lasting as a lesson against going on wild parties.

It is all in an education; and the fact that every one seemed to consider it so, or better, to have the conviction that it really was the thing to do, was directly responsible for a great fall from grace by none other than the Blunderbrat. After much arguing on the part of Riley and much declining on Brat's part, the latter succumbed to the Yale game madness when the Irishman quoted the Bible regarding "the fact of there being a time to dance and a time to sing," ending, "and this is the time for a rootin'-tootin' party! The night of Yale game is the time to explode, if you ever expect to explode before you die!" So Brat finally agreed to accompany the crowd on its jamboree, after which he left with the team for a near-by country club, at which Crimson teams made a practise of resting during the two days preceding their big games.

The Beau and Riley began their celebration on the night before the game, Brock being unable to accompany them because of certain promises which he had made to be with his imperious Dora that evening. The Irishman and the French Canadian were celebrating in an odd manner; they were looking for bets, and their success might have been measured by their degree of intoxication, for they steadfastly refused to give odds and they soon found true the old wheeze that no Eli supporter was ever known to give odds or even even money

on a Harvard-Yale game; the further the two Crimson gamblers searched for an even bet, the more inebriated they grew, as a result of their habit of having a drink for every Eli man who demanded "odds because every good man we've got is in the hospital!"

To every one of such, Riley replied, "Yeh—all in the hospital! Every damned one of them'll be right there fightin' tomorrow afternoon!" and took another drink.

They did not get the bets which they sought all evening, and would not have bet on the game at all, had not the Beau, on Saturday morning, after helping a rum-running friend from down Maine dispose of several cases of forbidden liquids at a very good price in Cambridge, determined to enlarge his quarter-share in that transaction by whatever kind of bet he could find. The Irishman, a little foggy from the night before, finally donated an equal amount to the Beau to place as best he could.

At six o'clock that evening, hoarse of voice and with trembling hands, the French Canadian counted out in Riley's hand the latter's share of their winnings at ten to seven odds, and ended by exclaiming, "For once in my life, Tom, I do believe there is a God in heaven! The first good luck I've had for years!"

He could speak only in a whisper; the excitement of the game had made him almost a nervous and vocal wreck, and Riley, who had not been able to wax so enthusiastic over the give-and-take of the gridiron fray because of his morning-after feeling, was now so much recovered and so revived by the sight of his winnings that he became at once enthusiastic for the party which was in prospect for that evening.

"And Beau-boy! Look at the money we can spend now!" he exclaimed. "We'll get Brat so plastered he'll forget home, mother and all religion!" On the strength of which they had a drink.

Brat returned from the Stadium, tired and not relishing the prospects for the evening. He was sorry he had

promised to go with Riley and the others, but he knew they would be forever holding it against him if he backed out at this late hour. Nevertheless he knew he didn't want to go with them—meet a crowd of girls, have a few drinks, joke and play around foolishly awhile and come home—that would be the evening. And he was not interested in girls, anyway.

No, he wasn't interested in girls—didn't know anything about them and cared less! Not that he hadn't been exposed to their fascinating arts! He had been inveigled into plenty of parties, nice little affairs of various kinds, usually sober and perfectly proper in every respect, with decent little society girls still in the dreamy stage of youthfulness. Nice parties, all of them, and nice girls who were glad to use their cars to cart college boys around town, and patronize trick tea rooms and Bohemian joints on Beacon Hill. Jolly girls, so affectedly innocent as a rule, and so well versed in the fine art of appreciating risqué tales and suggestive reparation. Plenty of harmless fun, out of which the girls got and gave little that was important, and the boys served merely as companions. He didn't see anything in all that stuff — Elizabeth, for instance!

Other parties, too, with girls whose threshold of thrill-dom was much higher, who had to have more excitement before their feelings could be aroused. Other parties, with mixed crowds, football game guests and bread-and-butter visitors—sort of a bore, all that kind of thing; he sympathized with those college men who were forever repaying social obligations with football game tickets, and then contracting other obligations which had also to be repaid and thought about; Brat didn't relish having to think about anything. And then there were other parties, mostly with girls whose vocabulary complete and whose conduct complete were limited by the ever-functioning "Collegian-stuff" complex — there'd probably be a lot of that kind on this party which Riley had planned, and he didn't want particularly to meet them.



The last idea he had before they left the rooms was concerned with Ellen. He was sitting stretched out in a big chair, taking heavy, regular breaths and otherwise relaxing as much as possible in anticipation of the strenuous evening, when Riley was suddenly possessed of the devil, and of the idea of pouring a strong drink down his big roommate's throat—"just to wake him up." Brat, open-mouthed, was in such a position that he could not keep from swallowing Riley's offering, but after a gulp and with tears in his eyes he started after his Irish friend, sputtering and heaving, swearing he'd break every bone in the other's body if he found him. But Riley locked himself in the bathroom and refused to open the door until Brat promised not to molest him.

"Glad you're awake!" he laughed when he came out. "And I guess you are, all right — you sounded like the wild bull of the campus roaring around here; that drink did you good!"

But Brat was not even thinking of Riley's pouring efforts. At that moment he remembered Ellen, and was saying to himself that he really ought to be glad that he was tied up to her, otherwise he'd be worrying around after some such foolish girls as those whom he would probably meet that night with Riley and his friends. His last thought was of Ellen — he would write her a good long letter tomorrow and tell her all about it.

"Come on, Brat! forget it!" called the Beau from the door. "You're lookin' better already!"

Riley and the Beau had with painful care arranged for a considerable party, but when all the members had been rounded up, it was found that there were two men too many, and by the way the available girls had paired, Brat and another chap whom he knew came to the conclusion that they were the odd men.

"We'd best chase along and leave you people to yourselves," said Brat when he noticed this situation.

"Nothing of the kind!" remonstrated Riley, who was herding his sheep into the little private dining room



where was to be held their celebration of Harvard's victory. "You come on in and we'll locate a couple of girls in short order."

Several of the girls who were supposed to be with other fellows joined Riley in imploring them to remain for further developments, and when the other extra man accepted, Brat submitted also. So they entered, and under Riley's able guidance the party got away to a glorious start on the strength of two rounds of most tasteful drinks, after which Brat felt more like staying, and suggested that Riley try to find a couple of girls for them.

Riley listened to several suggestions as to possibilities, and finally went to the telephone accompanied by two girls, each one certain that she knew of at least one wonderful woman who would come. When they returned, after about fifteen minutes, another drink having been had in the meantime, Brat seemed very disappointed to learn that they had been unable to find a single fair companion who could get away.

"They've all got engagements, or are sick, or don't want to come out or something!" complained Riley.

"Well, we'll go along then, and see if we can't find something exciting somewhere," said Brat.

"No—wait a minute!" broke in the Beau, who then called Riley into a corner for a whispered conference, after which Riley also told Brat to wait a minute at least, and then dashed for the telephone again.

"Where's he going?" demanded Brat, suspecting some one of his Irish friend's jokes.

"To telephone!" the Beau smiled. "He's going to call an old friend of yours — she'll be glad to come down."

Brat thought for a moment — an old friend? Must be Elizabeth!

"Like the heck he is!" he exclaimed and rushed out after Riley, whom he found in the telephone booth, talking excitedly with an uncongenial operator. Brat pushed

open the door and pulled his friend out of the booth. "Don't be foolish! I don't want to see her!"

"What's the matter with you?" demanded Riley, as if he had not the least idea as to what Brat meant.

"You were calling Elizabeth, weren't you?" laughed Brat. "And I don't want to see her, so let's go back!" He took Riley's arm and led him back to the crowd.

Other drinks were had, Brat succumbing to the insistent demands of the company that he stay and have a few rounds at least. Eventually a dinner was served and the party continued.

Brat was feeling better. By the time the dinner was well under way he had come to such a degree of good feeling that he determined not to remain in the party any longer, since his presence was merely cramping the possibilities for the other more fortunate fellows. He declared to Riley that he was going, and after promising that he would return if he found nothing of interest, Riley let him depart, the Irishman feeling rather happy over the condition in which Brat was leaving. The others of the party still insisted that the two extras remain, and the other man submitted without trying to follow Brat's example, so he set out alone, seeking some kind of a fair companion to bring back to the party.

He had regularly been an abstainer, and the several drinks which he had had were having effect — he was beginning to expand and desire action. He went to several clubs and hotels, hoping to find someone who could lead him into something interesting, and finally, having met with but little success, he was on the point of returning to Riley's party when he suddenly remembered that all the clubs and houses in Cambridge were having their usual Yale Game parties, and he had told more people than he could recall that he would try to stop in, if he could get free early enough. He decided to go to Harvard Square, but the nearest taxi-stand was at a hotel the name of which, when he had arrived in front of it, recalled to his mind that Pick and his friend

Jud Lee and another chap whom Brat knew were having a little party all to themselves in that very hotel. He'd better pay them a little visit, just to surprise them.

The party of six was well in progress when Brat finally found them. They were in a little booth, tucked away in a far corner of the place, imbibing freely and having an hilariously good time. Brat was welcomed with open arms, the girls and men joining in showing every evidence of being glad that this new and extra blood was thus flowing into their party. Choice liquors were served, and their effects were altogether beaming, so much so that the party had soon progressed as far as it could without mishaps, which (unfortunately, the men thought) were unthinkable with the girls who were present; they were all three just excitement-loving young things, from the best of families, and had to be taken home at some reasonable hour and in reasonably good condition. The men realized this, and the drinks became fewer, the party gradually slowing down quite noticeably.

But while the party in general was slowing down, Brat was warming up in a most unusual manner; he had never really had drinks of anything intoxicating, and this night had seen him imbibing more at one time than in all his life before.

One of the girls, a sweet-faced little creature who seemed to Brat to have entirely too much energy and life for one so small, had from the first moment attracted Brat after the fashion of a magnet, and as the evening wore on he was taking up as much if not more of her time than her man was able to equal, and Brat could not determine absolutely which man was her man.

This being his first real experience with liquid stimulation, Brat's little world had expanded to the skies, and he became more and more convinced that he owned the world, and that anything which happened to occur to his mind could be carried out as well as not — which would have been all right, if no one had aided or abetted him in his efforts. The sweet-faced creature, however,



was enjoying the game immensely, and took an impish delight in making this big giant of a man do funny things for her benefit. The more expansive Brat grew, the more she teased him and coaxed him, and the more uncomfortable her man became, until, when he thought his remonstrances were too utterly ignored by her, he turned his attentions to further and far more inordinate drinking—with the inevitable result.

The end of it all was that the little girl had to be taken home, and Brat was elected by Pick for the office because her man had been declared *hors de combat* for the night.

“He’ll learn some day!” was the sympathetic comment of the little lady, upon being thus informed. Turning to Brat, who was himself on the verge of raising the white flag, she smiled and beckoned, saying, “Come on, Brat, you funny old dear! I simply must go home!”

Home they went, or at least Brat imagined they did, but the next thing which he realized clearly was his own room and his own pillow under his head. In his pocket later he discovered a card with the name “Virginia Jordan” and a telephone number on it, under which was a scribbled note reminding him to call sometime later in the day; on the back of the card was another note to the effect that Virginia had had to pay the taxi-fare by going through his pockets for his money—“excuse the familiarity,” it ended. Then Brat vaguely remembered that Virginia was the sweet-faced girl’s name and, despite his bottomless stomach and terrible headache, he could smile at the recollection.

Thus did the mighty fall, and the old saying that “the larger they are, the harder they fall,” was never more truly nor nicely illustrated. He did not realize the fact, but it was nevertheless true that little Virginia Jordan had done something which no other woman had ever been able to do—make the Brat forget himself for the sake of her.

Brat smiled at his patched recollections of the night



before, and was on the verge of thanking Riley for his party when that gentleman, who had heard all about the time at the hotel, pointed out with much emphasis that this Virginia of the sweet face happened to be another man's girl. "Why, she and Jud Lee are practically engaged — and here you go and drink Jud under the table, and then steal his woman away from him while he's *hors de combat!* A fine gentleman we have for a roommate!"

This was all lost on Brat at the moment, but later in the day, when his senses began to re-collect themselves, he was further informed that his fair companion of that night had been none other than the daughter of Old Man Jordan, the well-known nail-eating aristocrat of Brookline, and this information served to make him realize several things — mostly unpleasant. Came also in his mind the conviction that he had made an impossible ass of himself in the affair, and that the best thing he could do would be nothing; he'd write his letter to Ellen, and forget all about this Virginia who had caused him to make such a fool of himself among his friends.

Invariably his letter to Ellen was written on Sunday morning, when Riley and the Beau were at church and Brock was at peace with the world by being asleep, but this Sunday's letter was not composed and sent off until very late that night, and then it was not such a missive as might be called properly a letter, being merely a very short "just a line" note containing a few generalities about the game and his studies.

The letter had been difficult to write — the cause was Virginia, it being still a recognized fact of psychology that one's attention will invariably be disconcerted from matters pertaining to one girl when the vision of another girl is constantly crossing, recrossing and bobbing up in one's mind. Brat should have admitted to himself that this continual "bobbing up process" was quite disconcerting.

Thus it might appear that football celebrations may

have many and varied results, some good, some bad, among the latter being the case of Beauvais, who was almost as financially wrecked on Sunday morning as he had been three days before the game. But his troubles were temporarily overlooked many times throughout the days following, owing to the indications of perturbation in their estimable roommate. To Beau, Riley opined that he guessed "little Virginia has sure played hell with our Achilles!"

At which the French Canadian smiled, saying, "Well, every Achilles has a bum heel, you know!"

Bum heel or not, however, Brat did not call or see Virginia as she had explicitly directed him to call or see her, and yet he did find it rather difficult to write to Ellen.

#### A FEMALE MONKEY-WRENCH

During the ensuing weeks Brat continued to be annoyed by the image of Virginia, its every appearance making him wonder increasingly where she was and what she was doing — and then he would remember Ellen and proceed to ignore Virginia's image, or rather, he would proceed to try to ignore it.

It is an old, old chip of human nature, this problem which confronted poor Brat during the weeks between the Yale Game and Christmas holidays, one of the easily observed mental conditions which has formed a starting point for many a tract, or investigation into the mysteries of human psychology. And poor Brat was utterly untrained in this game — he had no precedents to guide him toward a solution. The more he tried to disregard and forget Virginia, the more frequently the image and the vague wonderings came to him; not to cause him worry, because he had stubbornly refused and determined to continue to refuse to take any steps further in Virginia's direction; and as for his actions, that determination was final. He did not act; he did not worry considerably; he just kept up the recalling of Virginia's

image, which image with its associations was somehow annoying. It would be difficult to explain the situation or his reactions by any specific reasoning, but the fact was that he could not keep from thinking of her.

“One of the great mysteries of human society!” Riley once declared out of the depth of his Sophomoric wisdom. “There is no accounting for a woman’s tastes or a man’s woman.” Truly Brat’s situation defied all rationalising or explaining.

Riley and Brock were by nature observers, hopelessly addicted to the gentle art of being interested in and curious about all that went on about them; and the obviously disturbed condition of their two roommates was pronounced enough to occupy their attention during this period. But their observational interest differed considerably, for while both watched the Beau and his growing financial troubles from the same point of view, their attitude toward Brat’s affairs was a divided one; Riley was a disinterested spectator, motivated by objective curiosity; but Brock, still having his troubles with Dora, had not forgotten Ellen; and despite his determined efforts to be disinterested in Brat’s affairs, he had to admit to himself—with suspicion of his own disloyalty—that Brat’s triangle was nearer to him than it was to Riley, for Brock’s observations were animated by a subjective interest, and he could not make it otherwise.

This also Riley suspected, especially when it became so noticeably true that no one had been able to really settle back into their pre-Yale-game routine of work and play. “We’re all upset!” he complained to the Beau. “Everyone’s all unsettled again, off the track, after having had a peach of a ride through the fall.”

“I know it,” replied the Beau. “Also know what the cause is in my case; but what’s wrong with Brat and Brock and you?”

“Damfino—” mused the Irishman, as through his mind ran several suspicions which he never expected to be so soon crystallized into convictions.



But not long after that the process of crystallization began. Brat was taking a course in Social Ethics under an eminent professor who was undeniably one of the most forceful instructors he had ever met. In his hands the matter of ethical conduct was made a matter of practical common sense, and it was made so with much force and effectiveness. This professor's teachings were not forgotten over night, it being still a possibility in undergraduate schools to find such instructors. However that may be, Brat absorbed his teachings in this course in his usual habitual way, only more so, and on this particular occasion, which was shortly after Riley had confessed his bewilderment to the Beau, he listened with more than usual keenness to the instructor's consideration of a modern case of conjugal incompatibility and consequent infidelity, as treated in the light of an ethical system which was a combination of old Greek social law and the more modern Christian teachings. "The Greeks," said the instructor, "had the same idea of infidelity as we have, in other words they held to the religion of 'Thou shalt not—' from the same motives of social welfare as we do today." He then described similar, parallel married states in Greece, Egypt, India, China and modern Christian countries. When he had finished, his hour's lecture was all a haze in Brat's mind, although the lecturer's ideas had been well directed and effectively presented. The ideas were jumbled in Brat's mind nevertheless.

Next morning he had to remember, hazily of course, the details of a wild nightmare which had caused his aroused roommates considerable wonder. He needed no one to assist him in interpreting them. He had, he recalled, discovered himself to be a great infidel king whose armies were invading Greece. In his native country a woman waited upon his return, but here in Greece he was burning up with a passion for a holy woman, a priestess in the temple of Artemis. He had entered the temple to be with her, and she had led him on—then she became, not a priestess but the woman of another prince, a friendly



prince—both their faces were terribly familiar; yet here was he with this girl who had been a priestess before whom he had been willing to bow; here were they enjoying themselves, both unfaithful; suddenly there had come before them an enormous, white-robed prophet, who talked to them in deep, ringing, resounding tones, saying over and over again, “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor’s — for it is the law! It is the law!” The voice had said other things too, about “hell fire” and “eternal damnation” and other terrible punishments, and then some odd-sounding but relevant things, like “fair play,” “sportsmanship,” and “social ostracism,” and many other odd terms. The voice had droned out these things in a terrible way, and had talked on and on until the rhythm of it caused the walls of the temple to shake and quiver, and the statue of the goddess to totter frightfully—the infidel and his priestess had become terrified; he had wanted to flee, she held him back, wanted him to stay; the goddess had tottered more and more as the rhythm of that terrible voice kept on stronger and stronger, until finally, seeing it about to fall, he tore himself free and fled away, through a side door and away to a dark woods in which had been many stars. He had rested there and in due time gone his way back to his people, determined to forsake this campaign, and determined not to ever, ever, covet anything that belonged to any other man in any other way—not ever!

The rude awakening had come suddenly, just as he was leaving the star-lit woods, and for several moments Brat had been unable to decide whether he had been awake or asleep—the dream was all too real to him.

His roommates did not push him for an explanation of these sleep walkings, but after they had all gone back to the bedroom from the study wherein had occurred the awakening, Brat, who made a last, lone trip to the bath-

room for a drink, was heard by Brock, who at the moment was entering the door, to exclaim to himself almost inaudibly, something to the effect that "that woman won't see me now if she paid me!" And this bit of a comment reported by Brock to Riley gave the latter a key to the situation, and for days afterwards he and Brock spent many an idle moment discussing the strange effect which one little girl had had upon their steel-hearted roommate.

Riley did most of the talking, for Brock, with his troubles and his conscience, could not trust himself to discuss Brat's affairs at any length. The Irishman, however, thinking over all the phases of the case, came to several conclusions, which he confided only to the Beau, which were, "The damned fool's in love with this Virginia and don't know it! He won't see her because he's ashamed of the way he acted that night—because he's supposed to be tied up to Ellen, and because Virginia is Jud Lee's girl, and Brat thinks Jud Lee is too good a fellow to play dirty with!"

"By Cripes, some people are funny!" commented the Beau philosophically. "Why the devil should he fall in love with this Virginia, when she can't be, from all I hear, any finer a girl than Ellen? I guess he's just like all the rest of us; never satisfied with things we've got, always want something more or different!"

"That's the way it goes!" agreed the Irishman; "but this kid has nabbed our hero because he feels that she is forbidden fruit, and because she made him make such a foolish ass out of himself that first night that he's ashamed of himself. I'd bet that's the real reason for his being upset over her; if she hadn't made him ashamed, he would never have bothered his head over her again!"

Riley continued to moralize, philosophize and generalize and observe and criticize as the weeks went by, for, as he concluded to his own satisfaction, the reason for all their lethargy as regarded studying, their inability to settle down again after the Yale game, lay entirely in this

little bundle of femininity called Virginia Jordan—"She's the monkey-wrench in these works!"

Which was, more or less, a pretty good conclusion, for Brock's routine of complacent acceptance of Dora's common ways was completely shaken by the development in Brat's affairs. Sometimes Brock almost admitted to himself that he wished Brat would fly off the handle and go after Virginia, "which is a fine way to feel toward one's friend's girl"—meaning Ellen.

#### "DISTANCE LENDS——"

The weeks rolled quickly by, bringing the mid-year exams to lay their cloak of enforced quiet over all extra-curricular activities such as girls and entertainments. Brat's record in all his courses was unusually low and unsatisfactory, so unsatisfactory in truth that he had to have more than his usual amount of tutorial assistance in order to insure his passing; but after much burning of the midnight oil with tutors and alone he managed to bring his record for the half-year up to the requirements, and with that he was satisfied. He was much worse off, or had much more studying to do, than had any one of his roommates, because they had started the year with sufficient time on their hands to do at least a goodly portion of their required work, and up to the time of the Yale game all three gave better than perfunctory attention to their studies. After that, when Brat should have been putting in the time necessary to catch up in his courses, the machinery of study had, for the reasons which Riley gave, somehow functioned in rather a loose and inefficient manner, and Brat came to the exams with a very unsatisfactory record and much studying to do. Brock was not far behind him in that respect, for he, too, had been slipping along too easily in his courses since the Yale game. Beauvais was not so badly off, despite his financial operations, which, by the time of the Mid-Years had come to embrace several



ignoble professions, including the selling of liquor to his friends and the partaking of a survival-of-the-fittest interest in various kinds of gambling games such as exist in every college community. Riley seemed to go serenely on his way—never studied very much, never cut too many classes, always seemed to know something about whatever subject he was supposed to know something about. He it was who invariably took charge of their study sessions before exams, and he it was who led at such times, in the insistence upon studying despite drooping, sleep-anticipating eyelids and nervous dispositions. After a great amount of oil-burning and a periodically intense torrent of profane castigations of professors and textbook writers, he managed to pull his roommates through to satisfactory half-year marks.

In view of this fact, Riley was certain that the time was more than ripe for a rip-roaring celebration, so he proceeded to arrange for one, not delayed or retarded by either Brock or the Beau, but not exactly countenanced by Brat. Riley argued with eloquence, trying to persuade Brat to accompany them, but Brat was cured of parties, and flatly refused to be a sharer in any of Riley's wild concoctions.

"All right," the Irishman at last submitted, "stay here and rot! My fondest, sincerest hope is that they turn off the heat, and let it get so cold here that your merry appendages turn to icicles and fall off!"

Brat smiled. Even he enjoyed Riley's blasphemy at all times. "Oh, I guess I'll not freeze, Tom," he laughed.

"You ought to do worse than that!" rejoined that worthy, with heat engendered by several drinks. "We go to work and fix up a perfectly nice party for you, and you haven't the brains to appreciate it, let alone manners enough to say 'Thank you!'"

Riley was disgusted. "I'll wager it'll be a long time before I try to fix anything up for you again!"

"I didn't ask you to. Run along now and have another little drink!" laughed Brat, and Riley took his advice.



Alone, Brat sat for a long time, apparently lost in the maze of his own thoughts. These took many avenues, but they brought him to the resolve to write to his mother and to Ellen, so he moved over to his desk and settled down to these over-due letters. The one to his mother was of his usual kind; the one to Ellen was quite full of news, too. That finished, he was at a loss to know just what to do, finally deciding to walk to the postoffice on Brattle Street to mail them.

From there he went to Randolph Hall to call upon some of his friends, who, he thought, on a night as cold as this, would surely be at home. But the rooms in Randolph were empty. He tried another suite, in Claverly near by, but the only individual in that room was an impossible up-stage boy, whom even Brat did not enjoy as a companion. He did not stop there long, but wandered out and up across the Avenue into the Yard thinking to drop into a senior's rooms, a serious-minded chap who had a scholar's knowledge of every profession and occupation the world over. This fellow had company, but welcomed Brat with due solemnity, invited him into the circle about the fireplace, and proceeded with the discussion of heavy economic problems with which the company had been engaged. Brat stayed long enough to hear these world-beaters and future captains of industry air their views on all that mattered in the world, decided he'd heard enough of that ego-inflation, and withdrew, saying to himself, "Gee, some people take themselves seriously!"

He wandered over to a club on the Avenue and watched a three-handed game of bridge for a while, refusing the invitations to sit in, because he didn't feel like playing bridge. In the billiard room was a strained game of billiards, the two players acting as if some sort of Quaker meeting rule had to be observed. Brat's presence was acknowledged with a curt "Lo, Brat," so he did not stay there long.

On the Avenue again, he began to wonder why he felt so restless. There was something wrong with his affairs,

and even the Brat felt uncomfortable and uneasy about this, whatever it was. It'd be nice if he could see Virginia; but no, he didn't want to see Virginia—he'd rather Ellen were there so they could go places together; Ellen would do all the talking and wouldn't be bothering him all the time foolishly. Still, Virginia's foolery and teasing, as he recollected her ways from that night of his fall from the grace of sobriety, were not so unpleasant, would be a lot of fun. Wonder what she'd be doing this night?

"Let sleeping dogs lie!" he told himself by way of a verbal kick, as he turned down the street toward his rooms. It was, he noticed when he entered the study, just eleven o'clock, and automatically adding eight hours to that he decided to go to bed and get up at seven in the morning. But just as he was starting the process of undressing, his operations and thoughts were interrupted by the ringing of the telephone bell.

"Well?" he asked, lifting the receiver.

"Hello—this Brat? This is Brock——"

"Yes, Scotty—what's on your mind?"

"Brat!" Brock continued, excitedly, "Riley's in a hell of a fix! He's half canned, and slipped in the snow outside here a few minutes ago! He's in tough shape, and he insists upon having you come down here—will you?"

"Why——" Brat did not want to go, even if Riley were dead drunk.

"Come on, Brat! Better hustle along as fast as possible, and I'll tell him you're coming."

Brat was silent, trying to imagine just what had happened to the inimitable Irishman. Finally he said, "Well, what do you think, Scotty? I hate like the devil to chase in there at this hour of the night, but I will if you say so."

"Yes—you'd better, Brat. We can't do a thing with him, so hurry along."

"Well—where are you?" inquired Brat as an afterthought.

Brock told him the name of the restaurant in which the

party was in progress, and Brat agreed to come right along.

He went up to the Square, found a taxi and asked for speed. The taxi ploughed and slid through the snow-filled streets in good time, so good that Brat's heart spent the greater part of the trip in his mouth, and deposited its fare without mishap at the destination.

"Guess you'd better wait for me," said Brat as he alighted and ran into the restaurant.

He found the place almost deserted, so that Riley's party was easily located, in a far corner booth. Running up to the end of the table he demanded, without stopping to remove his hat or turn down his collar, "Where is he?"

A wave of laughter ran through the crowd, and the Irishman, smiling happily, was produced from under the table, "well plastered but still able to navigate! Greet'n's, Brat!"

Every one at the table was laughing, and Brat joined in as he said, "The joke's apparently on me!" Then, looking at Riley, he demanded with a set smile, "What's the big idea, Tom?"

Riley merely laughed, and invited him to sit down. Brat's eyes swept the group, coming to rest with a jolt upon the smiling countenance of none other than the fair, sweet-faced creature of his dreams, the cause of his nightmare, the proverbial monkey-wrench of his mental machinery, Virginia Jordan.

"How do you do, Mr. Bratten?" she smiled sweetly. "Won't you take off your coat and be comfortable after your hard ride?" She moved over, making room for him to squeeze in beside her, but Brat, noting quickly that there was an even number of girls and fellows, did not move.

"No—don't want to break in on your party," he declared, really smiling this time, and continued, "So I guess I won't stay."

This brought forth a general flurry of invitations to



remain. "Come on, Brat, now you're here, sit down and be human for a while." This from Riley, who was at the moment acting as official bar-tender for the party.

"Humph!" returned Brat, smiling and shrugging his broad shoulders. "You'd better be happy while you're here, you're going to get killed when you get home; I'll be waiting up for you! So long, folks." And with that he fled.

"That's that!" Riley had the drinks prepared by this time, and looking toward Virginia, he exclaimed, "Come on, now, Va, don't cry over spilled milk—drink this and forget it all." So they all drank and Virginia tried to forget it all.

But she was having trouble in erasing Brat from her memory; that faculty in her mind was exceptionally keen, and she talked to her escort, the Beau, with growing concern for the cause of Brat's rudeness to her.

"You can't prove anything by me, Sweet Woman," was the Beau's invariable rejoinder and refuge. "That man is the prize enigma of all time——"

"The Egyptians used him for a model when they made the Sphinx!" put in Brock.

"Well, I can't understand him at all!" declared Virginia, as if trying to convince herself that she should never hope to be able to understand him.

"Why worry about a mere man!" was the wise, sophisticated comment of Dora, who for the first time in many moons had persuaded Brock to take her on a real party with his friends. He had been uncomfortable all evening, waiting for her to spill either his own or some other one's beans.

The party dragged on and eventually broke up. At home, Virginia cried herself to sleep. For the first time in her happy young life, a man had absolutely spurned her, thrown her flat, and she felt it keenly, the more so because the man happened to be something that she wanted—wanted, oh! so terribly much! She had been delighted with Brat's funny ways on the occasion of their



first meeting. He was so big, so strong, so clean and fine and so unlike the "wise" boys to whom she was accustomed. She really wanted Brat, as she had never wanted any other thing or person in her life. She had given him every opportunity for calling on her, for becoming better acquainted with her. She had waited and waited so patiently for him to call on that day after the Yale game—but he never called.

She had consented to come on this night's party just in the hope of seeing him, and finding out the reason for his not calling or trying to see her during the two months since their meeting; she had come with Beau, ("a prince of a fellow, and all that, but not much of a substitute for Brat"), and had lived in hopes all evening long, finally swallowing her pride to suggest the calling of Brat. And in the end—he wouldn't even speak to her by name! And for no reason at all! No wonder she cried.

At the same time in Cambridge, Riley blasted Brat in no uncertain terms. "You big, brainless, pig-headed barnacle on the rear end of progress! And you haven't got even the decency enough to appreciate what we tried to do for you! What the hell's the matter with you anyway—is that girl poison?"

Brat listened to a lot before he even bothered to answer; finally he said, slightly ruffled by the Irishman's verbal mauling, "Why don't you all leave my business alone? If I wanted to see her I'd go to see her. Anyway, I can't see what the hell she was doing down there in that joint with Beau—she must have a fine sense of fair play! And besides that—nothing!" With which he proceeded to undress without another word, and crawled into bed.

But he heard Riley say to the Beau, "Well, old tank, it looks as if your martyrdom were in vain!"

And the Beau replied, "She's a good kid—but it was sort of rotten—can't blame her for feeling upset."

Then Brock, who was slightly peeved and sour on the world because Dora had behaved herself all evening,

cursed the other two into bed and told them, "Let him alone—he's a married man!"

But Brat, married man or no, dreamed about Virginia that night, and was much annoyed throughout the following days by very queer feelings, totally strange to him—resentment for having let himself into meeting Virginia in the first place, further resentment because he did not feel free to see her again on account of Ellen, irritation because Virginia did not seem to play fair with her man, Jud Lee, aggravation because her image would not cease appearing before him, annoyance because he was always getting into meetings with her in which he invariably made a fool of himself or acted like an ass, and exasperation because he was resentful, irritated, aggravated and annoyed.

Meanwhile Virginia had similar feelings, from slightly different causes, and finally broke off her relations with Jud Lee entirely, knowing that sooner or later the news of this break would come to Brat's ears and perhaps stir him to action—for Jud was the only reason she could assign to Brat's reluctance toward her.

But she waited and waited without visible results. The news did in due time come to Brat, but the same day brought a good-sized letter from Ellen, and within a day or so he heard that Jud and Virginia were again tied up. The result was that Virginia waited and waited—most unlike any modern American girl is supposed to wait—and Brat waited and waited, all in a stew the greater part of the time; wanting to stay away from her and play the game with Ellen, at the same time he did want something else, and he didn't know what to do, because he had a premonition that playing around with this Virginia would not be the same for him as his playing around with Pick's friends had been during their Freshman year. Brat was extremely conscientious for a youth of his age; had his conscience not been so supremely in control of his machinery, the female monkey-wrench in the person of Virginia would have put his machinery not a bit out of

commission; the monkey-wrench would have usurped the control, and that would have been the end of it. But as it was, Brat's machine was functioning sporadically, spasmodically and altogether inefficiently. And Brat knew it.

Riley watched developments, and on several occasions, after some queer act on Brat's part betokened this disturbed state of affairs, he confided to Brock, "Distance sure does lend enchantment for these one-woman men."

And Brock, uneasy with the crown of Dora upon his head, would reply, not knowing whether Riley referred to Ellen or Virginia as the one-woman of Brat's endearment, "Just like shell-shock! The damned fool's going nuts!"

To Brat, this "distance lends enchantment" idea was a two-edged sword, cutting in either direction or in both. Still, as does not happen in the story books, nothing happened, as does happen in real life. The routine of work and play continued—regardless of all disturbances.

### KEY HUNTING

The life of an undergraduate from day to day is full of incongruities and inconsistencies, dull realities and lurid expectations, contrasting ups and downs of emotional experience. The student who so intently hangs upon the words of wisdom emanating from a bewhiskered instructor in a four-o'clock class, rushes from the lecture room to keep his next engagement—considered of equal importance by him—which may be an idle game of bridge, a tutorial conference with an instructor, a date with a bootlegger, a tête-à-tête with a loose lady, or a session of thesis-writing in the library or in his room. No one can ever tell by observing the occupation of a student at five o'clock just what that student will be doing at six, nor can one tell by the nature or elegance of one's conversation in a bookstore at noon just how or about what one will be talking in his own room after dinner.

Most students are like lamp-laden Diogenes, going from



place to place, from people to people, from one thing to another, seeking; unlike Diogenes, they usually cannot say definitely just what it is that they are seeking; but it is very seldom an honest man.

In the days following Brat's last meeting with Virginia, there was more or less of a strained atmosphere in their rooms, the cause of which was traceable to what Riley called "this damned restlessness." No one seemed to feel certain about anything, and no one seemed to be able to do anything of a definite, constructive nature. Their lives as students had, since Freshman days, been more or less colored, their dull moments merely leading up to colorful incidents. There had been plenty of incongruities and inconsistencies in the past; but now it seemed that everything was more awry than ever, and, as Riley said, "We ought to be more settled than ever, more regular, instead of irregular!"

But affairs continued to be rather irregular. A change was coming about, and the troubles could all be traced to Brat, for that individual, who had been forever a slave to habit, was now become a slave to indecision, and the change was affecting not only himself but his roommates. He had made more or less of a success of everything in the past merely because of his ability to plot and ply a straight unmindful course through the good and bad waters of his life. This ability was a matter of mental machinery—and Virginia was truly a monkey-wrench in that machinery, so that now his master was not Habit, but Indecision. In the following weeks he had many opportunities for seeing Virginia, and the more frequently the opportunities arose the more indecisive and irregular Brat became; his efficiency was reaching a very low ebb.

This state of mind in their erstwhile so regular roommate had various effects upon the others. Riley merely observed and wondered, philosophising as usual, and quoting poetry right and left—lines from the masters about the ways of men with maids, maids with men, the course of true love being rough and the life of lovers



being a living hell; all of which was opportune, but not conducive to comfort for either Brat or Brock.

To Brock, who had been doing just enough studying to make him dissatisfied with all college work, and hypercritical of the scheme of things, Brat's affairs and Riley's poetic commentaries were more disturbing than Riley suspected. He had come to a working agreement with Dora by which he was able to maintain his own dignity among his fellows and at the same time see her as often as he chose. This he had thought would make things much easier and his mind more comfortable, but as the time passed and Dora still made a practice of keeping after him incessantly, Brock came to the conclusion that his hopes had been vain. He was determined to make the best of his predicament in so far as such a "best" was at all tolerable, but his odd attraction toward the memory of Ellen really did more to keep him to that determination than did the determination itself. He could not understand why Brat should ever think of turning away from Ellen for such a lightweight flapper as Virginia, and he did not know whether to be regretful or gratified over the many evidences of Brat's intention to stick to his girl from Dartonville. He suspected, before much time had passed, that Brat was on uneasy street, and he had to admit to himself that he was sorry, for very obvious reasons, all of which caused him shame.

The peace which had come in Brock's amative affairs had superseded the peace which he had had in his college affairs; he now transferred his restless attention to the business of going to college, with the inevitable result that he came to the same old conclusion—that it was all waste of time.

"We were arguing about Education and Intelligence in English conference today," said Riley one afternoon, as he sat down to play a game of cards with Brock and Beauvais and a friend named McCarthy. "Professor Whosis defined intelligence as 'the having of a purposeful sense of values by which to conduct one's life.'"

“Meaning, in good old-fashioned slang—what?” inquired the Beau, lighting a cigarette. The Beau had a habit of putting more expression and finesse into the lighting of a cigarette than he could ever command for any other occasion.

“That’s the trouble with all these definitions and generalities,” declared Brock. “No one can understand them—that is, the man in the street can never understand them.”

“What do you mean—man in the street?” demanded the Beau, forgetting his technique. “I’ll have you understand that I belong to the intelligentsia, and where I come from they cut throats for less than that!”

Brock smiled, saying, “But you’re not where you come from!” Having thus ignored the other’s mock anger, he proceeded, “I’d like to have some one explain the whole rigmarole of education to me; I go through the motions every day even to such side lines as chasing women and drinking hooch and shootin’ craps, but damned if I can make out just what it’s all about; the whole crew of us ought to be out diggin’ ditches somewhere, I think!”

“Well,” began the Irishman again, “Old Whosis described life as a huge lock, and all us human beings are supposed to be chasing around looking for a key to fit it. Now some kids go to work in grocery stores when they’re fourteen years old, and they look for the key there and around their work; others go through high school and maybe get a line on the key there; others just wander from one thing to another, never doing anything worth while, and they’re looking for the key; some of us come to college, and some work like hell, while some play around all the time, but all of us are looking for the key—some depend on luck, others on work, and faith in work.”

“What difference did this Whosis think work or loafing might make about finding this all-important key?” asked Brock.

“Aw—deal the cards!” interrupted Beau, who had the

happy faculty of not caring about things intellectually discussable.

Brock proceeded mechanically to deal, his mind still turning over the possibilities of the key-lock conception of life. Finally he said, "Well, I suppose the idea is that some fellows come to college and just float around waiting for the key to drop into their hands—that's us. Others come here and don't take chances like that, but start right in to make a key of their own, so they'll be sure to have one to fit the lock; there's a lot around like that—Brat, for instance, and Pick; they'll be able to open that bloomin' lock, I suppose, while we'll still be drifting, and cursing Dame Fortune for not giving us a key all readymade! That the idea, Tom?"

"Exactly," replied Riley. "The aim of education should somehow fit in there, too; let's see, I think Whosis summed it up by saying that we should all be better able to look at life and appreciate values. He meant that we should, after finishing a college course, be in a position to do the things that are worth doing and avoid doing things which are valueless. That's just common sense!"

"Sure, any damned fool knows that!" put in the Beau, who at this time was making the best part of his living by selling bootleg liquor to his friends around the college. "Why, I never needed to come to Harvard to learn that."

"Right—neither did we," answered Brock, still thinking about the idea. "It isn't the knowing that counts, it's the being able to exercise your knowledge. Now, you—you damned fool, Beau—you say you know you should be able to discriminate between worth while and worthless occupations and acts, and probably you can so discriminate, but you don't act accordingly. Education should make a man a stronger man, make him able to do what he sees is worth while, and avoid doing what he sees isn't worth while—there's the aim of education!"

"A lot of huey!" was the Beau's opinion. "Mac, now you can see what I have to listen to every damned day.



"This pair is terrible!" McCarthy smiled, waiting for the game to proceed.

It went on slowly, Riley and Brock being more interested in speculating upon this business of education than in watching the run of the cards.

"Education should educate desires!" said Riley. "That's what you mean, Brock—and it should educate them so that they will be strong enough to look out for themselves, eh?" Brock nodded, and the Irishman continued, "Well, look at us—we're fine examples of educated desires!"

"Yeh—four bundles of suppressed desires!" laughed the Beau. "Will you, for Cripes sake, deal those cards?"

The cards were dealt and the game went on, the interruptions for discussion becoming more and more infrequent. Now and then the conversation would center on the cards—thence to the subject of some girl who happened to be known to them all—thence to the price of liquors in various localities—thence from subject to subject, with many profane comments and heated arguments, until finally Brock declared that he had had enough. "I've lost interest in playing cards," he declared; "lost interest in everything, as a matter of fact! I'd like to get rip-roaringly plastered and raise Cain!"

The game broke up; the players separated. Brock declared again for a liquor party, thought better of it and declared that he had to study, thought again and decided to go to Dora's—and went, thinking the while he did that there was "a hell of a big joke in this Educated Desires scheme!"

Yes, college life is much a matter of incongruities and inconsistencies; it was even becoming so for Brat, the paragon of consistency and logical progression in real life. He went through the routine as if little were wrong within him, but, if all could have been seen, his mind was at this time a battlefield with as many armies struggling there as he had complexes, inhibitions and desires—both educated and uneducated, suppressed and free.



An older man, in considering Brat's case, would probably have said that the only trouble with him was that he had taken longer to grow up than the average boy takes. Whether or no, Brat was having his troubles, and more than once he felt the point of the apex of his triangle of hearts pricking him unnecessarily deep. He was uncomfortable, to say the least.

All of which uneasiness arose from the fact that Virginia, who apparently could not take "No" for an answer, continually contrived to have Brat invited places where they would meet, and in many other ways managed to keep herself in his mind. Brat's determination grew stronger, however, and when he learned from home that Ellen would be at school in Boston again the following fall, he breathed a sigh of relief.

So the school year passed, with not much of anything happening to break the routine, except several amateur shows, musical clubs' concerts, Union dances and finally the Junior Prom, which all attended, and where Brat ran full-face into Virginia and was feeling so intoxicatingly good that, had it not been for Jud Lee's watchful supervision of his companion, Brat would probably have bettered his acquaintance with her. With morning he was entirely recovered, and joined with Riley in blasting out all such social functions which, as the Irishman said, "Are nothing but elevated mob scenes, with two orchestras trying to drown out the noise, and a hallful of stags looking with eyes like hungry wolves at every girl that passes, cutting in if you let 'em or making wise cracks about the girl the rest of the evening if you don't let 'em! A hell of a party!"

On this occasion Brock had said, "No one ever seems to have a good time at those big dances—I can't understand why people go to them if they don't enjoy them!" Brock had spent the evening in the crowd's booth entertaining other fellows' girls when the other fellows' thirst had to be quenched. "Now me—I had a good time on several drinks, and never danced a dance!"

However, the fact remained that no one enjoyed the Prom over-much, and that was really the only real break in the monotony of late winter and early spring.

Weeks passed, and the general uneasiness increased. Brock was serene socially but much upset academically; more and more he grew to be critical of all about him, his work, the reason for other's actions, the why of going to college. He looked out upon the college world about him and wondered more and more at the passing show.

Came a Sunday in late spring—and if there is one day of the week really, concretely remembered by every alumnus, it is Sunday; for on Sunday of all the days of the week the student is absolutely his own boss; there's no nine o'clock bell on Sunday morning, no classes to attend, breakfast can be eaten leisurely, a fellow can take his time about doing whatever he pleases. Sunday in Cambridge is a day of rest. Such days are memorable, even in the lives of loafers.

#### “WHAT MEANS THIS TUMULT IN A VESTAL'S VEINS?”

Inconsistencies and incongruities! Educated desires! Intelligence, the end of education, equals a perspective of life, a working sense of values! These, Brock and Riley often argued, were the reasons for one's coming to college. Brock and Riley thought and discussed these matters at great length, but had they been able to see and know everything that was going on about them, their discussions and meditations would have run to incredible lengths, and in the end they would have been baffled by the evidence.

Came a Sunday in late spring; and of all places in the world, none can vie with Harvard Square and its community (or rather, any college community might vie with it) in the matter of having the greatest variety of human occupations and activities on the Sabbath morning. For which there is ample explanation, and many proofs of the explanation.

Truly, Cambridge, in that so Puritanical Commonwealth of Massachusetts, is in a country acclaimed for its freedom and personal liberty, and Harvard Square, in Cambridge, is a veritable hive of the free. Here one may worship as he pleases or sees fit, blaspheme as he pleases or sees fit and do good or evil in general as he pleases or sees fit. This Freedom.

The greatest of old American colleges, glowing self-satisfiedly in its own light, is a hill-top temple of freedom; its far-flung community, from the Charles to the hills of Somerville, reflects the temple lights. Its intellectual oligarchy is a high priesthood in this temple of democracy—knowledge and intelligence being the beacons of true democracy. Its professors are intercessors before the god of knowledge, and its instructors are ushers serving the multitude who think they seek communion with Knowledge, but really want only to see and hear the priests of that god within the walls of his temple.

(Riley had noted these features and had said, "Athena, goddess of learning, you've a lot to answer for!" And Brock replied, "You can blame everything on a woman!")

That multitude! This Freedom! They come seeking something, they know not what. They come to be satisfied, they know not how. They crowd the schools and colleges of the country until these institutions are breaking under the strain of catering to the multitude seeking admission to the halls of learning. A mania for learning—for college-given knowledge—every boy and girl must be educated! They come in droves and legions, multitudes—and from what cause this inrush? for what purpose? Why are the worn walls so attractive? Why do the feet of millions so itch to tread well trod stones? Why this thirst for knowledge? Why do they come, this multitude?

They come to be in fashion—being uneducated is simply not being done—it is mortifying! They come for



prestige, to bask in the rays of the temple's lights, supremely confident that they will go away with a new and brilliant coloring for all the world to see and admire or envy!

What is the business of education? Is it, as Riley called it, "Merely a chance for the brilliant to shine and the dumb stones to reflect," or is it, as Brat put it, "Just one's job for the time being"? Is this brilliant coloring worth so much effort and expenditure and sacrifice by fathers and mothers, and often by the young worshipper himself? What do they find, once inside the temple walls? Here they set about getting what they seem to have wanted, doing what they please, chasing those satisfactions which they crave to embrace. They will be satisfied with the prestige of a degree, this they know. But other than that, their cravings have little in common with the services of learning. They live, but their learning does not help them live, nor does it help them die! Their cravings are for freedom, not for the finding of things ultimately worth while, not for developing a sense of values by which to apply and strengthen and make more happy their existence on this earth. They crave self-expression, unfettered individuality. This Freedom; the privilege to live as each sees fit, to enjoy and indulge in those pleasures, those vices, those "experiences" which, they have been deluded into thinking, home life has not allowed them. This Freedom is written in smoke-letters; it is a mirage, an illusion, causing anticipations which can never lead to satisfactions or even realizations, but for the time of its predominance, we poor mortals spend our every moment in pursuit. If variety is the spice of life, as it is so often said to be, no Mexican could swallow a morsel as hot as our modern life appears to be. The joys of monotony and the pleasures of solitude are conspicuously scarce.

Every community bears witness. A Sunday morning in Harvard Square finds a myriad of scenes which are truly typical of all such communities in our broad, fair

land—the number of kinds of scenes almost equals the number of people in the community—for in an age of independence, even so-called, people *will* do as they please.

As they please? On a late spring Sunday, on Cambridge Common, stretching from the Washington Elm on Huron Avenue across to the black hole whence come the subway cars up Massachusetts Avenue, may be seen here and there a nursemaid watching over a child at play or pushing a baby carriage mechanically up and down one of the paths that skirt the statue in the center of the green. Here and there, also, is an old man contemplating the sky and the trees and the passersby. Also a few people hurrying past, toward some destination, perhaps a church, but more probably to a breakfast or lunch in the Square. Also a few students reading books or Sunday papers in the shaded corners. Also, perhaps a few children playing on the statue, accompanying their movements with screams and laughter. And perhaps if one is observant a foreign-featured man or boy may be seen walking intently across the green, with bulging pocket or maybe a handbag which now and then gives forth a tinkling glass-against-glass sound. But altogether a peaceful, soothing bit of modern life there on Cambridge Common on a Sunday morning in late spring.

On the opposite side of the subway's mouth stretches the main portion of the University grounds. The walled-in campus traditionally known as the precinct of the original College, and now called "The Yard," seems in a state of calm peace equalling that prevailing on the Common. The lecture and demonstration halls and the laboratories are closed. Widener Library is open "for readers only." Dormitories are apparently lifeless, ominously so. Even Appleton Chapel, where services are regularly held, and the Phillips Brooks House, with its ever-welcoming open doors, are almost deserted, as if in keeping with the Sabbath spirit. All is quiet throughout the Yard, for the few stragglers, who might so easily disturb the peace, are

low-voiced or silent in their unconscious respect for, or awe of, the atmosphere of this historic place.

Yet the occupants of these ominously quiet dormitories are not all wrapped in sleep, as investigation of any one of them would prove. In one of the Senior halls, several incompatible occupations are in progress. In one room a leisurely game of bridge, the four players smoking and talking and playing with no evidence of enthusiasm or interest. In another two friends jointly carrying on a telephonic conversation with a mutual girl friend. In another a group of studious-looking young men, dressed in the latest lounging clothes as given in *Vanity Fair*, are reading the *Boston Sunday Advertiser* and the *New York Times*, with intermittent discussion of debatable items of news. In another a lone man, dressed most properly for the street, acts as though he were waiting for some one to call for him; he puffs furiously at his pipe and glares at the cards with which he is playing solitaire on his bed. In another, the "goodies" are giving the beds a lick and a promise, hurrying as if afraid some one might see them making them up properly. Next door a dishevelled youth is engaged in writing his weekly letter to the home folks, his train of thought being frequently broken by his roommate's requests for information as to details of the week-end party in prospect. Overhead, two collegiately dressed gallants are eagerly discussing tennis and the fine arts, and as eagerly consuming chocolates and mixed nuts. Down the hall a noisy meeting of a chapter of The Ancient and Dishonorable Order of Crapshooters is in that state of tenseness that comes only after an all-night session.

From the showers comes the sound of several voices, whistling, and running water. At the telephone in the hall a ministerial-visaged hopeful is exercising against an unresponsive operator a line of profanity and blasphemy that would shame the proverbial trooper by its profusion and strength.

Downstairs, in the basement that unsung and undeserv-



ing hero, the janitor, is spending his half-hourly rest over a rank old pipe whose aroma disinfects the entire building, thus relieving the unsung hero of that unpleasant task. Behind his chair an ominously fat cat is singing to herself, wondering perhaps why all her friends are looking so thin of late.

In a well-decorated room on the first floor, a poet, whose works are as yet unpublished, is communing with his muse by gazing dreamily across the Yard; a copy of "Sappho" lies closed in his lap; paper, pencil and a writing board are near his hand, and he is waiting for the divine afflatus. In the rooms above, two sufferers from an acute lyric urge are rendering their repertoire on banjo, ukulele and voice, all sour; fortunately, their windows are closed, for they happen to be singing some of those memorably rotten ditties which came out of the Great War, the last one being about a certain "Farmer, I Want Your Daughter Fine! Parlez-vous?" the daughter evidently being none other than the renowned lady from Armentières, who said she might as well have been in a vault for the last fifteen years. A touching little ditty, full of pathetic feeling and misleading inspiration, but it is being enjoyed with smiles by more than one young boy down the hall, where open doors signify its welcome.

One of these listeners wonders vaguely "how they do it." He is a dazed, dreary youth, too boyishly handsome for his own good, and he is walking the floor, with a letter in his hand which he has read over and over again since he found it in his letter box late the night before. The letter said, in ironically fine, well-chosen phrases, that the Dean was "very sorry to inform" him that "on account of" his failure to meet his requirements, his "connection with the University" was severed. "Survival of the fittest!" he keeps muttering as he listens to the songs from down the hall. "A damned lie! Survival of the Fortunate! That's it!"

In the room above him a dissipated Romeo lies abed, arguing with himself the pros and cons of the marriage

problem. He has met a married woman who swears she loves not her husband but him, and wants only the time to rid herself of her lawful supporter in order to take him for better or for worse. Not so good, thinks the Romeo. His roommate, because he cannot sleep and is too retiring to get up, is reading a novel, required in one of his English courses, and is almost ashamed of himself for enjoying it. Across the hall, a sickly, apparently God-forgotten boy is dressing for church; he thinks the services are worthless, education aimless and his own time misspent, but he goes to his classes regularly, studies hard, lives an upright life and keeps wondering why he doesn't get along as the other fellows do.

And in the attic suites are a few scholars. Bright, clever fellows, whose intelligence has not shown them as yet that scholarship pays no dividends. At this moment, two such men are spending the Sabbath in plugging over a dry old Greek named Sophocles. In contrast, the adjoining suite holds a young fellow with a wardrobe full of clothes of recent model; a few books are in evidence; the room is in disorder; the boy, sitting up in bed, is wondering whether his check from home will arrive on the morning mail next day; he does not try to remember that his mother will forego clothes and little near-necessities in order to get that check off to him, the brilliant young hopeful of the family; he has a party planned for Monday night.

Rest, quiet, peace, intellectual serenity! but this college life is an intense life!

In the opposite corner of the Yard the residence of the president sits, smug, imposing and impressive in its sturdy architecture. Seeing it one wonders how any man could look out upon the world from its windows with feelings other than serene and satisfied. But across the street the dark old Union is beginning to show signs of life. The card-room, otherwise known as the Quiet Room, has its windows open. The reading room holds a few letter writers and newspaper readers. Not much

noise there, but at the other end of the building, the dining hall is beginning to fill with that motley crowd of German-Jews, Russian-Jews, French-Jews, American-Jews, Italians, Greeks, Frenchmen, Swedes, Irishmen, Irish-Americans, acquired-Englishmen, Chinamen, Japs, Filipinos, East Indians and a few retiring Yankees—that crowd which, by its cosmopolitanism, has offered the negro waiters the unusual opportunity of getting a liberal education in the psychology, manners and politics of the world of nations, which opportunity these dusky servitors, however, forego, preferring to vie among themselves in noisily rustling silver and chinaware. Their efforts produce the most unmusical cacophony imaginable and greatly disturb the peace and quiet of the Union's near neighborhood.

Yet across Harvard Street a picturesque church is doing business, and almost between the two a dormitory that is known as the last stronghold of the "gold coasters," the wealthy loafers, stands in uncomplaining rest and peace, with the air of saying that money buys immunity from all such disturbing elements of life as clinking silverware and peeling church bells.

Along the Avenue, the shops and lunch rooms are all open, yawning for business, with the exception of one antique furniture shop, one grocery, two jewelry stores, two second-hand book stores, one bank, two clothing stores and one haberdasher's. In and out and about these shops many well-dressed, collegiate young men loiter, all of them apparently acquainted among themselves—as they should be, for most of them have lived in and around Harvard Square throughout their lives. They are all members in good standing of the University of Harvard Square, a self-perpetuating institution, whose entrance requirements demand that the individual assume the collegiate manner, wear the latest fashions, mingle with Harvard men and be able to talk Harvard athletics to strangers, visitors and any of the Crimson's enemies. They have the virtue of loyalty.



From the little streets which go down toward the River, trickle a series of steady streams of life, which pour into the Avenue and help to swell the torrent there. The Avenue and the Square present such a suggestion with the continually creeping throng of church-goers, idle promenaders, lunch patrons and boy-crazy girls. Long before noon the promenade is on, and the Subway Rotunda in the center of the Square stands like an island rock in a sea of steadily churning waters. It all suggests the manner of living in our cities today, where people go out for the air by walking the streets most crowded with people.

Albeit, there's a peaceful scene. Indeed, the policemen are so anxious for excitement that the least, inadvertent misdemeanor elicits the sternest rebuke. Harvard Square is a peaceful place, a likable place, a desirable place to live and learn, which shows that it is fulfilling at least a part of its *raison d'être*, which is to provide a place for one "to live and learn to live"—the last infinitive's meaning making a superficial judgment on appearances unreliable.

#### SEVEN TUTORS AND ONE PUPIL

On such a Sunday morning in late spring, a justly renowned local chapter of the Ancient and Dishonorable Order of Crapshooters was in a wild session in its usual place of meeting, in one of the little alley streets just off the Avenue. The rendezvous in which the session was in progress was in the name of four quiet peace-loving members of the University the quietest one of whom was still abed in the vault-like chamber beside the study. His three roommates were taking an active part in the proceedings in the study. One of them looking a little the worse for having been up all night was showing signs of steadily waning enthusiasm for the game in progress on the floor, but the others were more actively interested. Of the whole group gathered there, two others also showed unmistakable evidences

of having been on the previous night's party, and the three who were thus so tired were in various stages of undress—one with shoes and shirt off, another clad in a battered straw hat and knee-length underwear of a well-advertised variety, and the other, sans trousers and sans shoes, looking every inch the model for some college-cut sox company. A grotesque picture this trio presented—somehow inconsistent with the descriptions of students given by certain estimable educators in their books, magazine articles and public utterances. Yet Riley, Brocker and Maunstein were students in good standing.

Completing the circle around the playing field, four other, obviously more interested, participants were sitting, squatting, kneeling and standing, money before them or in hand, talking incoherently to the dice and to one another, and emphasizing their points by unnecessarily noisy but typical gesticulations. One of these was in pajamas, having been rooted from his slumbers by the noise of the festival. The other three were adequately clothed, so much so that they appeared to be expecting to leave momentarily, and Riley was spasmodically re-dressing himself preparatory to going with them—they were bound for the little wooden cathedral just down the street from their present meeting place. The names of the other three were Manning, O'Connell and McCarthy.

This carnival in honor of Lady Luck, *la belle dame sans merci*, had started early in the morning upon the return of Riley and the other undressed figures from an all-night party in town; it had dragged on through the morning, with varying good and bad fortune for the several individuals, chiefly for the reason—which is always the reason for the duration of all informal gambling sessions—that it could not be stopped: no man will sanction the breaking-up of a game when he is losing and he can't walk out of the game when he's winning.

"That's always the way it is!" Riley complained, for perhaps the twentieth time that morning. "We've got to go now or we'll miss Mass—but we can't walk out with all

the money without you fellows getting sore about it! I'm off these friendly games after this!" The Irishman, however, continued in the game, giving every one a chance to win back the money which he had gathered into his coffers.

And the game dragged on, the losers began to "come back" and the winners to lose, so that by the time the last ring of the beckoning church bells had died away, Riley had changed from the winner's position and attitude to that of a loser—and he resented the change. The Beau and Brock were now winning, the church-bound contestants were their opposites.

So the game went on—and the further along it dragged, the more bitter became the feeling of all concerned until, long after church time, it bade fair to end in utter hostility between the various parties. Riley was loud in his complaints and, when Brock chided him for being a poor sportsman, he declared, with much feeling, "The good loser is an affectation. There ain't no sich animal, because when a man loses something that means anything to him, he's going to feel rotten about it! If he shows his feelings he's called a bum sport, but show it or not, he really is, every damned time!"

To which Brock readily agreed, he being now a winner. But the game went on in the time-old way, turning gradually but surely into a survival of the most fortunate or fittest, and the man in the bedroom continued in unperturbed slumber, for it required greater cataclysmic disturbances than crap games to disturb the Brat, even when Virginia in image did not hold him entranced.

The festival would undoubtedly have ended in a chaos of bitter feelings, had it not been for the unexpected arrival of a young man for whom no one entertained the slightest comradely feeling. The game had been in progress about six hours when this individual appeared, at the so-called psychological moment, and achieved the incredible by bringing every one back to a state of



good feeling. Such things, rare indeed, do happen once in a long time, and this occasion was the once.

The gentleman in question was one F. Somerford Hamilton (commonly called "Frank" by his friends) a being so lean and lanky that Darwin would have been hard put to it to distinguish him from the genus tooth-pick. Son of a moderately successful Boston lawyer, Frank had spent such a guarded childhood and youth that his attitude toward other human beings and toward life was slightly twisted, askew in keeping with the stories and tales which so mislead the curious uninitiated. Excruciating in his proclivity for talking about himself and for reciting with over-affected suavity his innumerable intimacies with the governor, judges, large scale politicians and other easily recognized authorities of the Commonwealth, studiously a man of the world in all things, eternally spreading choice bits of scandal and talking about his own escapades and experiences in a way that caused acute pains to all but first acquaintances, Frank was withal, a likable chap, entirely harmless, without malice and without sting. Always ready to lend one a dollar or two, he was forever after mentioning the incident, and forever blating about something of no importance whatsoever. He was in his own mind, an exalted man among men. The crowd had long ago given him up as a hopeless nincompoop and paid as little attention as possible to his inconsequential presence.

On this Sunday, about noon, he rushed in, all business, and in a loud, frenzied voice, reeled off his prearranged line: "Boys, O boys! What a party! What a party! Never saw as much liquor in all my life! Almost floated away in it! Down at Judge ——'s country place— everybody, women and all, plastered for fair— The Judge was so boiled when we broke up that he insisted on giving every one present a quart of his liquor! Can you string that? Absolutely insisted! I got a quart of Gordon's! Brought it home and haven't touched it— if I'd had one more drink I'd never have got home! . . .

O boys, O boys! What a party! My old man'll have hemorrhages in four directions when he hears about it!"

Most of this running line was unnoticed by the tired and nervous auditors, but the reference to Gordon's Gin caused every head to turn toward the speaker.

"Well, let's have a drink!" suggested Riley, creating a pause in the activities of the galloping cubes.

"Oh Cripes!" replied Frank with a laugh. "I haven't got it with me. It's in the car."

"Well, where is it?" This from the Beau.

"Why, it's in the car. unless some one's appropriated it since four o'clock this morning."

"Well, where in hell is the car?" Riley broke in again.

"Uh—down by the Catholic Club." Frank was beginning to look uneasy.

"Then, for the love of Lucifer, go down and get it!" Riley's voice held more despair than hope. "Don't you see we're all about ready to pass out here? Go on! Be a good fellow for once in your life—if you leave that gin down there somebody'll steal it, sure as hell, and then none of us will profit by it. Chase along, Frank!"

McCarthy, "I'll go with you."

"Why-y-a, no, I'll get it—if it's still there." Frank spoke hastily, adding, "You know it may not be there now anyway. I told Izzy Donnelly he could use the bus to run in town, so it may be gone now. But I'll run over and see." That was a happy inspiration, Frank appeared to think, for he smiled, saying, "Pray for me!" and was out the door and gone.

The game proceeded again with new hope and life instilled into it. The betting was still restrained, but the prospect of a few drinks raised the assembled spirits very noticeably.

Somerford returned after an absence of what seemed an age and rushed in talking. "Just my luck! Donnelly's gone to town. Ought to be back any time now, but of course you can't tell—he may not be back for an hour or so. I told the boys up there to send him right

down here pronto as soon as he comes in." Frank was much grieved, as could be plainly seen. "So—that's the best I could do, fellows!"

The disappointment, however, brought the house down upon the hapless Frank. Innuendo, sarcasm, ridicule, insinuation and not a little well-directed profanity were heaped upon him; he was a joker—a fraud—always shootin' a line a mile long but never producing—they'd bet he never had a good drink in his life—probably never saw that Judge's face, let alone his country home—full of the old huey—a fourflusher—a false alarm—a damned nuisance—worthless pest—et cetera almost ad infinitum.

Somerford was uneasy, but not utterly squelched. He was accustomed to such treatment. However, it appeared that the seven players were united against him; their little grudges and grievances were forgotten, or rather, were all directed against Somerford instead of against one another.

"Cripes!" said Frank to himself. The more his friends talked at him, the more clearly he saw that he had to do something dramatic and heroic to quiet their tongues and redeem himself in their good graces.

The seven went back to their game, but continued to fire sarcastic questions and ironic suggestions at the unhappy young false alarmist, who watched the game with an air of close attention; actually he was wondering desperately over the possibilities of his predicament. After a time he arose, and nonchalantly remarked that he was going out to try again to find Donnelly and his bottle of Gordon's. Before he reached the door, he had the displeasure of hearing a chorus of ridiculing comments which spurred him on in his determination to "show that gang" he was not a piker.

As soon as the door closed behind him, Riley burst out. "He hasn't any liquor in any car anywhere!"

"Somebody ought to follow him," suggested Brock,



“and we’d see for sure if he’s crapping us. I’m tired of listening to his pipe dreams!”

“That’s the dope!” exclaimed the pajamaed Beau. “I’d bet a dollar to a doughnut that he’s dreaming out loud again.”

“Well?” Riley looked around the circle. “How about a little action? Who’ll go?”

“I would if I were dressed,” submitted the Beau, “but I can’t go this way.”

“Well, *sacre bleu!* Whoever goes must go quickly!” Riley was impatient. “How about you, Joe?”

The individual addressed was the hatted but pantless figure who happened to be in at least temporary possession of most of the money in the game. For this reason, the suggestion that he go out, if only for a few minutes, was a distinct *faux pas* on Riley’s part. He was properly overruled by a chorus of objections and counter proposals, and to save the day, McCarthy, who was not losing much at the moment, offered to go, and went.

The game proceeded. The dice went around the circle of six once. Again. The third time. Fourth. Fifth. And still no sign of either Somerford or McCarthy. The boys began to be restless, and McCarthy was mentioned in uncomplimentary terms several times.

“Maybe the two of them have gone off together,” suggested the Beau, who always exercised the unhappy faculty of saying the wrong thing at all times.

O’Connell, who was McCarthy’s roommate and partner through thick and thin, resented the aspersion, and was loudly ready to fight the pajamas for the slur. The Beau, however, continued to talk saying “Well what the hell’s happened to him, then? Where is he? Why don’t he come back? He’s been gone long enough to get President Lowell and bring him here!”

“He probably can’t find Somerford,” was O’Connell’s answer, “it took you snails so damned long to decide who was to have the honor of going! Why the hell didn’t you go, if you think you’re missing something?” No

blows were struck and the game went on, albeit with remarks more and more frequently occurring with reference to the two absentees and the long delay in their returning.

When all hope had vanished, and even O'Connell had become restive, and the game had again come to the point of imminent death for want of interest on the part of the winners, McCarthy rushed in.

"Guess where I found him!" he laughingly demanded.

O'Connell ventured the guess that he probably found the lanky one "having tea with the Board of Overseers!" "But where the hell is he?" He was disgusted with his roommate.

McCarthy suddenly realized that the six that had waited were not over-joyful in welcoming him. "He's up the street," he announced.

"Up the street?" O'Connell's disgust was unfathomable. Looking to the others, he went on, "Anybody'd think you'd discovered a diamond mine, the way you rushed in here! And he's up the street, is he? A hell of a lot of good that does, doesn't it?"

"Well, he's up the street, and he's on his way down here with a quart of rye!" The last announcement brought forgiveness for McCarthy.

"But rye? Did you say rye?" exclaimed the pajamas. "I thought he said he had gin."

"That's the point! He did say he had gin—so let's see how he explains it," answered McCarthy. "I didn't know where the hell to look for him. I stopped in the Pharm and the clerk told me he'd just been in there trying to buy some gin. Said he thought he'd gone over toward the Yard, so I wandered over to Weld, thinking he might have gone to that gang's hangout over there, and——"

"Did he get anything in the Pharm?" interrupted Joe, the hatted but pantless.

"No—wait! I went to Weld and listened outside their door. Somerford was talking to Dick Walker, arguing

with him about taking a quart of rye whiskey. Izzy Donnelly was there, and evidently the whiskey belonged to him and Walker. Frank wanted to buy the quart from them, and finally told Izzy he could use his Ford to go in town after another one. Finally they agreed and began to stir around, so I moved. Now, let's see what he has to say about it. Keep the game going for his grand entrance."

"Can you beat that guy?" inquired O'Connell, rhetorically.

"Guess we scared him into it," Riley concluded. "How young men go wrong!"

Again spirits revived. The game proceeded. Frank's entrance was effected with his customary dash. From a roll of newspapers he produced a well-sealed quart bottle with a well-known label on it. He set it carelessly in the center of the group and proceeded to anticipate their big question. "The gin was all gone. I got up to the Catholic Club just as Izzy got there—he was stewed to the eyebrows on *my* gin! Had about two drinks left, so I had to sit down and help him finish it. I said to him, 'What the hell am I going to do? I've got to have some liquor right away; it's already promised,' and the damned fool says, 'Here, take this!' and pulls out this quart and gives it to me. I figured it a pretty good trade, so I took it, and there you are. Go to it!" He smiled with a touching effect of fatigue, draping himself clumsily and clubbily over a hip-high bookcase in the corner of the room.

The boys went to it. The pajamas went looking for a corkscrew. The pantless Joe began to collect the motley assortment of glasses and mugs in the bathroom, bedroom and on the mantel. Riley, coming to life, remarked suddenly, "Jees, Frank! You ought to be plastered by this time. That must have been a stiff drink you and Izzy had—did it take you all this time to drink it?"

McCarthy and Brock smiled, but Frank was not to be thus caught, saying, apologetically, as if he had forgotten



to mention it before, "Oh, no—Izzy had to go to Allston, so I drove him over and then hurried back here. He was in tough shape, and I figured you fellows'd be wrapped up in your game so you wouldn't mind the delay."

All eyes were twinkling. The drinks were poured. No one spoke until Riley answered Somerford's explanation in an impromptu toast, saying, "Well, men, here's to Frankaye, May he always pay, for every such delay, in such a satisfactory way!"

"Down the dark alley!" echoed the pajamas. The glasses were drained, and all eyes turned toward Frank, who was still hesitating with his drink. They continued to look at him until, with a sudden closing of his eyes, a wry face, and a spluttering gulp, Frank downed his drink and smiled bravely back at them. He felt pretty unsteady and uneasy, but he was mighty pleased with himself at that moment.

"Great liquor, Frank," said Riley, smacking his lips. "Have to hand you the hot and cold running maids as the connoisseur of liquor. This is great stuff!"

His compliments were echoed by the others, and another drink was poured and taken. Frank's went down easier this time, and to the others the second drink was very effective also. The atmosphere of the room was entirely cleared of the smoke of battle, the bitter and raw feeling which the crap game had engendered was dispelled. Frank was a good fellow, too.

"A gentleman, a scholar, and a judge of good whiskey," as Brock said, causing a hearty laugh all around, even Frank joining in. Every one felt better now, and Riley even suggested sending a personal letter of appreciation to the distillers of the rye which they were consuming with such satisfactory results. But this suggestion being overruled, Riley turned to Frank with a few leading questions on the subject of dice, and Frank's experiences with those "cavorting heart-breakers."

True to expectations, Frank had plenty to say. Many and varied were his experiences with the leaping domi-

noes. He had communed with the fickle Lady Luck in cut-throat games with some of the toughest taxi-drivers, vault mechanics and close-to-the-ground bootleggers. Real gambling, that! No place for little Frankie to play—every one suspected every one else of cheating. Frankie didn't like it much. Then again he'd played in many an enjoyable game too—friendly little games in which a nickel caused as much excitement as a five-dollar bill. In fact, just the night before, they had had a little set-to on the Judge's billiard table. Everybody was in the game, shootin' just to be doing something. He dropped about five and quit—they were going too steep for him. No one would fade a dollar—nothing less than five to start, so he dropped out and watched the fun from afar. Frankly he didn't care for the game—he'd played enough to see that it really doesn't pay, etc., etc., etc.

All this came out in a running line of chatter which Frank punctuated with appropriate gestures and accompanied with an air of charming frankness and clubbiness.

But Frank builded better than he knew; his frankness was the more appreciated because none of his hearers had ever seen or heard of Frank's taking part in any of the skilled arts of chance, at cards or with the dice. They knew that he had been an interested spectator upon more than one occasion, but he had always studiously avoided sitting into any game as a player. But, as this day had already proved to be a day of revelations, in that Frank had actually made good on his promise of drinks, and had been seen to take not one but two stiff drinks of straight whiskey—on a day of such unexpected revelations as these, the assembled ones were quite naturally pleased with this recital of experiences, and almost suddenly began to entertain hopes that they might realize the previously incredible by seeing young Frank in a crap game.

Riley, the irrepressible comedian and practical joker, was the first to see this possibility, and it was he who made the preliminary moves toward a resumption of the

game. Under the influence of the whiskey, which was good beyond all expectation in that time when shoe-polish and hair-tonic were generally used as criteria for judging liquids to be drunk by human beings in America, the game was easily reorganized; money which had been slowly disappearing during the earlier session, appeared in abundance in all hands, and much shouting and good-natured cursing accompanied every play.

From the very beginning Riley carried on a running appeal to Frank to join the party, and at last he succeeded in placing a fifty-cent bet with that wary individual. Riley laid a dollar to Frank's fifty cents that the pajamas would not make his point, which was four. The pajamas was such a hopeful-looking sight, so confident and reassuring in the way he handled the dice and made his bets, and the others urged Frank so earnestly to take the bet, that Frank could not hold out any longer. He threw down two quarters in a careless way and remained in his previous position. Yet, try as he did, he could not appear as entirely unconcerned as he wished.

The pajamas had an exceptionally long roll. He rolled a twelve. Then an eight. Then an eleven. Then a ten. Then a five twice. Frank was interested now; the suspense was drawing him down to the playing field. The pajamas laid a "come bet," that he would make either a seven or eleven on the first roll, or repeat on whatever other point he threw on that roll. His bet was taken. He called for an eleven—no mention of the four. Frank slid from the edge of the desk on which he had been perched and stooped in the circle of players. Ten! The pajamas called for four or ten, and of a sudden, Frank's voice joined his in a demand for "Four first, dice, and then a ten!"

That was the beginning of the end for Somerford. The pajamas made the ten and laid another "come bet," with Frank still calling for his four. More suspense—an eight—five—deuce—nine—ten—then four, and the pajamas and Frank picked up their winnings.



From that point on, Frank made some kind of a bet on every play, and his voice was among the highest and loudest of those disturbing the Sabbath peace. Upon his comrades this unseemly conduct on Frank's part had the same effect as laughing-gas administered in small doses—they laughed, soon aloud, and to cover their laughing, cheered and coaxed the dice in tones growing steadily stronger and louder. The higher they raised their voices, the higher went the competing calls of Somerford, higher and louder, until bedlam seemed to reign in an unintelligible supremacy.

“Damn you, Somerford!” Riley would exclaim now and then, just to be saying something.

The spirit of the moment was irresistible, and was responsible for Frank's undoing. He felt reckless, daring, wild. So far, he had been successful, and at every count his funds were greater.

“Beginner's luck!” Brock would whisper to Riley when opportunity permitted.

“Boy, you're goin' good, there!” Brock would exclaim to Somerford, when a lull or a pause permitted his words to be heard.

“Good!” Riley would rejoin, “I'm damned glad he isn't shooting, or we'd all be broke!”

Eventually these remarks had their effect. By recourse to an excuse on the basis of being extremely superstitious about throwing dice, Frank had passed whenever it came his turn to roll; he was prospering on the side bets and on betting against the dice, for invariably he won, although many times, after cheering lustily for his point, he had to be told to pick up his money; he was so excited that he didn't really know whether he won or lost.

Eventually, however, the comments had their effect upon him. A few drinks had been passed around and after taking one, at the very height of all the noise, the spirit of the moment possessed Frank's whole being and, in a frenzy of confidence he accepted the dice in his

turn, and began what has gone down in the annals of Fair Harvard as the prize gambling trick of all time.

The human blade of eel-grass shook from tip to roots. His legs shook. His arms shook, moving so fast that the illusion of huskiness was produced. As a result of his body's shaking, the dice in his hand rattled and cracked viciously. As another result, all others present began to shake—with laughter and excitement. The room shook, the whole place shook by the time Frank's money had been covered.

He shot one dollar as a starter. Riley, who had managed to recoup some part of his losses, covered it. The dice, upon leaving Frank's hand, went in four directions: one went toward the ceiling and came down on the desk behind him, the other hit the opposite wall and caromed into the playing field.

"Crap him!" cried Riley, gasping for breath and crawling over to read the result. Frank was too excited to be able to read them. Riley called it a six on the floor and McCarthy read a one on the desk.

"Hell!" ejaculated Riley, preparing to cover the two, but Frank made no move to pick up the money. Instead he was going through the shaking process again, crying and crooning to the dice in true Ethiopian fashion.

"Seven's ma point, dice! Let's see a seven!" he cried and the dice flew out of his hand in opposite directions. When found, they showed a five and a two. "Seven she is, laddies! You can't beat your papa on these things." He laughed and majestically placed his right foot over the two dollars and surveyed his circle of opponents. All were watching him in dumbfounded incredulity. They could not even laugh; they could not speak. At last, when Riley could trust his voice, he whispered weakly, "Is that your point?"

"Sure it was—seven!" replied Frank, unmoved. "I made a six and a one on the first roll and just now a five and a two."

Broad smiles began to replace the dumb expressions

around the circle. Even yet, however, no one seemed to know what to do in a case like this, least of all Frank, who still posed over the two dollars in the center.

"All right," finally came from Riley in a tone which betrayed some sudden determination, "Shoot the two, Frank!"

"Sure—shoot the two! All right?"

"Shoot!" Riley covered with two dollars and looked around the circle for justification of his action before he turned his eyes again to the tall one with the dice.

Frank had himself in motion again; the house shook and Frank shot. One cube, with a five up, was found on the mantel-piece; the other, with a six up was under the radiator.

"Six and five are eleven!" counted Frank quickly, beginning to shake again. "'Leven's ma point, babies—let's see that eleven for papa!"

The elevens were scarce at the moment, however, and he was forced to shake the building six times before he finally rolled a six and a five.

Seeing it, O'Connell, who had been growing steadily weaker from laughter, gasped, "Gawd Gorboduc! He made it!"

"Yeh—there she is, boys! Big eleven!" Frank again posed over the money and surveyed the circle. "Read 'em and weep!"

O'Connell took the latter advice literally and began to weep profusely, but Riley controlled himself long enough to lay four dollars on the floor, saying, "Shoot the four, Frank?"

Frank shook and shot, amid wet-eyed encouragements from the circle, including even Riley, who, apparently the self-elected goat, could not decide just how to take this phenomenon. "I'd almost bet that the damned fool makes this one too!" he exclaimed, as Frank rolled.

A five was the point and after half a dozen rolls, the five appeared, causing roars of laughter from every one



but Riley, who promptly covered the eight dollars and cursed his luck in no uncertain terms.

Frank threw a ten, then proceeded to roll all over the room trying to throw another ten, while, by his shaking, twisting, stamping, coaxing and allied contortions, he had the company wrecked with laughter.

"There she is, boys! Read 'em and weep!" cried Frank. All hands came to the dice to see the ten. The sight was too much for them—their laughter burst out anew and they wept with abandon. O'Connell, taking Frank's advice literally again, adjourned to the bathroom the better to weep inconspicuously. The pajamas, holding his money close to his chest, leaned forward until his head rested upon the desk whereon Frank had rested earlier in the session. McCarthy was trying vainly to put his money in the middle of the floor, failing several times for want of sufficient energy to complete the movement. The pantless Joe gave the appearance of a line of clothes flapping in the wind. The shaking was contagious.

"Well!" announced Frank, starting as if to pick up the sixteen dollars which were now his. "What say, you fellows?"

"Four here!" Riley said, belligerently. "Let's see you take that away from me—it's all I've got." And looking to the others, he asked, "How about you laughing hyenas? Are your hands tied?" He glared uneasily at his friends.

The response was as prompt as possible under the circumstances, so prompt, in fact, that before Frank realized it, his sixteen dollars were bet again.

More crying! More shaking! Quiet.

"An eleven!" Several gasps by Brock and McCarthy, who instinctively read the eleven as loss for them.

More shaking. Quiet. "An eleven!" Utter silence. No shaking. No cheering. Suddenly Frank's voice, husky to a whisper and shaking with excitement, saying, "Sh-oot the whole thing!"

Pause. Silent glances between members of the opposition. Pockets emptied. A check written. Sixty-four dollars in the pot.

Frank shaking. Frank crying. Frank coaxing. Rattle of dice. Silence. Two cubes flying through the air. One reads *two*; the other reads six.

More shaking. More noise. Movements. Frank rolling and picking up the dice, as ten, four, three, six and eleven appear in succession. Finally, when least expected, "There's my eight!" in a low, rasping whisper.

Dismay. Wonder. Anger. Frank beginning to pick up his money.

"Wait!" Riley said, determined that by every law of percentages this fool could not keep on forever. "I'll take twenty of it! How about you Brock?"

Brock thought a moment, then said, "Ceerist! I'll be broke for the next ten days, but I suppose we have to get our money back. I'll take twenty!"

Several checks. Frank shaking. No cheers. No pleas. Flying dice. Read one; read one!

Hands reach for money. Stop. More silent glances around the circle and questioning looks toward Frank, who is unconcernedly shaking, calling for the two!

Hands withdrawn. Silence except for the rattle of dice. A ten. Sighs.

Again, shaking. A four. More sighs.

Again, shaking. A six. A few signs of life.

Again and again and again and again—Riley counted twenty-seven rolls with never a seven or a two. "How in hell can he ever roll another two?" asked Riley.

"Um-m," answered Brock. "That's what I want to know, but where in the name of all that's sacred are all the sevens?"

Roll after roll passed and the party settled into a state of dazed fascination, too weak to laugh or cry, too expectant and on edge to plead with the dice. All eyes watched Frank and all minds were dazedly praying against him.

Somewhere in the thirties—Riley lost count but swore he passed the thirty-three mark—two ones rolled to a stop, side by side, where all could see. The dropping of a pin would have sounded like a riot at that moment. After a moment that seemed ages long to all, Frank, utterly exhausted by his strenuous work, stepped toward his money, leaned over, but instead of picking it up, fell in a deathly white faint across it.

“One hundred and twenty-eight dollars!” mumbled pajamas, and with the others he continued to stare stupidly down upon the prostrate figure. This interval was short, however; at once all jumped to help in the resuscitation of the victor.

“Whiskey, quick!” exclaimed Riley, and the whiskey produced forthwith revived the fallen conqueror. But he made no move to gather in his harvest; he sat there in the middle of the floor, just beginning to realize what a terrible ordeal his foolhardiness had led him into—for Frank knew what the others only suspected, namely that he had never rolled a pair of dice before in his life!

The others were almost speechless, the best they could offer being a few inane remarks about the liquor and the general state of pecuniary ruin brought on by Somerford's phenomenal activities. Their losses, to which they referred constantly, did not however, seem to cause them much distress—which was unusual, it being always taken for granted that much sour crabbing would be in order at the moment of such disaster. And the ruin was all the more lamentable because the first of the month, ten days away, was the next “money” day for the majority of the players. In this instance, however, there were no hard feelings whatsoever—recollections of Frank's dice-rolling persisted in making the losers want to laugh uproariously, as if that ray of light made the whole affair ludicrously funny, more fantasy than reality.

Frank's feelings and thoughts were beyond description,



but the attitude of the erstwhile opposition was adequately explained by the pajamas shortly afterward in the bathroom, whither he had accompanied his quieter roommate who had chosen this moment for his arising.

"Damnedest thing I ever heard of!" the pajamas was saying to the Brat in a low voice. "Can you beat that guy for unadulterated nerve? After all his blowing about how he'd shot craps with judges and taxi drivers, he had the nerve to get into that game in there, when he must have realized that he didn't know a thing about the game—why, he didn't even know that seven and eleven always win on the first roll, or that two, three and twelve are craps and always lose on the first roll. Gad, we almost passed out laughing at the poor fool!"

"How much did he lose?" asked the lathered face before the mirror.

"Lose?" The pajamas laughed. "Hell's bells, he cleaned out the crowd. He made every damned thing that he came out on—twos, elevens, and every other point he shot for. He rolled for half an hour tryin' to make a two—mind you, a two, a crap, which nobody in God's world could ever throw! But he made it, and made one hundred and twenty-eight dollars by making it! Ran it up from one measly dollar, too! Why——"

In came Riley, smiling queerly. "Can you beat that damned fool's luck!" he exclaimed.

"Huh!" The Beau thought it unbeatable and said so, adding, "I was just telling Brat about it. But what the hell are we going to do about it?"

The shaver turned from the mirror and asked quietly, "How much money has he got now?"

"Why," Riley calculated, "he must have about seventy dollars in cash and the rest in checks."

The Beau had a sudden inspiration, upon the mention of money. "Say—we could have an awful party on seventy dollars!"

"Why not suggest it to him?" asked Brat, disinterestedly.

"No sooner said than done!" Riley was happy over the thought of getting something out of his money. "We could have one sweet party for seventy dollars!" He slipped out again to start the ball rolling in that direction.

Somerford, still pale and dishevelled, was the same grotesque figure in the center of the study floor when Riley came to present, with enviable tactfulness, the suggestion. The Irishman began by saying that he knew where there were many bottles of excellent liquor of an old, old brand, and several girls of very few morals, and that since no one had much of anything to do for the afternoon and evening, making connections with these two would be a happy and altogether desirable enterprise, a noble way for Frank to employ his winnings. "What do you think, Frank?"

Before Frank quite understood the subtle suggestion, and before he realized what it was all about, the others had completed the tentative plans for the party, and the pajamas was at the telephone inviting the chosen ladies to help them spend their month's end funds, which, it appeared, just happened to be in Mr. Somerford's care temporarily. As treasurer, he was too dazed to offer objections or excuses. Feeling that it was the thing to do, he arose to the occasion with magnanimous sportsmanship and tried to assume his customary blasé air as he gathered up his winnings and announced, "O.K.—anything up to one hundred and twenty-seven! And I'll break a date to go." Which is, altogether, one way of learning.

Then, to satisfy himself that he really was hitting the life of the elect, as portrayed in the movies, magazines and novels, he drank, striking a Long John Silver pose, the remaining two inches of the quart which he had donated. Which is altogether, if carried far enough, another way of learning.

“Lead the Brat to Liquor  
But you cannot make him Drink  
—Riley’s Unpublished Notes.

Suppressed desires — Curiosity — Antipathy toward Monotony—Anticipation of Excitements—Thrills just around the Corner—Experience as a Teacher—Acute Ennui and Fear of Missing Something—Wild Oats for Idle Hands to Sow—Something to Do—Learn Early and Be a Better Man by knowing what to avoid later—Know Thyself and as Many Other People as Will Let You—Unsatisfied Curiosity Kills a College Chap—Spontaneous Combustion!

A definite, specific, determinate description of the causes of parties, and the motives or reasons in the undergraduates’ minds at the time of promoting and going on parties whose only virtue is that they invariably become so unreasonably wild that the individuals’ anticipated evil-doings are impossible of completion, is defied by the conditions, but the above assortment of terms and phrases indicates more or less effectively the general attitude of both undergraduates and their female consorts.

On the occasion in question, much time was spent at the telephone by the Beau and by Riley, their efforts resulting in the securing of satisfactory companions for all but two of the expectant gentlemen. Arriving at this point, they were at a loss for additional recruits to the cause, having tried several sources of supply without success.

“How about Elizabeth from Malden?” asked Riley, suddenly inspired.

“No—not a prayer of getting her,” replied the Beau. “I understand she’s traveling with successful young bond salesmen and bank clerks—she wouldn’t think of going on a collegiate party now!”

“She’s graduated, eh?” commented Riley, smiling. “We’re too puerile for the young lady who is so sophis-



ticated! —Damned shame about some of these girls! —however, let's see: how about the soubrette or the dowagers?"

"There's a thought," agreed the Beau.

"We can probably get the soubrette and one of the dowagers, in case of a pinch! They're not so bad, either —both good sports about everything, even if they are a bit antiquated! What say?"

"May as well call them," submitted the French Canadian, who was ready to sign up any trollop who happened along, his service at the telephone being, as he said, "Not as much fun as you damned plutocrats seem to think!"

In due time, and with appropriate drinking and merry-making, the party was organized, and the business of seeking pleasure for pleasure's sake began to pick up. Before evening the various members of the crowd had leisurely shaved or dressed or gone after some special brand of "bootleg," and all was set for a jamboree which would make even the wildest and most zealous follower of folly excited in anticipation.

This party was to be one to remember, to tell about; it was to be a memorable experience, not just an ordinary time-passing device. The sky was to be the limit in all phases of the evening's entertainment—women, drinking, singing, dancing! There was to be neither restraint nor coercion; every one was going for the purpose of having a good time, and it was up to every man to see that he had that or more. It was to be "Every man for himself and let hell be the consequences!" Thus might be described the collective expectations for Somerford's party.

The program called for an early start from the rooms opposite the church, but it was nearly eight o'clock before the third and last car, containing Riley, Beauvais and Maunstein, pulled away from the curb. The others having just gone to collect their respective fair damsels, all were to meet at a well-known Italian slum joint in the North End, where a light dinner with wine and cocktails would be provided (primarily for the girls—it being

taken as a matter of course that the proper procedure for a mixed-up party required a get-together dinner with much drinking, because, as Riley often maintained, every party girl, regardless of how crazy or dizzy she might be, was rather poor company and at best much less entertaining and daringly intriguing when not properly oiled). According to all criteria and experience at Riley's command, it was, he estimated, inconceivable that there would be any girl in this party who would be in need of lubrication by the time the dinner had been finished. There would be no uncongenial spirits—Riley could be depended upon to see to that. Rather, they would all be ready and eager to go anywhere and do anything when the time came for anything to be done.

Such was the early stage of the party in prospect, and a feeling of intense anticipation of rare excitements was evidenced in the laughs and curses of every male member—not only, it appeared, because of the nature of the party itself, but also because the personnel included two members of the crowd whose relations with the so-called defensive sex had at various times been a subject of curious discussion among them. These two, namely Somerford Hamilton, the boastful, and Bratten, the human machine, although entirely unlike each other, were alike for once in being expected to furnish entertainment of some kind for the benefit of their friends, this entertainment to consist simply in the tactics which they would employ against their female partners for the evening.

"This is going to be good, young fellow!" Brock had exclaimed when Riley outlined the plot to him.

"Unlimited possibilities!" Riley had laughed in return. "God only knows what to expect from either of them!"

However, notwithstanding the Lord's monopoly on this knowledge, every one was expecting some interesting developments. For all of this there was an easy explanation: Bratten was too virtuous to be human, and his well-known habit of avoiding temptations and vices and petty or grand sins of every kind had made his friends ex-

tremely curious and, perhaps, envious. Brat avoided these things because they did not interest him, his well formed habits not comprehending or providing for any interest in women or allied dissipations. In view of which, the attitude of his friends was humanly natural and not in the least malicious, as it might appear to the casual observer. Somerford's case was diametrically the opposite of Brat's. All agreed that Somerford was in his talk too wild and world-weary to be true. No one had ever seen him in any kind of action; no one had ever been on a party with him; indeed, there was widespread doubt as to whether he had ever been on a real party. He had for so long and at such length related his exploits with the fair sex that he had promoted, in the minds of his hearers, first angry curiosity and later smiling disbelief. As a result, their attitude toward him was as much in the course of human nature as their attitude toward Brat; they were now visualizing the scenes which might prove this precocious individual a ridiculous prevaricator; they would now have the long-hoped-for opportunity of seeing the self-made heart breaker in action.

"I rather suspect we'll be entertained," Riley told the Beau, after explaining to him that he knew Somerford's destined partner for the evening well enough to whisper a few devilish suggestions to her regarding her escort's proclivities and his own surmises. It was to be expected that the girl would be the fisherman in whatever game the unsuspecting Frank might attempt to play. "And as for Brat," laughed the young Irishman, "it may be a case of an irresistible force meeting an immovable object: he'll be up against the most seductive, sensuously attractive woman that I know; we'll see how long his virtuous disinterestedness will survive!"

"But how in the name of God," asked Maunstein, in the car with Riley and the Beau, "did you get Brat to go on a party like this? He isn't drunk, he hasn't had a drink, they tell me—and it would take more than the combined charms of Cleopatra and the Queen of Sheba to interest



him! What does he want on a party like this? You must have hired him to come!”

“Gad—there’s another laugh for you! You should have heard me talking to him!” replied Brat’s seducer, laughing so heartily as to impede his talking. After a moment he managed to continue, “He refused absolutely to come with me at first. Said he didn’t see any reason for his coming along. I told him he’d have the beautiful but bluntly honest blonde bearcat—you know, Georgia Marshall, the lady that’s known as Lou, from Brookline—but that didn’t please him at all; said he didn’t care about meeting Georgia or any other wild woman. Jeess, it was funny!” Riley laughed at the recollection.

“Well, finally,” he continued, “I had tried every argument imaginable and they all failed to move him. As an afterthought, I told him we wanted him to come along because we all expected to be royally plastered to the hair roots, and therefore we’d need some one along to take care of us. To that, he at first said he guessed we’d get along all right, but he couldn’t argue much on that point, so I kept pleading with him, almost on bended knees, as if we all would sure as hell be arrested and sent to some loathsome jail unless he came with us. He gradually weakened and finally said he’d come—so he is the official chaperon of the party! Imagine it!”

More laughter, with Maunstein saying, “This gang is going to hell fast! Pretty soon we’ll be hiring wet-nurses to look after us.” More laughter, and many off-color jokes regarding Brat’s impending chaperonage, as the three in the car rode to Somerville for their ladies in waiting.

“Allah is merciful!” exclaimed Riley, as he noted that the crowd had suffered no losses since their separation in Cambridge. The party was uproariously completed by the arrival of Riley, Beau and Maunstein with their girls, and the festivities in Giovanni’s place, judging by the noisy welcome accorded them, were, in so far as refreshments were concerned, well begun.

Half-drained glasses were scattered around the long table. The girls were smoking, and talking in shrill, glass-tinkling tones, while their escorts were variously engaged in telling, with flushed faces and forced smiles, some latest risqué story, or listening studiously to some one else telling one, or taking a drink, or trying to persuade a girl to take another, or calling for order in order to keep the nervous, tolerantly smiling waiter busy, or playing with the silverware, or making under-cover advances to a skirted companion, or talking earnestly with said companion who was listening with distracted attention, or doing one and then another of these things or something else equally prosaic and intrinsically unexciting. All were obviously of the opinion that they were having a "real" time, and that the situation was pregnant with impending thrills and dangers, which, of course, could not be expected to materialize until later. The women were for the most part engaged in furtively studying themselves—that is, every woman was studying every other woman, it being the chief concern of every party girl to understand the makeup of the party on the female side. Such understanding enables her to act accordingly and feel safe, it being invariably true that a single "wet blanket" or "false alarm" or "flat tire" or "misfit" would spoil the party for all, since the other girls would know it in a very few minutes, and all would take it as their clue to let her conduct be their guide. All of which being so invariably true, precautions against having any such condition develop had been one of Riley's chief concerns. His knowledge of such things comprehended fully the fact that in a mixed-up party the girls never worry about what the men are thinking (they know what every man expects) but they are serious students of the fine arts of feminine camouflage and affectations. "A woman," said Riley, "instinctively lets every other woman's conscience be her guide, while a man depends entirely upon his own."

Riley had planned well. No misfits or Calamity Janes

were apparent at this stage of the party, and all was going serenely when Riley and his company arrived. No one appeared to be terribly bored or out of place, and Riley swore Allah's praises again when he noted the general congeniality which prevailed.

"That must be good liquor," said Beau, calling Riley's attention to Brat, speechless and inexpressive, evidently entirely under blonde Georgia's wing.

"The stubborn ape hasn't touched his drink," rejoined Riley in an undertone, after following Beau's gaze and seeing the untouched glass before Brat's place. But look at Somerford!" The imperious manicurist whom he had drawn was making the self-gilded youth transform himself into a perfect ass to please her affected whims and fancies. Brock looked on and laughed.

Soon Giovanni's place was practically in their hands, the few remaining diners lingering on merely to watch this obviously wild crowd getting away to such an auspicious start; these few, however, were unnoticed, for, as far as the party was concerned, the whole place belonged to them and they proceeded to take possession of it. Dinner was served and they ate. Some one suggested dancing, but as the Boston blue laws prohibit any terpsichorean activity on the Sabbath, the hapless couple who acted upon the suggestion was immediately returned to the table by the suddenly excited and frowning Giovanni. The three-piece orchestra, however, was willing to play when and what they asked them to play, so that the prohibition upon dancing encouraged them in singing. More food. Wine was served in coffee cups, and even Brat had a taste. A girl asked for a perfumed cigarette, and her man, Brock, ordered eight varieties of colored, perfumed, cork-tipped and plain cigarettes, a selection of cigars and a package of "Honest Workman" scrap tobacco, and threw the assortment over the length of the table, giving his girl the "Honest Workman" with some remark about "apropos" which proved to be more true than he suspected. More food. Mixed nuts. A round of



cocktails with several straight whiskeys. Some one called for Harvard songs; the orchestra rendered them unrecognizable, but they all joined in singing. Somerford's manicurist, ever at him, asked that he do the Pipes of Pan for the company, with the result that the orchestra played the most classic number in the repertoire, which happened to be something concerning a Cuckoo or a Nightingale, and Frank did it until his neck was bulging blue. Singing by the orchestra, by request. The orchestra earned a drink and got it. More music. More smoking. Singing. Drinking. An irrepressible movement toward the dance floor, which Giovanni could not prevent until he stopped the orchestra, after two or three minutes of dancing had been enjoyed by all. Again at the table, a rotten-toast contest was started. Brock gave the classic, "Here's to Woman, the Mother of Us All, etc." The manicurist followed with the ode, "To the Breezes that Blow through the treeses and . . . !" The manicurist was acclaimed as being in at least temporary possession of the laurels, but several others which followed upon her offering were so outrageously pointed and so generally unknown that the little manicurist was voted down, and had to seek consolation with Frank in another drink. In the end the contest was won by a bob-haired physical culture teacher, who offered a bit of verse the sense of which was worthy (according to the verse) of emulation by human beings. Much cheering after that one; the vote was taken by acclamation and the winner cutely curtsied, revealing her hither and thither to the delight of all.

The party was fast becoming riotous and maudlin, and Brat, the invited chaperon and caretaker of drunks, admonished Riley to quiet the session a bit, whereupon Riley arose to the occasion by announcing that certain friends had extended an invitation to the crowd to visit and occupy, for as long a time as they wished, the friends' secluded summer camp, situated on the seashore some twenty miles from Boston. Would they accept? The chorus of "Ayes" was drowning, and Riley proposed

going at once, after "one more drink, which," he said, when the glasses were filled, "is to the ladies, God bless 'em, . . .!"

This prefatory toast was answered by the physical culturist in a daring exhortation to all to "Let joy be unrefined!"

The movement toward the door began and the exodus was consummated with remarkable quiet and facility under the supervision of Brat and the Beau, while Riley helped Somerford pay the check, the amount of which has never been definitely remembered by any one. That done, Riley glanced over Giovanni's place before departing. "Looks like Kansas post-tornado!" he said to Somerford as the two went out to the cars.

"It ought to!" replied the lanky one, thinking of the purse which had been wrecked by Giovanni's bill.

"Well, every one's well oiled, Frankie, and the party's on its smooth-running way toward a place where joy can be unrefined and the way of all flesh can be traveled!" answered Riley, warming in anticipation again. He was happy. They were going to a very deserted neighborhood, where their activities could be unrestrained, without fear of molestation or arrest, or any other kind of interference. There was no fly in any one's ointment. The best was yet to come, and, with his imaginative powers, the very act of anticipation was more pleasant than any realization could possibly be. He anticipated much, the major portion of which would have merited the scarlet letter or the scaffold in dear old Puritania.

The twenty intervening miles were somehow accomplished, in spite of the heavy load of intoxicating beverages which the drivers, except Brat, were carrying, in a remarkably short time. The ride was, of course, accompanied by inordinate singing and loud, unintelligible noises, but for some reason (as is usually the case in all such incidents) scarcely any one could recall afterwards any part of that journey. Every one could easily remember having been in a car and riding through city streets

and country roads, but it would have been impossible for most of them to tell by what route, through what streets or towns or districts they traveled, or to describe any minor incidents which happened in their travels. Sufficient that they knew they were traveling, and that wherever they were headed, all was and would be well; the time has never been when it required a town crier to make a drunken man agree that all's well.

To all of which the one exception was the estimable, truly redoubtable Brat. He was sober, having had but a single cup of Giovanni's miserable wine, and Georgia's unrelenting seductive devices had so far availed her but little. It appeared that Brat's moral machinery was functioning as ordinarily, and that his control was unassailable. Thus Brat might have recalled, if he were a reflective individual, which he most certainly was not, that ride as very eventful, with frequent stoppings and trifling inconveniences, not relished by him, for he was throughout it all in complete control of all his faculties, the cup of wine and Georgia notwithstanding.

Eventually and in remarkably good time, considering all the circumstances, the party arrived *en masse* at their destination on the shore and, despite the fact that the house, which had been closed virtually all winter and spring, had to be opened and aired and its accommodations investigated by Brat and Riley and others, almost immediately the excitement began. The fun did not wait upon the investigation. No sooner were coats and other unnecessary articles of apparel removed and deposited than a round of drinks was forthcoming, a Victrola was discovered and uncovered, and a composite picture of a cabaret, an exhibition dance contest, a burlesque show, a fire sale and a mob bedlam was presented. The old house, which had weathered many storms of various elements, must have thought that some kind of black magic wand had been passed over it with immediate, transforming effects, for the whole place was within a few minutes a riot of lights and noises, in no detail in keeping



with the deserted aspect of the surrounding lands and cottages.

To describe in detail the incidents of the ensuing festival would require absolute repudiation or abolition of all the censorship and otherwise-blue laws by which certain estimable old aristocrats think they have made Boston and her Commonwealth famous throughout our broad land of liberty. For an adequate idea of all that transpired there on this occasion, one might let his imagination run as fast and as far as it can, and then put it in a Martian aëroplane of the speediest and most endurable type—everything passed on the way and everything at the ultimate end of the wild flight of one's imagination will contribute to an understanding of the magnitude and scope of this bacchanalian jubilee of unleashed repressions, liberated inhibitions and forgotten morals. It was a party of parties!

Yet, however indescribable many phases of this affair were, a few scattered incidents can be given, as suggestive of the whole. Not long after the arrival at the beach house, the physical cultural expert became engaged in a heavy, intellectual discussion with Beau, who, as a pre-medical student, had several advanced courses in medical psychology to his credit. Whatever the general subject of their argument, it ended suddenly with the Beau explaining to the young lady that she had a very noticeable inferiority complex of a very dangerous kind, whereupon, without further argument, the young lady gave a yell and a leap and ended with, "Hurray-ye! I've got a 'feriority complex!"

The manicurist, beginning to waver in many ways about this time, showed her confidence in Somerford by explaining disdainfully, "Tie that! That woman'd drink anything!"

She probably meant no open insult to the lady with the inferiority complex; indeed, she laughed, as if she had sprung a good joke. The others, however, laughed at her ignorance, and the bob-haired athlete was grieved

and very much upset, so much so that she had to have another drink to pacify and exalt her outraged self-respect.

Within a few minutes of this incident, the thirty-five-year-old soubrette, who had been vainly trying to keep her escort, Maunstein, aged twenty-two and a handsome, athletic sort of fellow, from paying too much unnecessary attention to some of the younger pullets, was heard to exclaim, half in awe-inspired respect and half in complaining discomfort, "I've seen a lot of parties, but this is the worst yet."

Her conclusion was received with a loud chorus of agreements, and Somerford awakened long enough to advise her that she could safely wager a certain unmentionable that she'd never live to see a wilder one. In general, however, it seemed to be the consensus of opinion that the lady, by virtue of the well-known broad experiences of her life since she left home to go with a third-rate burlesque show certainly ought to be able to speak with authority on the subject of wild parties. Even her Maunie, who was one of those handsome, smiling, gleaming, dashing men whom women want to love and men want to kill—the kind that women adore and men distrust—paid her homage by returning to the fold of her society for a surprising period of time.

Incidents followed close upon incidents. Things happened fast, were uproariously attended, forgotten and discarded for the succeeding point of interest. Arguments and wrangles were frequent, in the midst of most of which was Brock, waving a bottle and tearfully admonishing, "Here, gin'll cure you all! Gin's good for that! I knew a fellow once——" but his voice was always drowned by the response. Several playful wrestling matches were staged, ending usually in both male and female contestants being bruised and scratched, so that Brock was kept busy with his gin bottle and his ever-ready, "Gin's good for that!" until finally he had emptied his bottle and discovered that no one would entrust him

with another, so that he was forced to make his solicitations consist of, "Gin'd be just the thing for that! Have you got any?"

Three hours later Brock had ministered to so many needy persons that finally he himself fell asleep in the bathtub, with his artificial leg afloat before him. His last words were to himself: "Brock, old timer, gin's just the thing you need—but—cupboard's bare—so—*pax vobiscum.*"

Every girl but his own mourned Brock's passing, for his girl, thus set free, was a constant source of distraction for the other girls' men (and women are so generous in that way; especially when the wine has flowed thereabouts in any quantities!). She and Brock had not been very friendly since early evening, because, as he explained self-effacingly, "That girl can't see fun spelled without a —ds on the end of it, and Brock is just a poor old soldier." Her mercenary schemes had an appropriate climax in a little affair with Somerford, who had been discarded by the manicurist as a "Kid Nuisance," which came to a sudden end in an exasperated denunciation of the hapless youth, which denunciation included a refrain about "robbing cradles for nothing." Somerford, however, unconvinced, followed her around for the rest of the evening session, until at last, worn out by his efforts, he succumbed to Morpheus. The lady, who was the one who received the "Honest Workman" scrap at Giovanni's, gradually discovered that she was entirely out of her element. Eventually, after being advised by the Beau to "cut out the funny stuff! It isn't that kind of a party, sister! All these girls come from good homes, are decent girls, just looking for excitement—you don't suppose any of this crowd likes that sort of stuff, do you?"—eventually, she came to the conclusion that she was fighting a losing game and tried to drown her very evident sorrow in drink; she succeeded, the accumulated liquor began to take command of her usually dependable and steady faculties, and she felt like being a good fellow



for once in her hard life, but Somerford was beyond joining her long before that time arrived.

As the night wore on, the drinks became more infrequent but more effective—almost every round proved to be the proverbial last straw for some one, with the inevitable result that the main party in the living room gradually diminished to a sort of survival of the fittest.

At four-thirty a.m., Riley suggested to the survivors that all gather around and join in a crap game with their clothes for counters! The survivors numbered at this time: one married man who was playing truant from his benedictine couch; one Brock, who had recovered himself sufficiently to be able to move around again with his "Gin's the stuff!" cry; one Martin, a man who had demonstrated his ability to drink anything up to carbolic acid and continue to live; one bob-haired schoolteacher, merely standing, nothing more; one disgruntled Georgia, disgusted with the party and deserted by her man; one Maunstein, now on good terms with the soubrette; one soubrette; one Beau, "just getting warmed up!" with the liquor; one dowager, a pretty well-shaped woman of the soubrette's age (perhaps), who had missed a lot of things in her youth and was now trying to make up for lost time; and one still sober but tremendously sleepy Brat. Four women and six men were available for Riley's proposed game, and all present greeted the suggestion with what little eagerness they could command, except the pretty dowager and the man whom she had won for herself in the course of the night's battle, by her kindly, quietly interested attitude toward him—the Brat. These two, she reclining upon a mattress of pillows which Brat had arranged for her in the window seat, and he sitting in an armchair beside her, offered to referee the game in case of disputes.

The soubrette refused to play until all lights were extinguished, but Riley, after explaining that they had to have light to read the dice, compromised with her by turning out all but a small study lamp, which was set

in the middle of the floor to illumine only the playing field. She was mollified. The game was on!

It lasted until long after daybreak, and was in many respects the queerest crap game of which Riley or the worldly-wise Martin had ever heard. It was slow, unexciting, absolutely dull at times, in spite of the fact that every loss was a considerable one in that it required the removal of whatever piece of clothing had been bet. Even the women accepted the losses dully, as if it were a matter of course and merely a question of time; they had the alternative of paying their losses or retiring from the game to the sidelines, and the soubrette was the first to take advantage of this alternative to draw her Maunie out of the game. The male contestants, who did the shooting, evidenced but little more enthusiasm, with the exception of Brock and the renegade benedict, both of whom showed bursts of active interest in anticipation of certain victor's spoils.

In the end all were eliminated and disposed of except these two and the fair, seductive Georgia, and after several unsuccessful attempts to win the damsel by the dice, Brock, exhausted but still excitable and responsive to stimuli, suggested a compromise. Georgia agreed, being so little interested and so utterly exhausted that she begged off and told them to settle the fight between them. Which they did try to do, but without success at once.

Still deadlocked after ten minutes of wild shooting and betting, they despaired of an amicable settlement, when suddenly Brock suffered an inspiration which shook him to his toes. He led the benedict into an adjoining room for a private conference. In the corner of the room was a big, comfortable armchair, and into it the benedict relievedly slid, while Brock, who was at the moment the soberest man in the house, except Brat, stood over him menacingly and began to talk. He began by reminding him that he was a married man and that he was a damned fool for ever coming on a party like this one; that he,

his old friend Brock, had been trying every way possible to keep him from going too far astray, from doing something he'd regret in the morning (it was now morning)—that he was there, trying to help him; that he ought to be ashamed to even think of cheating on such a wonderful girl as his wife; that she was far and away too fine and decent and lovely to be married to such a scapegrace, such a cheater; that he was an ingrate, absolutely devoid of sense of honor or appreciation of feminine worth and beauty; that he, Brock, would give his one remaining leg to be taking off his (the benedict's) shoes for just one night; that—etc., etc.

When he finished, the wretched man was in tears. For a moment speech was impossible, but at last he arose and steadying himself by grasping Brock's hand solemnly, he swore by all the gods that he appreciated everything: his wife, and Brock's solicitous care for him, among other things; and that he hoped the Lord would strike him dead if he ever ventured on such a party again. With a last, solemn shake of the hand, which almost knocked over Brock, who was none too steady himself, he fell back into the chair and proved his sincerity by promptly falling into a deep, sonorous sleep!

Brock, all agog but staggering unsteadily, returned without delay to claim his winnings. But the winnings had neglected to wait. He found her, after a painstaking and careful search of all the rooms, in a chair in a far corner of the living room, dead to the world, in such a stupor that volcanoes and earthquakes could not have disturbed her. Brock tried several times, cursed his "unmitigated tough luck!" and laid himself down to sleep also, after one glance at the lumberous Brat and his pretty dowager, both asleep in the sleep of the not guilty.

\* \* \*

"The moral to all of which," said Riley to Brock later in the day, as they leaned shakily over the kitchen sink making a whitish drink, "is that most of the joys of this



living business lie in the anticipation of pleasures and achievements—the dramatists and novelists call it suspense; it goes by various names, but it's just plain anticipation of expected things! Anticipation is greater than realization every time!”

“Maybe so, young feller,” rejoined Brock, raising his glass to his lips, where he held it for a moment, saying, “Anyway, I'm anticipating some great relief from this bromo-seltzer, and personally I hope God protects the man that invented these bloomin' things.”

And since a goodly portion of the joys of anticipation lies in faith, the bromos had a very beneficial effect upon both Riley and Brock, as well as sundry others who visited the kitchen from time to time throughout that day, for the “morning after” was of the usual kind, with thick tongues, cotton throats and general lack of ambition well distributed in all quarters. And to top it all, several of the girls began to realize with trepidation that they should have gone home sometime during the night, “any time would have done,” as one put it hopelessly, “any time, just so I was there when Dad got up this morning.” Worry over parental wrath, combined with the aforementioned symptoms of after-morningness, resulted in bringing about a council of war, at which it was decided that the logical thing to do under the circumstances was to call the respective parents of the girls and tell them some story—the best story being that they had gone to a Mrs. Smith-Jones's country place the night before and, on account of motor trouble, were unable to get back. All those who had to call home were piled into a car and taken to the nearest town, whence they called and satisfied their consciences by that much at any rate.

Brat alone, and perhaps his dowager, were exempt from these sufferings of the morning after, so customarily grinned at and borne. These two had become magnetically attached during the festivities of the preceding evening and, Brat not imbibing freely, the wise lady stoically forewent the greater part of her usual quota of drinks,

with the result that both were quite sober at all times and especially after their sleep in the bay window, which, though short, had been almost sufficient for refreshing them. So the morning found this pair still enjoying themselves, while the others were having their troubles of various sorts.

Brat's Georgia was especially upset, both physically and mentally. Despite all her wiles and inviting charms, Brat had failed to register any response, and had finally let himself be taken entirely from her by this old veteran of many campaigns, who had somehow managed to appear still pretty and intriguing. Georgia was a clever girl, when things were going her way, but exasperation, on account of the hurt which her vanity and prestige had undergone, caused her cunning to have a brief vacation; she forgot to be subtle and apparently carefree, and took no pains to conceal her troubles. When she awoke from her slumbers in the chair, where she spent the hours of sleep during the morning, she was a spectacularly wild woman, ready for any and all excitements and *outré* doings; as such, she conducted herself for all the party to see and hear. She was uncomfortable. She had had a rotten time, had had a dirty, rotten Irish trick played upon her in the person of that huge prize dumb bell, Brat-ten; all in all her grievances were mountainous, and Georgia wanted nothing so much as some opportunity for making every one else as uncomfortable and displeased as she herself was. Changing slightly, her feelings directed themselves toward her wanting to show them all that they would have some fast traveling if they kept abreast of her.

There was presented, however, no opportunity, and every one seemed so stupidly satisfied and morning-afterish that at last, in sheer desperation, Georgia allowed her cunning to return to the helm; things began to happen immediately. Her very first move resulted in disaster to several of her companions of her own sex, and won her favor with every man present, excepting perhaps the Brat.

She suggested—with catlike directness to the widow and the dowager—that every one go for a swim to freshen up. “The party’s going to seed! A good swim will zip everybody up again! Who’s game?” But no other woman in the crowd was over-excited about such an idea, presenting various excuses and counter-proposals, but in the end, the men having joined with Georgia, the others had to fall into agreement or admit Georgia’s supreme dare-devilishness. So eventually they agreed to go—that is, all agreed except the widow and the dowager.

The party went swimming—in what may be called the queerest assortment of bathing apparel that ever appeared on even a deserted beach or secluded pool. All the popular brands of men’s underwear were represented, and a wide variety of women’s unmentionables, from passionate colored bloomers and dainty chemises to monogrammed linen pillow cases, inverted and with leg-holes cut out. A casual observer might have called them a wild-looking class in æsthetic dancing—some observers would undoubtedly have made a complaint to the police. But there were no observers, and the lone policeman of the near-by village had no cause to suspect that such things were going on in his district.

Fortunately, or, as it seemed later, unfortunately, it was a very hot day, such a one as the Lord very seldom pleases to grant to the New England coast in late spring. The sky was clear and the sun was sending down relentlessly wave after wave of heat. The day was really ideal for swimming, the early chill of the water notwithstanding.

As Georgia promised, it was very freshening, just the panacea for their ills. Spirits revived, the party began to come to its old liveliness again. Martin brought a bottle from the house and a few drinks were had, to make the water warmer. One thing led to another, until finally, when spirits appeared generally congenial again, Georgia offered another suggestion, saying, “How in the world can we get dressed when we go out? I’m not going to run



around with nothing but a dress on!" She was speaking to the manicurist, who happened at the moment to be thinking about her job and some necessary excuses for not showing up on a Monday morning. Georgia, however, was insistent, continuing, "Are you game to take off your clothes with me? We can send the fellows back to the house and then put our clothes on the sand to dry! Are you game?"

"Sure!" answered the manicurist, coming suddenly back to the business of the moment. "I'd just as soon!"

"Count me in, too!" called the physical culturist, who had been listening. "This chicken craves freedom and liberty! Take my clothes—I want to be free!" Her clothes at that moment consisted of the inverted pillow case, alluded to above.

When the matter was presented to the fellows, a chorus of encouragement was the answer. "But," objected Brock, whose lack of two legs was no hindrance to movement through the water but necessitated some difficult hopping or being carried on land, "why the devil do we have to clear out? I'll hide my eyes if you are all so modest as all that!"

"Sure," Riley joined him, "you girls don't need to stand on any false modesty around here! We've all probably seen much better and more beautiful bodies than yours anyway!" The laugh was not relished by the ladies, who continued urging that the men depart and leave them to the work of drying their clothes.

At last when the male protectors agreed to go into the house the project was carried out. This done, that was done, and Father Neptune probably chuckled at the sight of these human mermaids trying to keep themselves hidden in his waves, which proved to be rather difficult unless one stayed in water over her head at all times.

Soon the men reappeared, a grotesque crew, waving bottles and glasses like the shipwrecked sailors who lost their rations but saved their rum and so were happy. Coming down upon the beach, they began successfully to

devise ways of getting drinks to the submerged mermaids.

The water seemed warmer now. The sunshine was marvelous. The swimming was great sport, enjoyed by all. The drying clothes were forgotten for a while, in all the excitement which sent shouts and shrill laughs echoing around the cove; the clothes were quite forgotten, by all but one, that one being Georgia, the she-devil, who reminded Maunie of them and in such words that when Maunie went to the house for another bottle—at any rate, when the clothes were remembered, they were not to be found!

A blazing hot sun and chilly, cold water! Regardless of Brock's "Gin's the stuff for that!" tender shoulders and backs were as tender as skin ever is under the steady rays that pour down from Old Sol. Eventually, of course, the clothes were found and returned, but not before the party, one and all, including the partly satiated Georgia, had become possessed of a sunburn over the upper parts of their shoulders that was to give every one of them many a painful moment when the burns began to draw and crack.

A pretty party—well planned and well carried out, except in the two matters which had been expected to afford enjoyment to the company. It was a party long remembered and still discussed, variously with pride and shame. Even Georgia at the end declared it a "whiz—even unto the sunburn!" Whereupon she indulged in a justified laugh at others' expense. The sunburn, as she expected, had several after-effects—some of the girls had to wear painlessly low-necked dresses for the following few days, and others, whose parents and friends were more apt to be inquisitive and curious, wore protectively extra high-necked frocks until the burn on necks and shoulders had either peeled or mellowed into presentably smooth tan.

In one case—Georgia would have relished this result of her evil genius—such precautions led an inquisitive

father to wonder and demand explanations, which explanations somehow (the girl, in reporting the developments, swore that she had mentioned no names or places) resulted in the doors of that father's house being forever barred to one who had previously been a good friend of the family. His name was Brocker, and the girl in question he had invited to the party for another fellow, of whom he was not extraordinarily fond.

"That's the way it goes, Brock," was Riley's sympathetic comment upon the matter when Brock gave the victim's version of the trouble.

"Yes, but Cripes! I never even laid hands on that girl the whole time; and I didn't tell her to go swimming and get all burned up like an over-fried egg!" Brock was determined to ease his conscience, at least.

Riley eased it for him by agreeing *in toto*. "Right, of course, but," he said, "you can't blame her old man either, when he knew she was asked to go by you." He stopped, after a moment continuing, "It's just the way things go. You never can tell what's going to happen or how. Look at Brat! Had the prettiest and snappiest number in the bunch, but the damned fool left her to go and chew the rag with a mothering old dowager! We all thought we'd have a lot of good sport watching him slide, but the best he did was just stick along and take care of us, just as he said he would." Riley had been much disappointed, but he smiled at the recollection of Brat's part in the party.

"And look at Somerford!" he exclaimed. "I'd swear he was never out with a woman before in his life, and what happened? Why, every woman in the party was complaining of that damned fool's attention—that should have been fun, but it wasn't. It was pitiable to me, after a while. I really felt sorry for the poor kid, with every woman he approached trying to take a fall out of him!" Brock smiled at this recollection, but Riley continued, "and that swimming business! That was Georgia's idea, you know; she was sore at Brat and down



on the party and that was her way of getting back. But she didn't get back at Brat—while we were all swimming and freezing the dowager tied him right around her finger, and now he's going on a week-end in Maine with her. And look at me! I didn't get any more out of it all than you; a hell of a headache and a mess at the Dean's office, probably, because the Doc refused to sign me off for the classes I missed Monday and Tuesday! You birds were lucky—you all looked sick enough to miss classes, so he signed you off for sickness; but me, I'm penalized for not looking sick! But, then—it's just the way things go—you never can tell by the whiff nor smell what the brew will really be!"

"Well, I'm off those damned fool parties!" Brock's voice carried conviction. "I'm off 'em for life! They're usually false alarms and get us nothing but trouble!" Brock learned lessons frequently and regularly, and forgot them as regularly.

This conversation took place while Brock and Riley walked down the Avenue toward the subway rotunda. Riley was going into Boston to seek out a physician who would be kind enough, for a consideration, to write a letter to the college doctor saying that one Thomas F. Riley had been under his care for the past four days and had been advised to forego all activities which might interfere with his taking a complete rest. Brock left him at the subway and plodded his one-legged way to a conference with an eminent old professor of zoölogy whom Brock had to convince of his own (Brock's) profound knowledge of how fruit-flies breed, how they reproduce their kind, and how the gametes and zygotes and unit characters are distributed in the progeny even unto the fourth and fifth generation—all of which Brock knew.

The wild party at the beach was soon past history, done and gone; but the effects and results of that jamboree were not all so quickly evident. It seems to be a fact that no incident in life, however trivial, can be entirely divorced from cause or effect; seemingly inconsequential

happenings as well as tremendous events invariably result in some chain of effects. To some individuals these effects contribute to and are "learning" and knowledge, to others they may be but colorless and effectless incidents, experiences. In this case, the party, which was thought of by all as a closed event, had many chains of consequences, not the least of which concerned the education of the two guests of honor at the party, Brat and Somerford. Both were to learn that such bits of a young man's education are invariably not Melchizedekian affairs, without parentage and without progeny.

Some results were not long in becoming apparent. Dora, who had been excluded from the party by clever trickery on Brock's part, made his life miserable for some time after because from his appearance the next day she was certain that he had been on some kind of a jamboree, and his continued denial of any guilt of that kind only served to heighten her indignation. Brock endured her scathing remarks for some time, but when she kept on harping on the matter without giving any indications of an intention to forget about it, Brock's grudges began to grow and a vague determination began to crystallize in his mind—he would get rid of this woman, if he had to hang for it!

Another consequence appearing immediately was concerned with the Brat. His change from slavery to habit to slavery to indecision had really been responsible for his consenting to joining the crowd on this party. Now, in consequence of that weakening, he was more than ever unable to ply a straight course, for the dowager who had succeeded in fascinating him by virtue of her more mature serenity and more sensible attitude toward him, had insisted that he accompany her to Maine over the succeeding week-end.

"Oh, you must come with us," she had said many times. "It will be a lovely ride, up into the woods—really, a wonderful place! I know you will enjoy it more than you can imagine!"

Brat had declined at first, although he had to admit honestly that he would like to go. Before the Yale game he would not have admitted that he wanted to go or could possibly go—he would have said at once that he had other engagements which absolutely prevented his getting away from Cambridge. But he was weakening, and the dowager was so enthusiastic over his coming that he finally agreed to go.

But after thus accepting her invitation, he was again at a loss to know whether to go or not. He had not forgotten Ellen, but he eased his conscience by considering the fact that all his friends, even when engaged, chased out on a wild party now and then—he argued thus to himself about being on Riley's beach party. As to going to Maine with the dowager, well—surely that could not be construed as playing unfair; she was at least ten years older than he—couldn't be compared with Ellen.

Thinking over the whole matter, he decided that he might as well go.

Then he recalled the news which had just come to him the night before that memorable crap game in his study—that Virginia and Jud Lee were very much and finally, definitely estranged. That Saturday afternoon he had received a letter from Ellen, with the result that this news had disturbed him not so much, but now, his attitude again wavering on account of this party and by virtue of the dowager's maternal charms and her invitation—well—"Oh, heck—what's the use!" summed up his feelings. Very much a slave to indecision.

"To Love Her was a Liberal Education"

—Steele: *Tatler* (No. 49).

Many a wild oat has been sown by an unwilling hand, provided that——

So far in his life, Brat had been a stupidly sturdy Joseph Andrews, equal to if not surpassing that hero of Fielding's burlesque in virtuous immunity from any and all



advances of the fair sex. He had sedulously avoided any courtship with temptation during his three years in Cambridge—not for want of convenient times and places for dissipation, but merely because the whole business of chasing after girls, whether they be decent and nice, dizzy and teasing, or wild and immoral, never appeared to be worth the candle. He had been satisfied to accept the arrangement which existed between himself and Ellen, and had proceeded about his education with the idea that therein lay the sum and substance of his desires, in so far as the weaker sex was concerned. The truth was that temptation had never occurred to him in any attractive or desirable form sufficiently powerful to disrupt even for a few fatal moments the machinery of his virtuousness which habit had so well developed in him. As a mamma's boy with an automatically functioning mental machinery, his habits had never comprehended any interest in or curiosity about storklessly-delivered infants or related points of biological interest, with the most of which the normal boy manages somehow to become acquainted. His education on the formal side had been a process of absorbing whatever was offered him, acting as he was advised to act, seeking what he was told to seek. In consequence, his education on the other side had been sadly neglected, though apparently he was little the worse off for this having been the case.

He had been sought and pursued after the common fashion of all college heroes who have been blessed with better than common appearance. He had met women of various kinds and types, with varied interests and varied points of possible contact. He had had opportunities aplenty to learn about women, yet he had embraced none of these opportunities; he responded to none of the garden variety of stimuli. In fact, if he had thought about the matter—which he undoubtedly had not—he might have realized that only one from all the multitude of females, pulchritudinous and otherwise, could really have aroused any real responsive feelings in him. Virginia, with her

petitely sweet but inquisitively vivacious way of treating him, alone could have attracted this *virgo masculinus* from his routine and ideals. Almost inexplicably, little Virginia had by her efforts succeeded in getting under his alligator skin to such an extent at their first meeting that Brat's feelings were quite pleasantly tangled, so that he appeared to her even more bafflingly immobile and stolid than he actually was. Truly, if the opportunity had been offered for Virginia to pursue her advantage at the time, she might have ruined him utterly—or redeemed him, as some would say. However that might have been, that avenue of progress and education was, by the combination of circumstances, prematurely closed, for Brat, of course, refused to take the initiative toward further acquaintance, and even when Virginia had an opportunity to carry on her attack upon his fortifications, he had refused to coöperate. Since that time at the restaurant, which was in snowy early February, Brat had on two occasions seen her at a distance, once on the street leading down to the Stadium and again in the stands at a baseball game. Aside from these two times, they really saw no more of one another, and in consequence their budding friendship had no chance to bloom.

Brat still recalled with pleasure (and shame?) Virginia's features and ways, and the image of her kept quite inexcusably bobbing up before his eyes during the weeks following their meeting. Even during those days following the party at the beach house, his mind insisted upon turning to that image. Indeed, whenever he tried to consider whether or not he should go on the proposed week-end trip with the dowager, his considerations were confused by this image of a smiling, teasing Virginia insisting upon being considered too. The reason for this probably lay in the fact that the rumor of Virginia's break with her man, Jud Lee, had come to Brat's ears, and really was having some effect upon him.

All of which confusion in mind, being unusual, quite disarranged his plans so that by Friday afternoon he had

decided to send his regrets to the dowager. Having decided this, he wondered how best to do the deed and, as usual, turned to Riley for help. But Riley did not at once appear, and when he did, he came with the latest rumor—an authentic report that Virginia and Lee were again together. This bit of news brought forth for the most part uninterested comments as to the two parties concerned, but little else. No one seemed to care greatly whom or when either of them married, although “it surely is tough,” as Brock put it, “the way these athletes fall into a lot of money through light-headed girls.”

The only one present who made no comment of this or any other kind was Brat, and he was also the only one present who took the matter seriously—this for some quite indefinable reason, the whole reaction being notable as an instance in proof against the claims of psychologists that the individual’s conduct under any set of circumstances can be predicted. It was most unusual for Brat to be affected by news or incidents of any kind, yet the announcement which Riley brought was sufficient to disturb his customary calm—and this in view of the fact that he had been absolutely rude to her at their last meeting, and had been trying earnestly to avoid seeing her again under any circumstances.

At any rate, Riley’s advice was not requested in the matter of sending regrets to the dowager, and she and Brat met according to their previous plan. Her car, driven by a sleek, well-dressed individual whom Brat had never seen before, called for him at five o’clock, took him to her apartment on Commonwealth Avenue, and then proceeded on the way to Maine.

Up the Newburyport Turnpike, through Portsmouth, past York and Old Orchard, through Kennebunk and Portland—six hours of commonplace talk about the scenery and the weather, before they pulled up before a plain looking camp in a woods at the head of a small lake cove, somewhere, as Brat learned, near Augusta. Brat could not have said whether he was enjoying it all



or not, for somehow, in spite of Virginia's image, he liked this woman who was so meticulously careful and primly attractive in her dress and manner, but so confidently informal toward him. Then, too, from what he was told, the party in prospect was to be rather cozy and exclusive. In truth, he felt peculiarly uneasy and at the same time pleased with the prospect.

Riley would have said that he was anticipating some pleasure—which, Riley would also have said, probably would not please him half so much when it materialized, if it did.

The party was cozy and exclusive. Complete, it included besides the two, a man of about thirty-five who looked the part of an omniscient salesman, with the marks of the beast all over him; his wife, a few years younger, who acted and talked as if she feared death would overtake her before she had tasted of all the joys and thrills of existence; and the dowager's chauffeur, whose demeanor and manner were anything but servantesque, for he joined them as an equal in everything. The dowager treated him with curious respect and feeling, and the other couple were so friendly and chummy with him that Brat accepted at once the dowager's explanation that "Charlie" was an old friend of them all, who drove for her occasionally just for want of something to do. If Riley had been in Brat's shoes, he would have accepted this not so quickly; instead he would have noticed with growing suspicion the way in which the dowager with an air of expectancy always leaned upon Charlie for advice and assistance, and he would have noted the perfunctory, half-reluctant manner in which Charlie catered to her and jollied her with sly flattery and risqué suggestions. But Brat not being a Riley, these things escaped him, as did most untoward or suspicious incidents in his life.

After a few drinks and a light lunch—it was now past one o'clock—they all sat about the rustic table in the kitchen, the lapses in the conversation indicating one of

those situations in which every one seems to be waiting for something to happen, or for some one to suggest the obviously logical thing to do—retire. The expected suggestion did not occur to Brat, and the remarks of the others regarding “romantic moons,” “haunted bedrooms,” and the “state law against sleeping in bed” failed to call forth any action in that direction.

At last Charlie started the old music box in the dining room, picked out a lively fox-trot and led the dowager out for a dance, during which he worked over-hard while she kept up a line of happy chatter with the others in the kitchen. Afterwards, Brat danced with her; she clung like wistaria and contrived to make her partner respond in kind. Charlie put on another record, but Brat made no move toward having another dance, so Charlie, who probably decided that a little of this dancing with the dowager went a long way, let the music box run down and gave notice of his purpose to retire forthwith.

The married couple signified their intention of retiring also, and with much talking and laughing the three began to collect lights and bags preparatory to adjourning to the upstairs. Brat thought this a cue for him to move too, and remarked to that effect, but his companion, who was sitting ever so closely and warmly beside him now, negatived the idea by suggesting that they wait until the others had gone up.

The minutes dragged on, and the sounds from above became more infrequent and dim, until at last it was so quiet that the two in the kitchen were talking in whispers in order not to startle themselves by the sound of their voices. Now and then the woman stroked his hair and trailed her fingers carelessly down and around his neck and shoulders. Her hair was against his cheek, her head resting in the hollow of his neck and shoulder. She snuggled closer. After a little she whispered again, to tell him how wonderfully big and strong he was, so much a man in every way, so adorable! Brat was

experiencing some of that anticipatory curiosity of which he had heard Riley speak so often.

The dim light made queer little shadows over the walls and ceiling. The whole atmosphere of the place was seductive, bewitching. But Brat merely felt this vaguely and did not act. The woman's attitude became more and more plainly inviting, for this big giant of a man, who looked so masterfully strong and overpowering, continued throughout to make none of the natural moves which she had learned to expect from men.

Brat never could have explained how they happened to go into the living room. It was chilly there, but Brat did not mind. There was a long, low lounge of a sturdy, rustic type, and upon this, bewildered and strangely entranced, he found himself. For perhaps the first time in his life he was filled with an impulsive desire to do something—he did not know exactly what he should do, or what he wanted to do, but he had heard enough tales and yarns to have a hazy idea of certain steps that one should take in such a situation.

Riley could have warned Brat of what he could expect to find, but Riley had quite concluded that there was no danger of Brat's ever needing to know such things, since his curiosity was impossibly beyond all arousing. Consequently he was quite unprepared for the developments which confronted him in accumulating effectiveness.

The dowager was, as Riley would have put it, too comely to be true; she was pretty, indeed attractive, in a quiet, subdued way; her appearance, from her closely dressed hair to her trim little ankles, was consistently agreeable and pleasing. Anything detracting from this consistency of apparent beauty was entirely ignored by Brat. He had not even stopped to consider the matter. There on the lounge in the dark living room of the quiet, romantically inspiring camp, he was so overwrought as to be beyond considerations of any kind.

Many a wild oat has been sown by an unwilling hand—provided that the unwilling hand lapses into willingness!



He suddenly came to realize how hot and stuffy the room was—close and unventilated—almost insufferable! Funny how loose and scraggly her beautiful hair seemed—it had always seemed so thick and fluffy! Lord, but it was hot! The poor woman must be overcome with it! She would not even speak—her so fresh and healthy colored cheeks, what the devil made them so pasty and sticky?—makeup, he concluded; smelled more of perspiration than of lilac blossoms——

Funny he should think of Virginia then—and of Ellen! Gad, he couldn't imagine Ellen's ever being like that! he could even smile mentally at the thought of such a picture!

His partner lay there, wanting nothing so much as to have his strong arms around her and to feel his breath uneven against her neck and face—her kisses, so long and so lingering, pleasant for the moment, but somehow revolting, unclean; her lips seemed so loose, flabby, bloodless, lifeless—it was so damned artificial—this passionate device wasn't real, it couldn't be; it was sickening, disgusting, with the whiskey of her breath——

He was beginning to collect his senses now, but she grew more and more ardent. His hand, which had been at her waist, came suddenly up toward her shoulders, and he suffered the sickening discovery that all things were not what they had seemed—apparently full and girlish, actually flat and limp. To him it seemed that everything he touched was changed, transformed, thrown up to him in a new light; none of the freshness and desirableness there now! Even those trim little ankles belied the grossness which they supported. He had been led to expect the well knit, sturdy, altogether intriguing muscularity of youth!

“You ought to take more exercise!” he muttered, for want of comment. He became more and more reluctant, receded further from her—her whole being, her ways, her talk, her absolute vulgarity and uncaring boldness—she was so utterly disgusting and revolting!

The Devil makes mischief for idle hands to do, provided that the idle hands were— Brat's hands were not; they were busy in an endeavor to extricate himself from her suffocating embrace, for the illusion consequent to his first wild impulses had been rudely shattered, and was now superseded by a disillusion a hundredfold more effective, more commanding. Brat's hands were not idle, nor his mind—he was again remembering Ellen, and Virginia. . . .

So this was Woman, the thing men live by, for and after! And he had been curious about this! Why the hell hadn't he stayed in Cambridge where he belonged! He left her and went out into the lighted kitchen, where she soon joined him.

“Lose interest so soon, Brat dear?” she whispered with a smile which showed little red blotches under her eyes. He noticed that she looked almost, but not quite, so repulsively featured as he had been imagining her. She made several excuses, about her hair and about “looking a wreck,” and insisted upon turning down the light for her own peace of mind.

Brat was now his hard-shelled self again, and observing this and other tactics impatiently, vaguely understood that she wanted to return to the couch in the living room. She kept up the queer little smile which had accompanied her first comment and Brat wondered vaguely as to the cause of the smile. Shortly, after a few moments of inaction, she remarked, still smiling, that they might as well go to bed, and he agreed, still wondering about the smile. So they went to bed, but her smile left her face when, at the top of the stairs, he coolly wished her good night and turned into the room which he had been told would be his.

He undressed, and in pajamas stole forth to the bathroom for the nightly ablutions with soap and tooth powder which his mother had taught him. Some ten minutes later he crept softly to his room and to bed. He slept well; his conscience was perfectly clear, and

he felt no regret. But from that night henceforth he was certain that he would never let women trouble him again; he had even less use for them than he had before. He was cured, fortunately without ever having been sick.

They stayed at the camp until Sunday evening, Brat remaining for the simple reason that he did not know how to get away gracefully. The dowager was particularly nice to him at all times, and the others tried not to be strange or distant towards him, but the atmosphere of the party changed noticeably despite their efforts. Charlie even went so far, under the influence of a heavy load of drinks, as to advise Brat not to be foolish about "the old girl! She'll treat you right and look after you financially if you play the game with her! Kid her along—she won't hurt you!" From which advice Brat deduced the conclusion that the others somehow were aware of the fact that he was not playing the game with the dowager and he felt a sort of pride in the fact. Little wonder then that the party slowed up considerably; as Riley would have said, "One monkey-wrench is usually sufficient to cramp the digestion."

Charlie's advice was lost on Brat. He was cured. Although the term "cake eater" was, chiefly because of Riley's many tirades on the subject, anathema to him, Brat smiled to himself at the picture of him, the Brat, playing the rôle of cake eater to a dowager!

Riley would have remarked this as progress in Brat's education—that is, the fact that he could smile was in his favor. Altogether Brat learned about women from the dowager, but this primary stage of his sexual education was such as to be deplored, for this experience resulted in changing his apathy to antipathy.

#### MATTERS OF OPINION

There would seem to be some divine law which applies universally to human beings and makes the said human beings fail to appreciate what they have until they have



lost it. Especially in the period just after the War has this divine law been in operation, and it has been so generally and so thoroughly respected that the curse of the time has been the consequent hungering after unpossessed things, while the things and people in one's control or possession or bonds of friendship and love go discounted and neglected. No one enjoys or is satisfied with his own world—he thinks with covetous desire of all that he might have, never appreciating what he has. This kind of discontent passes under various classifications and terms; it is called ambition, when it brings about some material progress which the world at large takes to be good work; it is called greed and covetousness, when it results in the individual's inadvertently taking things which in the eyes of the world at large he should not take; it is called envy or jealousy when it makes the individual act in an unhappy and uncongenial manner when looking upon the blessings which others seem to possess; it is called "climbing" in respect to one's having designs upon the occupants of the rungs of the social ladder; it is called avarice, gluttony, lust, hunger and thirst after material things, malicious selfishness—the individual's motives are taken as the final determinants of the classification: if he acts out of what superficially appears to be a noble impulse to help others, the act is called by an honorable name; if the superficial consideration shows the motive to have been selfish, unreasonable, unsocial, the doer is dishonored by the resultant classification of his act.

All of which has to do with this matter of appreciating the things we have before we lose them. Brat had always had the happy faculty of being neutral on all matters. He had no active sense of appreciation for either the things which he had or the things which he should have imagined; lacking imagination, this latter possibility was unnecessary. Proof of his having the common failing, however, lay in his inability to appreciate his girl from Dartonville: in his mind she existed as his future wife,

and that was all there was to that! His little experience with the dowager in the camp in the Maine woods served to bring him to at least a momentary sense of appreciation for Ellen, but it was merely momentary, and had passed long before he had arrived in Cambridge. As for Virginia——

There was a case of appreciating something which he did not have—— Riley would have remarked that this showed Brat as a human being, just like every one else, but Riley did not happen to think of this phase of the case. The fact was that Brat was in a bad stew because of Ellen and Virginia, and now on account of this foolish dowager who had so disgusted him. If she had done naught else, she did succeed in teaching Brat an awful lesson; he now was of half a mind to “be off women for life” because they were probably all just alike! But whenever he tried to come to that determination, the vision of Virginia and the memory of Ellen upset his conclusions, and he was again a man in bondage to indecision.

If, after his return from Maine, he could have taken Virginia in his arms, mauled her over in terrible fashion, literally let himself go to whatever limits of knowledge that little *vivant* might have permitted; if he could have gone to Virginia whole-heartedly and forgetful of Ellen, he might have gone through the ramifications of satisfying his curiosity, his desires, his unhealthy longings, and afterwards have been able to return and be completely satisfied with and fully appreciative of his Ellen. For Virginia was to him a repressed desire: he wanted her and his wanting fed upon itself, its fires being also fed by “forbidden” elements in the case: he felt that he was not free to have anything to do with her—therefore he wanted her the more; he suspected that she should not want to be with him—therefore he wanted her the more; his knowledge of her affairs did not permit him to know what she was doing or where she was doing it, his visions of her were recollective and indefinite in

so far as the present was concerned—therefore he wanted her the more. In short, that was about the only occupation he had for several days: this wanting her the more and the more, for the various reasons suggested above. If he could have had her, he would probably have come before very long to discoveries equally as effective as lessons as those which he had arrived at in Maine, but he could not have her—so he continued to want her the more.

That following Monday morning found him in Cambridge attending his classes as usual, none the worse but a little wiser for his experience in Maine. He did not relate his adventure to his roommates, but when they asked him about his trip he smiled and said, "Oh, had a good ride down and back! Wasn't much there." They had not the least suspicion that anything had gone wrong—knowing Brat they had no reason to suppose that their stalwart roommate had succumbed even momentarily to any woman's charms.

And there were other things to worry about, much more important than Brat's trip to Maine. The Beau that day found himself swinging at the end of a long rope, a rope which was tied fast in the office of the Dean of Harvard College. He too had fallen because he did not appreciate the things which he had and had coveted the things which he had not.

"Oh, damn, Damn, DAMN! Sacre damn bleu!" he broke out, in discussing his troubles with his roommates. "My old man'll break my neck when he hears of this! Kicked out of college for trying to bribe an instructor with a quart of liquor! Oh—HELL!"

The others did not know just what to say. If there is one time in a fellow's college life that is more awkward than any other, it is the time when one is confronted with the necessity of sympathising with a friend who has just been forcibly ejected from the college. There is little or nothing that can be said on such an occasion—Riley, Brock and Brat said it.



“What’ll I do, Tom? What’ll I do?” the Beau cried, looking with appealing eyes at the Irishman, who appeared to be wrapped in deep thought over his problems.

“Nothin’ you can do, Beau,” he replied, lifelessly. Riley had sympathized, when the news first came in, by an explosion of profanity and universal blasphemy, so strong and genuine that his sympathy thus extended made up for whatever was not extended by Brock and Brat. “Nothin’ to do, but wait till you hear definitely that you’re out.”

He referred to the fact that the Administration Board of the College would meet on Tuesday and that the Beau’s fate would be definitely settled then.

“Oh—hell!” the Beau had to talk; he would have broken down completely, if he could not have exploded verbally. “The whole point is that they’re kicking me out for something I didn’t do—and they don’t seem to care a damn about me! Why, the Dean told me himself that he didn’t think I had any business in College—said I didn’t appreciate the opportunities that have been given me here—that I conducted myself not as a student should—that I— Why, dammit, he’s crazy!” He stated his final conclusion as if it were self-evidently true.

“No doubt he is,” agreed Riley. “But—how about the bootlegging? You know what happened to the birds in New Hampshire after that fellow got killed! You know what they’ve been doing about students peddling hooch around, and you know they’re watching everything around the Square like a bunch of hawks!”

“But—but—BUT!” the French Canadian could hardly speak. “That’s the idea—they’re booting me on this bribery charge, not on any bootlegging complaint or suspicion—and I swear to God I never bribed that instructor——”

“No—because he was too good a fellow to take advantage of it!” This from Brock.

“No sir!—By God, I’ll take my punishment for any-

thing I get caught at, for anything I do—but I didn't do this! Oh—anyway, what I say is this: I admit that I wasted my Freshman and Sophomore years, but I did come to realize what and how much this damned old college meant when the old man's financial troubles made it look as if I wouldn't get to come back this year! I've been appreciating the place ever since! And I've studied, just as hard as the next one, to prove that I really wanted to stick! Why, I'm just beginning to get something out of this place—and here they come along and throw me the hell out, just for trying!"

"Well, it's damned tough, Beau! And I wish there were some way we could help you, but honestly I don't know a damned soul with any influence over there at the College office—and, besides, I'm afraid they've got some dope on you for bootlegging, in which case you'd best let well enough alone and clear out; they will keep quiet about whatever it is then! Otherwise it may get into the newspapers, and then you would be cooked!"

"But, it isn't fair—there's no justice in that! And anyway I haven't sold a hell of a lot of liquor around here! And I wouldn't have sold that if I hadn't needed the money to pay my bills and get along. Why, Cripes Almighty, if I wanted to bootleg as a profession, I wouldn't hang around and study like a damned fool all the time, would I?" The Beau was convinced that the fates were against him, that he was being unjustly handled by the powers that were.

"But they don't know all that," answered Riley, "and besides, even if they did, it wouldn't make any difference—they won't let you stay here if you're selling hooch, no matter how good a student you are or how much you've sacrificed to stay here! They can and will do anything they please about you—you are just a little drop in their bucket of worries; they're looking out for the prestige and good name of Fair Harvard—they don't care a damn about you!"

"And it says in the Bible," began Brock, musing,

“that the Lord worried more about the one who went astray than he did about all the ninety and nine that stayed in the fold!” Brock smiled.

“Well, that fold wasn’t Harvard College!” declared Riley. “Nor was it Yale, or Princeton, or Dartmouth, or Cornell, or any other big school with a prestige that has to be kept up, regardless of the individual. What the hell do a few of us poor damned individuals amount to compared with the sum total of this place’s productiveness? Not a damned bit! They haven’t time to consider the potentialities of every piece of fleshy raw material that comes in here; if there’s enough defects to make the piece look rotten, they throw him away without any ado about it, and that’s all there is to it!”

“Well, I leave it to you, Tom—” pleaded the Beau. “Ain’t it hell to—to—to sell your birthright for a mess of pottage and then have some damned fool take the pottage away from you?” This burst of poetic feeling from the Beau caused his roommates to look at him in wonder.

“Of course, it’s tough, Beau! Cripes, I’m as sorry as hell; I’m not lecturing you—all I meant to say was that you might as well make up your mind to clear out and do it without trying to make a fuss, because they’ve made up their mind that they don’t want you here!” Riley was making an honest effort to show the Beau the error of his ways and the best escape, but the French Canadian hated to admit the justice of the situation.

“Damn ’em! By— — I don’t believe there’s a God in heaven! There’s no Christ! No justice! I wish somebody’d shoot me—the unluckiest sucker that ever lived!”

“Self pity,” Brock was thinking, but not saying. Brock’s reaction to the Beau’s breakdown was slow in coming. It seemed so strange to him that the Beau, one of the happiest, most carefree fellows he’d met, should be in such misery, so in need of sympathy and help—Brock knew how the Beau felt, but Brock had had but little experience in helping others. Nevertheless it made him feel



better to see another figure in distress and to feel that he, Brock, might be able to help him.

Brat was at a loss to know what to say, and Riley's talking had more or less bewildered him, for he had never thought of Harvard College in that light before. For a moment he wondered if all that Riley suggested were true—but only for a moment, for Brat's attitude of reverence and respect held no place for criticism, even of the mild kind which Riley suggested.

"Well—we never appreciate how well off we are until something happens to us!" Riley continued to think aloud. "Scotty here probably never thought about how lucky he was with two legs until he lost one of them! And look at Brat—" Riley smiled and winked at Brock, "he's got a perfectly nice girl at home, but he doesn't appreciate her because she's always been his girl!—And that's the way it goes—no one ever appreciates anything until they lose it!"

"Guess so," mumbled the Beau, quieting down.

"It's a damned shame, Beau—tough as hell that you didn't appreciate the place when you had a good allowance (but one never does, except the Picks and the Brats)—you could have gotten by this year on what little you had, but you probably would have been unhappy all year—you didn't have to go in for selling hooch—you did it because you were afraid of what it would be like to have to go through the year without money enough to do whatever you pleased! Isn't that a fact?"

"Fear? Yeh—I suppose so," was the lifeless answer.

"But what'll I do now? I'm broke right this minute! Got about two bucks to my name—can't even go home!"

"You don't want to go home anyway; stay here and get into some other school as soon as possible!"

"No—I'm going home, face the music and come back, try to get in here again—the dirty fools! I ought to tell 'em to go to hell and go my way, but I won't! And if I ever run across that pie-faced instructor that went up there and said I tried to bribe him with liquor, I'll kill

him as sure as my name is Louis Beauvais!" The Beau was on fire again; his thoughts once started on this line kept on and on throughout the evening and the next day. Late that afternoon he was informed by the clerk in the Dean's office that the Administration Board had voted that his connection with the University be severed immediately "for the commission of an impropriety."

The Beau left town that night, without waiting for the official letter of dismissal from the Dean. He did not know until the very last minute that he could get away—on account of his barren purse; but when Brock, who had gone to Boston in the morning, returned, he very matter-of-factly handed the Beau a twenty-dollar bill, and told him to "forget it; just let us hear from you, Beau, and come back if you possibly can!"

The Beau's misfortune had got under Brock's skin—the French Canadian, the jovial, good-hearted fellow of fair weather and foul, had been the very first individual whom Brock had had any opportunity for helping. It really did great good to Brock to see another man, a close friend, in trouble, and to be able, as he had been, to help that dear friend in some way. So it always goes that one man's sorrow is, or may be, another man's salvation.

The round of routine went on its way, classes were attended, Brat had a part in a Hasty Pudding play, Riley busied himself with good and bad literature, Brock tried to coördinate his studies with his relations to Dora—both tempered by that annoying recollection of Ellen and her likeness to Dora. Time passed and the Final Exams hove in sight.

#### CURRENT CRITICISM

The Final Exams were in full swing when Brat one day chanced to meet Virginia in Boston. She was driving a little sport roadster, an automotive study in cerulean blue, and was forced by a traffic stop to pull in at the

curb on Tremont Street near the foot of the Common. As such things sometimes will happen, there before her eyes, standing within a few feet of her, was Brat, just starting from the curb to cross the street. As he stepped in front of her car, she gave the horn a vicious push and let out the clutch just enough to make the car spring suddenly forward. He jumped away and looked up with a scowl on his face; then he saw her.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Bratten," she chirped gaily. "Sorry I didn't hit you!"

Brat's face lighted up with a grin, as he came over to the side of the car. "That's a nice attitude!" he reproached.

"Well—you deserve to be run over and utterly demolished," Virginia declared, assuming a slight pout of judiciousness. "You are positively the most exasperating man I've ever known! Honestly, I shouldn't even say 'good afternoon' to you, after the rude manner you've assumed toward me!"

Brat laughed, chiefly because he could laugh more winningly than he could talk; his laughing therefore showed his intelligence, for the intelligently clever individual invariably puts his best foot forward.

"Why don't you like me?" Virginia demanded, her tone carrying a touch of regret and appeal.

"Why—who said I don't?" laughed Brat.

She looked at him sternly. She really wanted to laugh; somehow she just knew that Brat did not stay away from her because he didn't like her: such an idea would be absurd. "But you surely do not throw any fits of gladness or go into any convulsions of glee when you meet me! And you have refused more of my invitations than I can ever recall! Do you think that's being friendly?"

"Oh, now, Virginia—listen—you—say, I'd better run along before I get run over! The traffic's going to move. I'll——"

"You'll get right in here with me and come along!"



Virginia ordered very severely, leaning across to open the door for him. Then, as he still hesitated, the traffic whistle sounded, cars began to move, she commanded again, "Hurry—before we're arrested for blocking the traffic!" and Brat ran around the car and slid into the seat beside her.

"Where we going?"

"Well, I'm going to Dad's office—then, I guess maybe you can take me to lunch somewhere; I haven't eaten since a nine o'clock breakfast! Now, since you haven't anything to do——"

"Who said I didn't have something to do?"

"I did!" Virginia smiled. "Honestly, you're almost as funny when you're sober as you were that night!" She laughed at the memory. "Anyway, we'll go down and you can meet Dad, and maybe he'll make you president of a corporation or something—Dad's a peacherino: you'll like him; he's almost as funny as you are."

She ran on and on, talking so fast and about so many things and in such an impertinent fashion that poor Brat had to submit to all her demands and suggestions.

"Now that you're in my power, I'm going to make the best of the opportunity!" she explained, "for Heaven knows when I'll see you again. For a man so popular, you can disappear and stay hidden better than anyone I've ever known!"

Brat agreed that she seemed bent upon making the best of her opportunity. She took him to her father, toward whom she was even more impertinent and saucy. Old Man Jordan talked with Brat, seemed to be pleased with him, winked to him at Virginia's very studied flatteries.

Afterwards they went to lunch, in a little toy tea room on the Common side of Beacon Hill, where they spent most of the time in inane arguments regarding the paying of the huge check, which came to a little over two dollars, Virginia being very insistent that the whole affair was her party.

Brat was completely her dog that afternoon. He quite

forgot whatever errand had brought him into Boston. Virginia carried him all over town, stopping here and there to see some person "about something very important," or to make some small purchases. Brat concluded that this must be her busy afternoon.

"Oh, no, Brat dear—I'm a woman of exceeding business every day of the week! This is nothing compared to my usual program—I'm slowing up today just out of respect for you." More laughter. More calling and shopping. Finally off for a ride out Commonwealth Avenue and around the Reservoir district.

Virginia did most of the talking, but finally Brat managed to interpolate a few remarks in regard to the matter which had been uppermost in his mind since the day after their first meeting.

"I don't see much of Jud Lee these days," he said, "What have you done—captured him, too? Got him hidden away somewhere? Fattening him up for the slaughter?" Brat's facetiousness was so spontaneous and unusual that it was unbecoming, and Virginia was quick to take advantage of him by a few well directed remarks which concerned not Jud Lee but himself.

"But you're going to marry him, aren't you?" he persisted.

"Well—I don't know, to be perfectly frank! What do you think? I have so many things to think of that I just forget poor Jud completely."

"Well, I don't see—" he began, but she interrupted him.

"No, you wouldn't, Brat dear! You'll never see anything if you live to be a hundred! Now, you're much older than I, but I venture that I've seen much more than you!" More laughing.

"My God!" he exploded in mock seriousness. "How in the dickens can anyone ever get any sense out of you?"

"Easy, Brat dear! You want to know how Jud and I stand—but honestly you shouldn't ask such a question, and you know it! However, to ease your troubled spirit,

lest you think you are compromising a married woman by this afternoon's companionship, I'll tell you frankly that you needn't worry—that's my lookout!"

Brat wanted to know more definitely than this, but all his queries brought equally indefinite answers, and finally he submitted to her chatter and proceeded to be delighted for the remainder of the afternoon. She took him back to Cambridge, threatened to come after him unless she heard from him in a few days, and left him—and Brat was in a fine frame of mind to study for examinations.

Several days later Riley, Hamilton and Brock were holding forth in a heated discussion of the many problems and aspects of college life in general, when the Irishman, after declaring that "college athletics run the business of the country," added, "and look at Brat—he saw Virginia Jordan about a week ago and she took him up to meet her old man; the old money-bags liked him—sent him a letter the next day to come and see him. Brat went in and was introduced to a friend of Jordan's who has a kid coming up for entrance exams next fall—they want Brat to tutor the kid this summer! Now, can you tie that—the Brat tutoring! Cripes, he can barely pass in his courses here!"

"Good joke on the kid's father, I should say," said Hamilton.

"Joke, nothing!" declared the Irishman. "He'll give that kid more than his money's worth. He can show him not only a little about his studies, but also a lot about how to get along in college. The kid'll like him because he's a college athletic hero: he'll listen to everything he says and will come down here next fall all primed to lick the world according to Hoyle! Oh, this athletics stuff pays princely rewards! Brat's to get four hundred dollars for two months' work with six weeks on the Cape!"

"Lucky egg!" sighed Hamilton.

"Lucky—not at all! No luck in that! Brat's just played his cards right—just as they should be played. He plays the idea that you get out of college exactly



what you put into it: if a man makes a success in college he ought to expect rewards, that's the idea! And athletics invariably pay big dividends: look at all the soft summer jobs at excruciating pay! Look at the jobs they get when they graduate! Look at these newspaper jobs—and most of them can't write worth a damn! Why, I know one chap who's been working on one of the papers in town for five years, and in that time about seven or eight athletes have gone over him in promotion and pay. He's not an athlete because he's had to work his way through college, but these other birds get the gravy, just as if he deserved to be penalised because he had to work while they played football or baseball! American business is run by athletes—and they are, all in all, the greatest salesmen the world has ever seen. They bring to their job a lot of popularity and publicity, and they have entrée in innumerable places where the ordinary graduating sheep can't go, and they know the fine old art of handshaking as well as the art of working—some of them do, that is!”

“They put a premium on these extra-curricular activities!” agreed Brock. “They get the opportunities to progress rapidly—the poor hard working scholar has to be content with a long, slow grind and a lot of polite kicks!”

“But these athletes don't seem to get very far, as a rule,” objected Hamilton.

“Why—they ought to!” said Brock. “They have the opportunity, and they have had sufficient training in college; they should, if they are any good at all, be able to fill a job very intelligently!”

“Oh, it's about fifty-fifty, I guess,” offered Riley. “There are about as many stultified and impossible handshaking bond salesmen and small-time business men as there are real business or professional successes. The point is that athletics pay because the man finds opportunities much quicker than the grind does! And that isn't a very healthy condition, if college amounts to anything other than an athletic club!”

So the discussion went on, as so many such conversations go, with a maximum of knocks and kicks and complaints about this, that and the other thing. In any college it is invariably true that no one is ever absolutely satisfied, there is always something to complain of, either of the way the athletic teams are failing to do as well as they should, or the college authorities are acting so much like demagogues and unreasonable arbiters, or the instructors are unreasonable in their assignments and unfair in their marking, or the fraternity system is ruining the school, or the college is getting filled up with babies and damned fool poets, or the eating conditions are a thing to shudder at, or the goodies never make the beds or sweep the rooms, or the college police are too two-faced and double-crossing and sneaking to be anything but unspeakable gumshoes, or Professor So-and-So spends all his time with and over the co-eds (at Harvard, the Radcliffe girls) or the Jews are ruining the place, or the blue-bloods are too snobbish to be tolerated, or the college courses are too prep-schoolish and unpractical, or they are too materialistic and practical, or there's too much red tape to allow any efficiency, or—or—or—or—— There is always something to be discussed, some complaints to be made. No one is ever satisfied. A college is a hotbed of discontent, and Riley and Brock were after the fashion of arch-critics.

This conversation took place on the day before the last exams, and it came to a stop when Riley suddenly remembered that he had to get some notes to study for his next day's examination. Hamilton went to the library, and Brock walked along with Riley to the Tutoring School, where the latter purchased for the sum of three dollars a complete set of notes on the English Literature course, his exam. They walked back to the rooms, stopping for a drink at the College Pharm, and finally drifted into the room to find Brat there reading a letter, which, after a moment, he handed to Riley. The latter glanced at the contents and proceeded to read aloud, as follows:

Boston, June 16.

Brat, you heart-breaker,

I said I should dog your steps if I did not hear from you—and I haven't heard a word! Where have you been and why such neglect? Would it inconvenience you too much to let us hear from you once in a while? Please do!

Dad has asked about you several times since you met. He liked you immensely—said you did not act like the usual college "rattle-brained parrot" (whatever that means!). I hear you are going to tutor Freddy Parks this summer and will be at the Cape during August and September; if so, and you fail to come to see us, I shall never, never speak to you again.

Of course we'd rather see you sooner—right away! That is, if you could arrange somehow to recall our address. Please, now, don't be such an idiotic stranger!

My best to all the crowd—trust you are being good! I'll be expecting you.

VA—

Riley and Brock looked at each other, so much as to say, "Well, there you are!" But Brat appeared to be more affected by Virginia's note.

"When you going to see her, Brat?" inquired Brock, as if he considered it all settled that Brat was to call on the little lady immediately.

"I don't want to see her!" said Brat, trying to say it indifferently.

Brock was on the point of asking for some reasons, but Riley interrupted, as he handed the letter back to Brat, saying with much implied disgust, "You're crazy, Brat! Go and see her, and don't be so utterly foolish! You know damned well that Ellen doesn't expect you to sit down here and twiddle your thumbs all day long! And you needn't cross this girl off your list just because you think she's supposed to be engaged to another man who is a speaking acquaintance of yours! Cripes sakes! she



gives you every opportunity in the world. I think the kid's in love with you!"

Obstinately Brat held to his position, saying, in his usual colorless way, "Well, as long as she's tied up, why should I break in? And if I fall in thick there—as I probably would—what the devil would I do next year when Ellen's down here? Besides, I don't like this unfair stuff anyway!" The matter was settled in his mind.

"You should worry about the fair play part of it, you ape!" Riley was completely out of patience with his roommate's impossible ideas. "It isn't your fault if the girl keeps inviting you to call, it isn't your fault if this Jud Lee can't keep her occupied; if she wanted to stick to him, that'd be different, but very apparently she'd rather play around with you! Jud Lee doesn't play any too fair with her, I guess—he's chasing around with other women all the time; so why shouldn't she see you?"

"But—" Brat started to ask about Ellen's part, but he stopped. It did no good to talk these things over with Riley, for Riley could explain away the moon and make you like the change. To him the fact that Virginia was obviously after a fashion engaged, and the fact that he himself was practically engaged, were sufficient to write "verboten" across any possibilities between himself and Virginia. His attitude was entirely typical and consistent. Whereas most men, as Riley said, relish playing around with some other man's girl, he, Brat, was not even interested. That is, he tried to appear not even interested—but the matter was complicated by the fact that little Virginia had so affected his sensibilities that he was actually beginning to realize that he could like her better than any girl whom he had ever met. He even contemplated the possibility of breaking with Ellen, but his mind stopped at the contemplation, and his will never even considered it for a moment. He was determined not to see Virginia, and he decided Freddy Parks' summer place was too close to the Jordans' for comfort; he guessed he'd better go home after Summer School.

While Riley was maligning Brat for his obsolete ideas and while Brat was paying no attention whatsoever to his maligning, the door burst open and in bounded F. Somerford Hamilton again, with an armful of books and an air of hustle and bustle entirely out of proportion to the demands of the time. He had returned to study with Brock and Brat for their Psychology exam, which was to come the following morning. His chatter, somewhat subdued in the previous visit with Riley and Brock, was again of its usual gattling-gun variety, and rendered all other conversation impossible. He began at once to prepare for the business at hand; off came his coat; out came his necktie; up went his sleeves; the books were stacked neatly beside a comfortable chair—Somerford was ready to study. Meanwhile he talked.

“Say, Brock—I just remembered——” he rattled out, “I only got a C on that last theme you gave me for English 6. Old Saint Pierre tore it all to hell; his criticism covered a whole half-page, the chief point being something about me profiting by spending more time on my work! Ha—that’s a joke! How long did it take you to write that, Brock?”

“An hour, probably,” replied the other dryly. “What the devil does that old lady want, anyway?”

“Can’t prove it by me. All I know is that I’ve got a good strong C in his course, and that I’ve got to get a C in this Psych or I’ll be lulued!”

“Did you take Music, Frank?” asked Brat.

“Yes, and I was one of the ones he flunked! Did you hear about that? The College Office told the prof the course was getting too easy; he’d have to toughen it up or cut it out; so what the hell does he do but flunk about half the men, just to prove that it isn’t a snap! Why, I know several fellows who studied like hell for that, and got D’s and E’s—and they won’t change the marks, either. One fellow’ll have to come to Summer School to get his degree, just on account of that damned foolish trick!”

"Hm—nothing fair about that!" said Brat, as if it made no difference to him. "But how about this Psych?"

The consensus of opinion seemed to be that the Psych exam would not be too hard for Frank to get a C, which being the case there need be no hurry about studying for it. The conversation moved to other subjects.

"What did you get on that History thesis?" Riley asked of Brat.

"Just a C," answered the other. "What did you get, Somerford?"

"Oh, I got a B on that. It was a darned good thesis, even if Brock did write it." Frank thought this a good joke.

"Yesoos!" exclaimed Riley. "Can you beat that? Brat stayed up all night making up that thesis and gets a measly C on it—because he's an athlete and C's are all he needs. I don't think they ever look at half of them, anyway! You don't do a thing but copy twenty pages from one of Brock's old theses, and you get a B plus! How the hell do you do it? What do you do—bribe these instructors? Donaldson only got a B on his thesis in that course, and he works like a nigger and knows the stuff from A to Z. What did Martin get?"

"Oh, Martin—he got a C plus, and he's sore as hell. He has a different instructor, you know, so he copied Brock's thesis, too. But he only got a C on it. Pretty lucky, I guess!"

"Lucky" was no word for describing Somerford, according to Riley, remembering the freakish way in which Frank had taken his money at dice a few months earlier.

The conversation again shifted from topic to topic, as Somerford, the human newspaper, related all the scandals and rumors that he had lately heard. He talked on endlessly, it seemed to Brat, who paid little attention to him until he turned suddenly to remark, "Oh, by the way, Brat, I saw your little friend, Virginia, the other day.



Keeripes, but she's a rare little darling! And she knows it, too! Dresses as if she were going to do a nymphatic dance on the sands—gentlemen, she *is* built!"

Brat's eyes continued staring away from the speaker, but he was not inattentive to his words and when Somerford went on, saying, "I saw her at a dance and she was sure feelin' good—between the scantiness of her clinging clothes and the inimitably effective way she dances, I could hardly dance with her! Whew, mama!"

Brat turned and faced the speaker. "What the hell are you talking about, Somerford?" he demanded angrily.

Fools invariably rush in where angels fear to tread. Before Riley or Brock could silence the human phonograph, he had blurted out in his most blasé air, "I'm talking about your friend, Virginia. She said she hadn't seen much of you lately and I said, 'Never mind, Va, I'll tell Brat what he's missing—he sure could see a great deal of *you* right now! And, Brat, you could have! I did!'" His voice stopped—Brat's long, hard fingers were around the foolish one's neck; with one sweeping heave, Somerford was lifted from his chair and held at arm's length.

"You skunk! You're not worth hitting or I'd kill you right now!" glared Brat. Somerford shook helplessly, trying in vain to ease the hold on his neck. He was choking, blue in the face, but Brat continued, "If I hear of any dirt like that again, I *will* kill you! I mean it!" And he threw the lanky fool at Riley, who calmly stood him on his feet and told him, "For Pete's sake, use your head and keep your trap shut!"

Brat turned to Brock who suggested that they get busy on the Psych. Somerford was silent for some time, but finally offered Brat an apology and explanation (which Brat ignored) and joined them with the books and notes.

Riley muttered something, gathered his notes together and adjourned to the bedroom to study, leaving Brock alone with his two pupils. Brock did the greater part of the work, outlining the course, answering questions, explaining principles and emphasizing the points most

likely to be covered in the examination. The entire evening was thus spent, but at midnight much material yet remained to be covered. All three were tired and groggy, and Somerford was ready to quit.

"I'll take a chance on bulling anything that may come in that last section," he declared.

Brat, however, had no such "bull" to rely upon, and was therefore in favor of sticking to the end, so Somerford prepared to desert the two, Brock being willing to stick with Brat to insure his passing.

Somerford put on his tie and coat, but while looking for his hat and collecting his books, he stopped long enough to inquire as to the difference between "analytic and synthetic processes," a point which he had been told by a friend of an instructor would surely be on the examination.

"Yes, you ought to know that," Brock agreed sleepily. "Get this, Brat. Synthetic means building up from ingredients or parts to the whole or conclusion or generalization. Analytic means taking the whole and separating it into its various ultimate elements or parts, its ultimate ingredients. Just remember synthetic gin, and you can't get confused. Synthetic gin is gin made by putting the various ingredients together in a certain way, a certain proportion. So much water, so much alcohol, so much juniper, so much nitre, all mixed up is synthetic gin. See?"

He looked sleepily at Brat to see him nod his head, then continued, "Now, when you pass out after drinking about two quarts of this synthetic gin, the doctors wonder what the hell you drank! So they pump out your stomach and analyze its contents. By analysis they determine that whatever was in your stomach contained water, alcohol, juniper and nitre, the ultimate ingredients or elements. See?"

He stopped again for a moment. "Now, all philosophy can be divided into two parts or kinds, according to these two processes—one, making one thing out of many,

arguing from causes to effects, and the other, making many things out of one, arguing from effects to causes; one is inductive, the other is deductive reasoning. Just remember these two lines and you can criticize any theory of values or anything else in an intelligent way."

Somerford asked a few more questions and took his departure. After the door closed behind him, Riley came from his place of confinement and announced that he had to eat before any further work was possible, so the other two called a halt and joined him in cereal and coffee at the nearby Waldorf, after which the three returned to their studies. The would-be psychologists heard the clock strike three before they finally called it a day by going to bed. Riley, they discovered had preceded them.

The most important question on the morning's exam, which proved to be of the ordinary variety: easy to pass but hard to make a high grade on—was concerned with the analytic-synthetic contrast as applied to a selection of ten notable philosophers and psychologists of the last fifty years. Somerford wrote for an hour on and around this question. Brat wrote what Brock had told him, applying the formula to as many of the theories as he could. Brock wrote a compact but comprehensive answer.

Outside the hall, after the exam, Somerford was jubilant. "Boy, oh boy! I know I knocked it for a loop! I wrote for an hour on that one question. Wrote two blue books!" He was certainly confident.

The returns, received a few days later, justified that confidence, for he received a B, while Brock had to be satisfied with a C plus and Brat with a C minus. Once again the mighty bull was more successful than reason, and Brock declared with much feeling that some day he intended to write a book on the "Critique of Pure Reason," but that his book would have nothing in common with Emmanuel Kant's famous work on that subject. "Reason," said Brock, "is obviously poor property, and to be reasonable is to be foolish in a society that puts a



premium on huey such as Somerford merchandises so successfully.”

To which Riley replied, agreeing facetiously with his boon companion, saying, “Yes, Somerford is the cardinal example of how to get ahead without a head.” This from Riley, who could easily outdo Somerford’s length and endurance in elucidating upon any given topic.

To which Brat replied, tossing into the waste basket an envelope which he had had in his pocket since the day before the Psychology exam, “Somerford merely writes out everything that comes into his head. You fellows would save yourselves a lot of worry and trouble if you would always do the logical thing, whatever it is—you spend half your time worrying over how you can do something better. Somerford doesn’t; he does what he can do and never thinks about ‘better’ ways or ‘better’ answers.” Which was altogether an unusually long speech for Brat, but Riley had an idea that his roommate had been thinking about the letter which had been burning his pocket for the past few days and that in consequence he had been deciding something along the lines which he laid down as Somerford’s. As fact, Brat had been doing just that—he did not call on Virginia.

#### CULTURE: SUNBURN OR TANNED?

The Fourth of July was quite improperly celebrated by all those members of the crowd who were in Cambridge at the time. Brock and Riley were there—as Government students they were there every summer—awaiting the opening of the Summer School, and Brat was also there, having decided not to accept the tutorial position until after the close of the Summer School in mid-August. The three of them faced the hot weather in prospect with few interests other than the trying to keep cool, which is more or less of a problem, indeed a difficult proposition, to undertake, as there are perhaps only a very few places this side of the land traversed by Dante’s fancy more hot

and uncomfortable than Harvard Square in mid-summer.

No one expected to do much studying or to find much enjoyment. Indeed, no one ever expects to study in the Summer School, except perhaps a few misguided creatures from the tall-grass country. Certain it is that Harvard undergraduates, who for one reason or another attend the hot session of July and August, do so without hoping for anything of an enlightening or exciting nature to happen during that time. A few men, acting in a moment of weakness no doubt, let themselves in for a summer's discomfort just for want of something to do, but such lightning of error seldom has been known to strike twice in the same individual. In general the summer season in Harvard Square is made up of individuals not enjoying life—at least, the male figures may be thus described, although it has been quite true that many of the visitors from other colleges and universities have upon many occasions been seen to act very suspiciously happy. This fact has provided a simple means of telling offhand whether any individual is a student at Harvard during the winter or merely a summer visitor, the rule being that if the man acts happy and in a manner that leads one to believe he is having the time of his life, so to collegiately speak, he very obviously and certainly is not a regular Harvard undergraduate. To the Crimson's real sons, the Summer School is something to be tolerated and looked down upon as an unnecessary evil; as a result the visiting men and women are quite properly objects of toleration and condescension, for they are very obviously "outsiders" and "foreigners" to these precincts which have been traditionally the haunts of men; they do not "belong," and should therefore consider themselves fortunate in being allowed to enter the walls of this great temple of learning and to hear the voices of the renowned priests therein. As Riley very aptly explained the situation, "These people rush in here and sit in the Harvard sunshine for five short weeks and chase away with a cultural sunburn, which they proceed to flaunt around the

country as genuine Harvard stuff! But the real Harvard man acquires by his continued residence here a cultural tan, which is in no way similar to the bright red burns which they carry."

The Harvard man does not enjoy his Summer School, and he has only pity for those who do enjoy it; he feels sorry for any one who can relish such meagre fare. Yet these strangers do relish it, and many of them are so adept that after a couple of summers in Cambridge they feel that they are as Harvardian and Cantabrigian as if they had spent four or five years there as undergraduates. However, as Riley pointed out, they cannot really attain the level of the Harvard undergraduate because the latter has the well developed uppishness of the accustomed superior; he knows that in Harvard he has the best and highest in the country and that, regardless of all the small colleges' envious dreams and claims—which are as flyprints to him—he need doff his cultural chapeau to none, at least and especially not to summer students!

Feeling as he does, the Harvard man who must attend in the hot season looks forward to the time as a dead loss, unless he is fortunate in his friendships so that his time can be divided between the Square and seashore camps or other refuges. The compensations of the situation mean little to him—the eternally parading girls, whose numbers along the Avenue are mysteriously trebled during the no-college months; the Summer School girls mingling wholeheartedly in the parade, which is ordinarily made up of crazy young things looking for excitement in the persons of college boys; this enlarged assortment of available female companions means little to the regular, who knows better than to seek his game near Harvard Square. Other slight compensations, whatever they may be, are at most as negligible in the eyes of the same regular.

So it was that Brat, Riley and Brock were looking for excitement while waiting for the school to convene, and so it was that they celebrated the Fourth improperly and



unbecomingly by visiting, incognito, Revere Beach where they flirted promiscuously and with fair results with the five varieties of Jewess indigenous to Revere, rode six times on the Thunderbolt roller-coaster, ate too many hot dogs and drank too much soft beer. They were back in their rooms at midnight, having witnessed every fireworks' display in and around Boston on the night before as well as the night of the Fourth. And as proof of what higher education can do for human beings, they all thoroughly enjoyed the time quite as much as did the God-forgotten Jewesses whom they encountered at Revere.

The following day saw the opening of the Summer School, and from that day until the middle of August the three partners were more than usually attentive to their studies, chiefly for the reason that they could find little else to do. On various occasions they sallied forth to seek entertainment, but their efforts were as often as not wasted.

"The place is going to hell!" Of this, Riley was convinced. "A man can't even walk through the Yard without swallowing his pride! And the place up there with all the trees and their green, setting off the red and white of those old buildings is really beautiful, something that could be enjoyed, if it weren't for those damned self-made poets who hold forth regularly on the library steps and in front of every lecture hall!"

To which Brock felt called upon to make an answer to the effect that perhaps the beauty of the Yard was the cause of the poets' flocking about so, but this answer merely set Riley to continue, "I wish that were it, but if you ever stop and listen to the inane, absolutely kittenish chatter of those tennis hounds on the steps of Sever, you'll assure yourself that it is not so. Why, it's desecration! The Puritan purity of those buildings up there, the very architecture representing the ideal of purity, is outraged! The green lawns, the green trees, other symbols of virgin beauty, are at odds with that motley crew that inhabits the Yard these days! Why, I'm getting so

that I can't look upon a Harvard pennant or banner without wondering if the crimson has come from some of those kittenish ladies who infest our fair temple!"

A few days after this conversation, Brock and Riley attended one of the official dances at the Union just to see what the harvest of men and women would be, and returned to tell Brat of their experiences. Brock, whose artificial appendage precluded his dancing when sober, had spent the evening talking with several young and middle-aged schoolmarms with whom he managed to strike up acquaintance and with the half-dozen or so of young, excitable girls whom Riley deposited with him after having danced with them. According to Riley, the party was rather stupid, it being his conviction, or so he said, that the authorities need never be afraid lest the summer students be not studious, "because such an assortment of human beings could not possibly be frivolous."

"The only way I can explain these school teachers," he told his roommates, "is by Emerson's Law of Compensation. School teachers, scholars and men and women of so-called genius are lacking in something. As far as I can see they usually are homely as the proverbial mud fence; consequently they develop their powers in other directions,—they have to develop some side of them, the idea being that if one's physical or mental qualities are circumscribed in one direction, the natural thing to do is over-develop some other quality or side. Now, as it is very evident that those people at the Union dance were not over-developed in physical or mental charm, they ought to be good students!"

"Right-o!" agreed Brock.

"School teaching must be a damned tough life," Riley continued, settling himself to smoke a cigarette before retiring, "if those individuals are representative. I only saw about six people up there who would in my opinion be good school teachers, and yet most of that crowd are in that profession."

"Well, somebody has to teach school," commented

Brat, in his logical, never inquisitive way. To Brat, things were as they were, and to try to inspect them for reasons and causes was a waste of worry.

"Yes, true enough," agreed the Irishman. "Somebody has to do the teaching, but my God, no wonder kids hate school!"

"Oh, the trouble with this teaching game," began Brock, "is that the natural-born school teacher is a rare article, and the demand is woefully out of proportion to the supply. From all I can gather, most of these people have gone into teaching merely because they had nothing else to do at the time they started. As I told a fellow up there tonight, 'You school teachers are like mercenary "pink ladies."' He didn't know whether to act sore or smile at that, but what I meant was that they take what is momentarily the easiest way. After a couple of years they find, just as the street-walking solicitor does, that it's easy to start but hard to keep going. It can't be expected that we'd have many perfect teachers as long as that is the prevailing thing."

"Yes, but what can be done about it?" This from Brat, of course.

Brock did not answer, but shrugged his shoulders, so much as to say, "Don't ask me—it's not my worry."

But Riley, who had been thinking while Brock talked, had something to add. "Just think of all the school teachers you've known in your life," he suggested. "They can all be divided into two distinct types—those who have a very active and dominant inferiority complex and those who have an impossibly egotistical superiority complex. They are either chronic, habitual subordinates, or they are self-deceiving, demagogic superordinates! I've known about one good teacher in my life; all the rest were either of the inferiority kind, who go into teaching because they are afraid or loth to face the racket and rush of the cruel commercial world, or they were of that excruciatingly overbearing kind, who think they know all there is to know of their profession, who feel that they



are divine gifts to mankind, endowed with godlike qualities for the keeping of their brethren. That kind always takes responsibilities too seriously for being a good teacher. Both are harmful—you can't blame kids for not liking them."

"Somewhere," said Brock, after a moment, "there ought to be a happy mean—a sort of happy middler, so to speak."

"Yes, there ought to be, but they're few and far between—the schoolteacher will probably always be either a Prussian demagogue who looks and acts like an ogre, or a weak sister who worries her head off trying to keep kids from taking advantage of her kindly nature. The trouble is that the jobs do not attract the successful type of person. I think that any man, if he has the stuff in him, will be successful and effective in whatever line of work he takes up, but the ones who have the stuff in them never think of teaching school." Riley very certainly did not overrate the profession of teaching.

Brock, who was really in more sympathy with his friend's views than his talk would indicate, continued to pour oil on the fire by saying, "Well, that's not so true now—according to what I was told tonight by a sweet but serious young thing from Radcliffe. She said that the personality of the teacher is becoming less and less important as scientific education develops. I should think a science of education would tend to reduce the importance of the teacher—but, of course, I suppose that's over-emphasized."

Riley's fire needed no more oil for an explosion. "They are crazy!" he exclaimed. "Just making a bed for themselves to lie in! All this scientific huey, all this mental age stuff and intelligence quotients and other paraphernalia for measuring and classifying kids is a lot of damned foolishness! All this 'project method' and 'scientific approach,' these questionnaires and tests for vocational and educational guidance and treatment—all this stuff has come about as the result of some normal-

school professors not having enough to do to keep them busy. They probably looked from their cloistered windows and said to themselves, 'All this science, with its laws of chemistry and physics and biology, being applied to life in general, ought to elevate our profession as it has others. This is a machine age; why not make a science of education which would mechanize the education of children? "Science of education" sounds better than "school teaching" or "pedagogy" anyway.' That's probably how they figured, and as a result the Science of Education has become all the rage, and the kids are being put in at the big end of the machine and turned out at the little end, a finished product!"

"Still, a lot of it sounds pretty good, don't you think, frankly?" Brock's eyes were twinkling. He enjoyed nothing so much as to see the Irishman shatter idols and throw verbal monkey-wrenches about.

"Oh, perhaps." Riley was more calm than Brock expected. "I don't know—the point is that it's all so damned unnecessary, a lot of fuss about nothing. Undoubtedly there is a science of education, but it's the science that every teacher used to learn by teaching; now they try to learn it by sitting in Lawrence Hall listening to lectures on Freud and Froebel and discussing such paramount topics of the day as 'Why Animals Play' and 'I. Q.'s That I have Known'."

Riley swore, at great length; this was another of his pet antipathies and he would have talked all night had not Brock and Brat both laughed at him, Brock saying, with a smile, "All right—you win, Doctor! It's all a lot of superficial and unnecessary bunk! That's settled. Now, when Brat gets to be President of Harvard College, we'll make him discontinue the School of Education entirely."

"You ought to write a book," said Brat to the wild iconoclast.

"By heaven! I'm going to some day!" Riley was

very much in earnest. "All this hot air theory stuff gives me acute pains in the neck!"

"Well, it's a tough life, anyway, Tommy—a stiff proposition in either hand, so to speak," returned Brock, who was ready to retire and forget the troubles of the world.

"A hell of a life! People are either living way up in the clouds of thought and don't know the world's going on at all, or else they rush around counting minutes, full of business and money-madness, and don't know what the hell they're chasing after! There doesn't seem to be any Aristotelian mean! The theorists don't even know they're alive, and the others chase around so damned fast, busy as hell about something that doesn't contribute the least iota toward life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness—so damned excited and busy that they don't have any idea whatever as to what or why they're chasing around. I wish I'd lived in the Middle Ages—there was some happy medium then, Artemis and Aphrodite were both permissible; but everything moves so bloody fast nowadays that a man can't live a decently regulated life, with ideals and intellectual satisfactions. For a fact, I hate like hell to realize that I'm living, spending my life, in an age in which no one seems to know what the hell they're doing or why they do it! The old days were the happy days for that!"

"Which reminds me of Browning's description"; Brock was undressing but he stopped, with his artificial leg hanging from his arm, and said, "So you saw yourself as you wished you were. As you might have been, as you cannot be.'" His undressing continued as he hopped into the bedroom for his pajamas, calling back from there, "What say, Brat—shall we reform the world?"

"Hell of a thing to worry about," returned Brat, also beginning to remove his clothes. "You can't change things anyway, so why worry about them? Got enough to do to live."

Brat went into the bedroom, Riley coming in a few



minutes later to find both in bed, but before he crawled into his own cot, he took time to say, "And there, Brocker, is the product of scientific education! 'Why worry?' 'Just live!' 'Do as you're supposed to!' 'Follow the system and you'll win!' And you probably will win—probably have all kinds of money and won't know what to do with it! Probably hear of you some day giving Success lectures to school kids, and I'll laugh to hear how you explain your success."

He turned down his blankets and rolled in, pulling up the covers as he flung another afterthought at his chuckling roommates, "I *am* going to write a book some day and damned if I don't make Blunderbrat the hero of it!"

No reply, no sound except the sound of breathing, then, from Brock, sleepily, "All joking aside, Tom—do you honestly think Christ fed five thousand and walked on the water?"

A snort from Brat. A subdued laugh from Brock. Then, the Irishman, with his sense of humor recovered, saying solemnly, "Yes, Christ *did* feed the five thousand and Christ *did* walk on the water, but Galilee is far from the Charles River! Yet, verily I say unto thee, he hath sent many Ruths to lie at the feet of our God and many Rahabs to shelter the spies in our midst! And they covet our God and our enemies, yet they covet not ye sons of Onan!" A laugh from Riley. "Guess that will put you to sleep, you poor deluded incense burners!"

In reply, a snore from Brat and a laughing "Shut up!" from Brock. Squeaks of bed springs. Quiet.

Three typical college men—it would never do for the world at large to suspect such men of actually thinking and talking seriously about serious things, yet it is nevertheless true that some of them do thus bother their heads—not any of Brat's kind, however.

O Education!

What sins are committed in thy name!

Not long after the foregoing incident took place, the three inseparables went to hear a lecture and reading on Sir Walter Scott, given by one of Harvard's most eminent professors, an eccentric little gentleman who had more humorous, often ludicrous, anecdotes to his credit than any other instructor in the University. A Scot by descent, with a love and feeling for the literature of his ancestral land and her English neighbors, he was one of the most popular, but least known personally, of all the corps of instructors. Indeed, his renown was such that whenever he consented to give a "reading" or a lecture in the Summer School, the largest auditorium in the University had to be used, and even that was always over-crowded.

Riley was far-sighted enough to insist upon going early to avoid the rush, but even so they had a difficult time before they located three adjacent seats that were vacant. The throng which awaited the coming of the esteemed professor was composed in the greater part of women, the fact being so noticeable that Brock, after surveying the multitude, ventured an appropriate remark to the effect that he "didn't blame people for accusing Harvard of being a No Man's Land." At which, two mannishly dressed girls, who were sitting to the left of Brock, glanced smilingly around at him and then fell to whispering in giggles. On Brock's right, Brat was sitting with an air of perfect boredom, while next to him Riley was calmly surveying the sea of femininity before and around him, and listening to the very audible dialogue of two studious-looking women beside him.

Presently a young man, with flowing hair and flapping tie offsetting a huge pair of horn-rimmed spectacles, appeared in a near-by entrance and began to walk slowly, majestically, up the aisle. After a momentary hush, the buzz and burr of much talking continued, and one of Riley's neighbors whispered to the other that the new-

comer "Is Fodd, the poet! Such an interesting man! Knows Harvard so well, and all the instructors are his personal friends! You should meet him!" Riley watched the oncoming poet as he listened to this bit of information. Another overheard remark from behind also informed him that, "Fodd is in with all the instructors, a clever, brilliant man, very interesting to know!" Riley continued to watch and listen. The celebrity continued his slow progress up the aisle, nodding here and there and beaming toothily but importantly upon a few acquaintances who happened to be sitting along the way. A romantic figure he cut, completely consistent with the illuminating and appraising comments of the women who watched his modulated march.

Suddenly Brock began to laugh, in anything but a well-controlled parlor laugh. Brat smiled. Riley looked and smiled, awaiting enlightenment as to the joke. Brock laughed, louder and louder. Heads began to turn toward him inquiringly. Even the poet looked to the source of all this distracted attention. Still Brock laughed, slapping his artificial leg in time to his guffaws; tears filled his eyes; his collar was limp with perspiration.

The poet stopped for a moment to speak with a friend, who was sitting just off the aisle, and Brock's laughter ceased, several huge sighs marking the degree of exhaustion to which he had come in his laughing. He looked at Riley. Riley looked at him. He looked toward the aisle. Riley looked toward the aisle and saw the poet almost beside them now in his slow march. Brock fell to laughing again and Riley noted that the renowned and popular versifier was taking a seat in the row behind them, being met with respectful greetings from two ladies who apparently had been saving a seat for him.

"I was conversing with the Professor," Riley heard him say, with a suspiciously artificial English accent. "He was insistent that we discuss whether or not he should mention some of the unsavory details of Scottish life in his lecture this evening. I was in a terrific hurry, and did



not care to talk, but he refused to stop until quite satisfied. He had not been to dinner either—in all probability we shall have to swelter here waiting for him—” etc., etc.

“Oh, do tell us, Mr. Fodd! What were the unsavory details?” This from one of his fair companions.

“Oh, really—that would be too much, indeed!” This with that awful English accent and an affected laugh. “But you know—he is the kind of a chap that depends absolutely upon his friends—he absolutely insisted upon having my opinion——”

Riley’s attention was distracted from further listening by the entrance of the eminent Professor, arriving promptly at the hour and minute appointed. He was at once the cynosure of all eyes. The hall was quiet until he had settled in his chair, arranged his notes and books and began to speak, whereupon the whispering revived.

He talked for an hour, now reading, now lecturing, dwelling almost entirely upon the writings of Scott and emphasizing especially the noble character of the author as shown by his giving the last years of his life to pay his publishers’ debts. Ending with a short reading from Lockhart’s biography, the little Professor removed his spectacles, bowed, and began to collect his papers and notes. The hall echoed handclappings and a few cheers as the crowd moved to disperse.

Riley heard the poet say that he was going to stop for a moment to speak with his friend, the Professor, and noticed that the ladies were properly impressed. Next, he felt Brock’s hand pushing him back into his seat, from which he had started to move.

“Wait a minute, Tom!” Brock said with a twinkling smile. “We’ll have some fun.”

So they waited until the poet and his two friends began to walk down the aisle toward the speaker’s desk. Then Brock led Brat and Riley along behind them, so that by the time the poet reached the desk, Brock was beside him. The little Professor was being besieged with questions

from a crowd, mostly of women, which closed about him. At last, however, Brock managed to address him, saying, "Good evening, sir! I wonder——"

"Good evening, Brocker!" returned that gentleman, with a smile which might have indicated his relief at seeing a familiar face in this throng. "What criticism have you to offer, Brocker?"

Brock laughed. "None whatever, sir!" he said. "I merely wanted to ask if you could tell me what some of the unsavory details of Scottish life were, in the early nineteenth century and before—you were discussing them with Mr. Fodd, I believe." Brock's eyes were really twinkling now.

At mention of his name, the poet appeared to be uncertain whether to smile or be dignified. The Professor, however, did not even notice him. Looking searchingly at his young veteran friend, he said, "Fodd? Fodd? I don't recall any discussion of that topic with any one, but, Brocker, who is this Mr. Fodd?"

Brock turned a devilish smile upon the discomfited poet, and Riley thought for a moment that he contemplated exposing the gentleman before all his admirers, most of whom were now smiling broadly or laughing outright at him. Brock, however, did not do his worst, satisfying himself by saying, "Why, Mr. Fodd is the well-known poet—surely you know him, sir?" He smiled, and the Professor, his expression changing suddenly to a stern, set smile, said with much feeling, "The gentleman is an imposter, Brocker! An imposter!"

Brock could not restrain his laughter any longer. He thanked the Professor and turned toward the would-be poet, but the poet had softly stolen away, through a now hostile crowd which greeted his passing with funny little smiles.

Brock rejoined his companions and explained, "I've been in a couple of courses with that apple! He's one of the biggest jokes that ever hit this place—runs around spreading a line two feet thick everywhere. To hear him

talk you'd think he was John Masefield or Mæterlinck; last summer old man Thompson in that English course had to bawl him out a half dozen times for talking so bloomin' much! He never had a line of poetry published in his life, and he isn't even a Harvard man. He's just another of the common variety of four-flushin' poseurs who come here and get away with murder!" Brock was not laughing now. He was very much in earnest.

Brat smiled at his description of the poet, but Riley, laughing at the thought of the conversation which he had overheard, exclaimed, gleefully, "And don't the women fall for that stuff! They swallow everything—hook, line and sinker, and snap at the pole!"

"Well," said Brat with a smile, "I guess Brock spiked him for a while at least."

To which Riley agreed. Brock had done a good piece of work, and the Prof was not a bad sport, to come through that way in the pinch, for, as Brock explained, "He must have heard of this Fodd before, from the way he spoke up!"

Riley added, "Well, I'm glad we stick together against the usurpers and imposters at least!" Which seemed to be the consensus of feeling, so the three walked on home discussing other, more immediately important subjects.

### A LITTLE CONSEQUENCE

A few days before the close of the Summer School, Brock and Riley were standing at one of the Yard gates, watching the daily parade, when F. Somerford Hamilton strolled up to them and unusually calmly asked how things were going with the crowd and the College at large. The sight of him quite shocked both Riley and Brock, for he was an entirely different Somerford from the one they had known. Tanned, hardened features were offset by tell-tale marks of wear and tear on "the Innocent."

"Where the devil have you been, Frank?" asked Riley. "We haven't seen you since June."



"Oh, why speak of love?" answered the lanky one, in an ineffectual attempt at his old swagger. "I've been through hell, boys—through hell!"

"Why? What's the matter with you? You look as if you'd been drawn through a sausage grinder," laughed Brock.

"Huh—bet he's married!" said Brock. "Looks it."

"Married, hell!" exclaimed the tall youth. "I wish I had been. You know that party down at the beach?"

Laughter by Brocker and Riley; yes, they both knew of the party to which Frank referred.

"Well—I've been working for the past six weeks as a consequence of that party!"

"Well," replied Riley, not understanding, "you look as if you had been doing something. What do you mean?"

"I'd like to wring that damned manicurist's neck!" Somerford was not so much of a lad now. "She came around to me about three weeks after that party and she's been on my neck ever since. Said she'd been sicker'n a dog as a result of that party and that she was broke and didn't have enough to live on—and—oh—a lot of other stuff about me being responsible for her being there! And, dammit, I didn't invite her, so I laughed until she threatened to go to my old man! Then I figured she'd probably exaggerate the affair—and—well—the old man would raise merry hell if he knew I ever went on any parties like that! So finally I gave her enough money to keep her quiet—had to borrow the money, and I've been working ever since trying to keep her mouth shut. Every time she sees me she hits me up for a ten at least! God, I'm almost crazy! And it gets worse and worse! The old man won't give me a cent until college opens in the fall!"

"You damned fool!" Riley suddenly exclaimed. "Any other time and you would have come running to us for advice! Why didn't you ask some one about it? That girl had no claim on you for that fluke party! And I know

that's a fact!" And Riley went on to explain his conclusion.

"Yes, that ought to be enough!" agreed Brock when Riley finished. "There's a lesson for you, Frank."

"Damned shame, Frank," Riley went on. "You should have come around, instead of paying out all that money. You don't seem to know that this place is just full of girls who like nothing better than to rook poor, God-fearing students like you! Look around the Square right now! Do you ever see women dressed so sensuously attractive anywhere else but here? Why I think that some of these girls when they think they're coming into or through Harvard Square, make a point of dressing just as exposingly, as suggestively, as they can; they seem to think that if they keep no secrets from the boys down here, they may get into something interesting! And they do, and lots of the boys get into interesting things, too—just as you have done!"

Somerford was uncomfortable, exceedingly so—indeed he had been uncomfortable for a long time, but no one had rubbed it into him. He looked at Brock for support, but Brock merely echoed Riley's sentiments, saying, "It's a fact. Even the summer women around here are a problem. Some of them probably work like hell all winter long to save enough money to come here and splurge for six weeks. Lots of them are starving for the excitements you read about in the books and magazines. They'll smoke cigarettes, even if it suffocates them, and they'll drink rotten hooch, even though it nauseates them! They play around flapperlike with these so-romantic men here—even though the playing is irritatingly inane! They taste as much of these over-advertised excitements as they can and then go home thinking they've had a hell of a time—think they've been seeing life and tasting experience! And the funny part of it is that they probably keep on wondering why they didn't get as much kick out of it as they expected."

Somerford mumbled something unintelligible and

looked at Riley, who went on from the point of Brock's stopping. "The place is full of them! The parade goes on every day and night! Most of them aren't bad—that is, they aren't looking for opportunities to go the limit, but they just crave excitement, something to do, something that will thrill them! Man-crazy girls who have nothing better to do than hang around where college men can see them and meet them—it's not much of a question whether they come here to know or to be known—their flare for learning is about powder-deep; they are infatuated with education for the sake of its appendages, just as sexual infatuation is a love of something for the sake of something else. And the point about your case is that every girl takes it for granted that every Harvard man has plenty of money, rich parents, prestige and standing, which should make it easy picking for a clever girl. The only thing the matter with that manicurist was that she suffered a chill from that cold water down there!"

Somerford was properly impressed by what his two friends had said to him. "But," he returned dryly, "that doesn't get back any money from that little rat, and I haven't scraped together enough to pay my bills. I'd like to take it out of her hide——"

"Which would do no good!" added Riley. "Best thing you can do is to go to your old man and put it up to him in all frankness. Tell him all about it and say that you're stuck and he'll have to help you out. And he'll take care of you."

This suggestion did not sound so well to Somerford, however, and he was still as much up in the air as to what he would do, when he left Brock and Riley, as he had been when he met them.

He went across the street and entered the subway, and his two friends, after seeing him safely out of sight, turned up the Avenue and walked home, discussing his case and other relevant subjects as they walked along.

"It's the nub of the whole thing!" was Riley's final



comment. "Men don't worry so much nowadays over any ill effects to themselves, but they think more about the trouble that the girls are liable to get into. That same fear also keeps more girls straight than anything else."

"More truth than poetry," agreed Brock, solemnly. "And the result is that that good old word 'virtue,' which the Romans used to define as purity of character, has come to mean physiological virtue, virginity, and every girl who is still a virgin thinks she's virtuous."

"Which accounts for so many of these so-called 'everything but' girls; just between you and me, Brock, I know a couple of prostitutes for whom I have more respect than I have for several of these 'teasers' with whom we've come in contact!" Riley talked very earnestly. "In my opinion, there's nothing lower than one of these girls who allows every kind of mauling and then chirps about never having been touched! Many a loose lady has more moral backbone, more real purity of character, more of the Roman virtue than any one of that kind!"

"Guess the world's headed for hell, sure 'nough!" laughed Brock.

These two took the ills of the world very much to heart; they spent much time in discussing these little problems and angles of social life as it is lived, and, although both really felt that all such things inevitably rested upon the well-worn lap of the gods, they persisted in trying to explain the whys and wherefores and hence-forths of everything around them.

Meanwhile another individual was also taking stock of the way of the world and his value in it. Somerford, listening dazedly to the rhythmic hum of the motors and trucks of the subway train on which he was riding, told himself for perhaps the hundredth time, that he was a damned fool for letting himself go on that beach party—he could have imagined as good a party any time, without any reason and without any consequences. Like Brat, the young fellow was beginning to realize that every

little thing has some consequence, but his sequel to the beach party incidents was destined to be even more effective and longer in duration than Brat's, yet, like Brat, he was learning about life through women, and his pill tasted even worse than that worthy's.

### DARTONVILLE REVISITED

Brat did not accept the tutoring position which he had been offered through the instrumentality of Virginia's father. He had several reasons of his own for preferring to listen to the voice of his mother, calling him home. After the close of the Summer School, Riley and Brock sent him away in a blaze of intoxicated glory—that is, they were gloriously intoxicated when they said good-by to Brat at South Station. They put him on the train, found the porter, gave him a drink and made him promise to take good care of their “young friend,” and were finally able to fall off the train just as it started to move. That done, they returned to Cambridge, packed their bags and set out for a lake in Maine where they planned to rusticate and rough it for a few weeks.

Dartonville was to all appearances as much in need of reform as when Brat had first left it for Harvard, and he could not help smiling to himself at the sight of three happy inebriates holding forth in a heated debate on the street corner nearest his home; indeed the smile endured even to the moment of meeting his mother, who smothered him with kisses and caresses and accepted his smile in return, the smile being the same one engendered by the sight of the three confirmed enemies of his mother's projects.

This does not mean that Brat was not glad to see his mother again; he was very glad to see her and to be with her again, for the school year which he had just finished had been a strenuous one, and the refuge of his home town had been popping up in his mind as something to look forward to. And Mrs. Bratten was still the same

surrounding influence—Brat allowed himself to be surrounded at once, then did his duty by going to see Ellen.

He went to her with mixed feelings: he anticipated the meeting with much pleasure; he wanted to see her; it would be good to talk to her again, to have her near. On the other hand, he felt somehow inadequate, as if he were going to her just as a matter of form, a case of the body being willing but the spirit weak. He could not keep from remembering Virginia—and he had stubbornly determined not to remember her!

Ellen greeted him just as she always greeted him—properly: with a caress of welcome, the gentleness of which for some strange reason made Brat feel like a criminal! Why? He could not have said; he had no reason to feel guilty—but he did, and he continued to feel more guilty as their first conversation progressed. And he couldn't understand the reason for this uncomfortable feeling. He discovered that Ellen had been going about to dances and affairs with various young men of Dartonville and neighboring cities, so his feeling could not have come from that quarter. Ellen seemed perfectly happy and contented, properly so—but Ellen was proper in everything! It was good to be with her—but Brat did not particularly enjoy the call.

Ellen and his sister, Lois, were after him even before Brat had had a night's sleep, the latter pouring out their plans for his time in town much as if he were a hired performer and they the directors. They had, it appeared, made arrangements to show him off to somebody or other almost every night of the time—and many of the afternoons. "There are so many, many people here now whom you will like so much!" Lois told him, while Brat wondered to himself if this were really the girl who had always been so distantly related to him when he was an awkward kid, the butt of the neighborhood's jokes.

"We'll be pretty busy, won't we?" he suggested to Ellen.

"Now don't be silly!" gushed Lois impatiently. "I thought you had grown up. Please don't aggravate me



by acting as if you have not outgrown your childish ways!"

Ellen, however, said, "Let's do whatever he wants to do—go to some of these things, and if you don't enjoy them, we'll do something else."

Hearing these two statements, Brat decided that both Lois and Ellen were the same girls they had always been—which struck him as being odd: they should have been different, changed. He smiled at them, when he said, "All right—I'll do anything you want! You people plan out everything and tell me what I'm supposed to do and I'll do it!" Which declaration would have pleased Riley immensely—the speech was so characteristic of Brat's attitude toward everything.

So he did as his mother and sister and Ellen planned, and he was ready within a week's time to proclaim to the world that he would rather play a whole season of football any time than follow the social whirl of Dartonville for a week. There was something doing every minute of the day and night. Didn't seem to ever have a chance for a good man-sized sleep. Ellen and Lois joined forces to keep him busy, and, whereas he had spent such a dull, uninteresting summer the previous year when Ellen was ill, he now was rushed to the point of being tired. And he missed the swearing and hell-raising of his raucous roommates more than he could have described. He even missed hearing the noise of crap games and the songs of liquor-laden students. He missed a lot of things; not that the places where Lois and Ellen and their friends took him were not fast enough—there was as much free-flowing moonshine in Dartonville as there ever had been in Cambridge; but his habits with these things, including also girls and parties, had been developed in the company of student friends, and his habits demanded that these friends be present upon such occasions, or that their absence be felt keenly by him. He felt their absence keenly enough; his party style was severely cramped. For this and other reasons he soon tired of the round of social

duties and parties to which Lois and Ellen and his mother had pledged him—his mother's pledges were of a vastly different kind from the parties of Lois's crowd—and at the end of the first week he was eager to get away, back to Cambridge.

Whenever time and occasion afforded an opportunity he met and talked with the men of the town who had been boys with him. But such meetings somehow were not very relishing either to him or to the boys. They fell flat. No community of interests at all. Reminiscences and recollections invariably had no particular point to them—Brat had always been more or less alone, even when in a crowd of boys, so that the doings of the neighborhood gang of boys were slightly obscure in his memory. However, he made a valiant attempt to revive his old friendships, but invariably his former playmates acted rather offish and distant, as if they were suspicious of his advances. They suspected him of being uppish with all his Hawvawd education, and took the natural way of protecting themselves against any overlording, all of which was unfortunate, since Brat was anything but snob-bish, and was really, genuinely desirous of making friends with all of them. Yet he did not succeed, and life in Dartonville soon began to upset his nervous machinery. He seemed to be an outsider, and this despite the over-attentive attitude of Ellen and Lois and their State University friends. For some reason, Brat felt always as much alone in the crowd as he did in absolute solitude. He gradually came to the conclusion that something would have to change if he were ever to be able to settle down there, marry Ellen and become the leader in such a community.

Thus Brat spent his vacation, with one exceptional occasion, upon which he was made to feel almost at home and comfortable. Happening to meet the former café owner who had been his mother's lifelong enemy, Brat was greeted with something akin to real gusto. The café owner, it appeared, had heard that Brat's college friends

were rather wild in their pleasures and short in their studies, and he took occasion to congratulate him upon choosing friends who could show him both sides of life "as lived by people who haven't come under your mother's soul-wrecking influence, son!" Brat had smiled at this, and had talked almost intelligently for half an hour with his mother's old enemy. Indeed, his mother's eyes would have turned purple with rage, had she seen him during this conversation. Brat was smiling when he left the portly, well preserved old gentleman.

He smiled because, as he said to himself, "It seems that you never can tell about things—who'd ever think of any one congratulating you on having a bunch of free and easy friends!"

Farther down the street he was greeted by one of the notable characters of Dartonville—the human tank of the fair city, known to every man, woman and child in the community as the original "old soak." This gentleman, whom some jokester with an historical bent had labelled as a direct descendant of the Indians of the ancient city of Whiskey Switch, greeted Brat with great good-fellowship, wrapped his arms around Brat's neck and proceeded to lecture to him upon the fine art and vice of dissipation.

"My boy," he ended, with tears in his eyes, "I'm 'stremely gratified to hear that y're gettin' on fust-rate down there! I knew your daddy, and there never was a finer, more upright white man ever libed, s'help me God! Y-no sir! None better than your dad, God rest his soul! We used to keep a beer keg in his stable—ha-ha-ha-a! which your mother never knew about at all! Yes sir, kept a keg of beer—and say, your dad was a fine man, sonny! But—but—but, what I want to say is this, son: and don't think I'm jokin' 'cause I'm not—I speak from experience! I'm a graduate of the good old school of hard knocks, and I want to say to you that you're on the right road! I've heard how you been gettin' on, and I want to say that you're doin' fine, and the farther away



from hard likker you stay the better off you'll be! You just keep on the way you're goin' and you'll be—why, dammitall, maybe you'll be president or judge or sheriff o' this damned country some day! Yes, sir! Who knows? Huh? Who knows?"

Brat smiled, and nodded his agreement that "Who knows?" was a pretty good one. He looked around to see how many observers might be watching this conversation, but before he had decided whether he could safely enjoy listening to this old barleycorn wreck, the latter was saying good-by to him with, "Remember, son—I'm pullin' for you! You've got the right idea, and I want to tell you, mister—stick to it! And who knows?"

Brat actually felt much better after having listened to this line of maudlin chatter. He could not have explained his feeling this way, but he knew he felt better. Why, if some one were to offer him a drink at the moment, he would almost duck down an alley to take it. Psychological? It's a queer study—the fact was that Brat was missing his gang in Cambridge, and this drunk was the nearest real approach to it that he had seen in Dartonville.

The vacation drew to a close, and Brat found himself growing more and more restive in anticipation of the end of his exile at home. He could not keep from showing his feelings, in many little ways which were entirely apparent to Ellen, but not to his mother or to Lois.

Ellen took him to task for his attitude, saying, "I can't understand what is the matter with you, Brat!" Ellen had addressed him as "Brat" since her first meeting with his friends in Cambridge, all of whom called him by that name. "Are you dissatisfied with Dartonville and us?"

"Blessed if I know, Ellen," he answered, almost truthfully, for he did suspect that he knew. "There doesn't seem to be anything here—all this running around seems so idle and fruitless, as if everybody just does it for the sake of something to do."

“Yes, that’s true, I suppose.” Ellen was thoughtful. “I guess that is our only reason for trying to imitate Broadway and Fifth Avenue and big city night life—but that isn’t what’s troubling you, because you never did pay any attention to that sort of thing. Why this sudden change?”

But Brat could not tell her the exact cause of the change which was coming over him, and eventually the subject had been dropped, only to be taken up for further consideration after they were settled in their chairs on the train which took them back to Boston.

Brat had been much relieved to get away from home again. He had been impatient even at the very leavetaking and had tried to hurry his mother’s long-drawn-out process of warning him against wine, women, bad boys and other conventional dissipations. It was with an audible sigh of relief, and a smile for Ellen, that he finally dropped down into the chair beside her, and Ellen heard the sigh and noticed the relieved expression on his face, but said nothing about it.

Ellen was a wise girl, a clever young lady and perfectly nice. She had been brought up with the idea that she and Brother Bratten were divinely mated and would eventually be joined together as all good married couples were joined. But for some time she had been seeing changes in this husband-to-be of hers, little things, between-the-lines feelings, and his obvious ennui during the summer. Now she wondered about many things, and at last asked Brat bluntly, however sweetly, “Brat, are you getting fed-up, tired, restless—wishing that you were absolutely free?”

Brat was so taken by surprise that he could not make any adequate answer.

“I think you are, Brat, dear,” Ellen continued. “You surely act it—and, of course, I can’t blame you: it isn’t your fault if you feel that way! You would like to be free to do a lot of things, wouldn’t you? I happen to know that you have been sticking pretty close so far,

and I don't want to feel that I'm responsible for your being unhappy."

"Why, I don't know——" Brat began, uncertain as to how he would finish the sentence.

"Well, I know!" she exclaimed as if by inspiration, "We'll call a holiday! I'll enjoy it just as much as you will and it will probably do us both a world of good! We'll call everything off for say this fall—you do just as you want to do and I'll go wherever and whenever I want to go! Then, if we do not want to rearrange things after Christmas, why—why——" The possibility of this had not occurred to her, but she went on to the conclusion, "why, we won't have to start over again, will we?"

"No, guess not!" agreed Brat, unable to fully comprehend Ellen's suggestion, but willing to try anything for her; and he actually felt at the moment that this plan was something for her benefit, not his own. Otherwise he would have objected.

So the plan was put into operation upon their arrival in Boston. They would keep in touch with each other, lest the folks at home become suspicious and begin asking funny questions. "But this is between you and me, Brat," Ellen counselled. "We're the ones who'll be getting married, not the folks—and if you're not happy now, it would be utterly foolish to go on to marriage without giving you a chance to find out whether you really want to stick!"

With these words, Ellen finally made Brat realize that the plan was for his own benefit; again he felt like a criminal, but for the life of him he could not raise a convincing objection.





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*The only end to justify education is intelligence; real intelligence constitutes one's religion—the organization of values by which one lives.*

*Said Riley: "This religion business is merely a convenience for human beings who have to live together."*

*"There's no such thing as an atheist! Regardless of how much a man may cry against religion and theology and God and the Devil—he may sincerely and earnestly believe that there is no God of any kind—but, when he gets into trouble, when he finds himself up against something bigger than he can handle, when he comes to the point of helplessness and hopelessness, he's going to pray! And he'll pray harder and more passionately than any ordinary believer! In so doing he admits the existence of a power greater than himself, a God."*

*"God's a refuge—prevents human beings from going crazy!"*





## CHAPTER V

### THE LAST LONG MILE

Seniors! The end is in sight—the last long mile seems in advance all too short a time to recoup lost opportunities and to turn one's college career to an appropriate culmination—and it seems in retrospect even shorter, for the time flies swiftly by those whose three years as undergraduates have given them a routine of occupations. There are those, of course, who have as much time on their hands as Seniors as they had as Sophomores, but these are the exceptions to the rule that Seniors are busy individuals, busy either at studying or at seeking entertainment.

Seniors can be defined as undergraduates who have spent sufficient time under an academic rooftree to acquire a considerable fund of academically valuable knowledge—among whatever other kinds and amounts of knowledge they may possess. Traditionally Seniors know much and are confident of their knowledge. This is undoubtedly characteristic of the genus Senior at the beginning of the year, but as the weeks pass and the end of the collegiate ordeal draws nearer and nearer, this self-assurance perceptibly diminishes so that a Senior at Commencement time is usually a picture of self-confidence—a picture painted in water colors, for the individual acts self-assured and as if he felt himself to be deserving of the plaudits and envious respect of the multitude of lesser animals, whereas underneath this cocksure veneer the man is stubbornly refusing to let himself suspect that he really does not know so much, feel so confident of his ability, think that he deserves so much credit for his endurance—in short, he's not so self-assured underneath: he is beginning to wonder a bit.



The difference between a Senior and a Graduate—unless the man be one of those who are addicted to a life-long indulgence in sophomoric and superordination complexes, one of those self-conceived cynosures of the world's eyes, one who readily admits that all roads lead to Rome, provided that his tent is on the Capitoline Hill—lies in the fact that within a very few months after graduation, a man comes to the realization that what he knows is an infinitesimal bit of the sum total of human knowledge and understanding: he becomes doubtful of his powers instead of more assured.

But he is becoming a more socially intelligent individual, and the Senior year sees, usually, the beginning of the growth of this wholly desirable kind of intelligence. So it is that the last long mile is the most important and, what is more, most happy in and for the life of the individual.

#### A FEW TOPICS OF INTEREST

There were many topics for interesting conversation among the various friends during the first days of the new college year. It was discovered on the very first day that young Maunstein had changed his name by dropping the "stein" from it, so that now he was to be called "Maun" in the college records. Riley and Brock were very outspoken in their disapproval of his action, arguing that he had changed his name because he thought the fact of his being a Jew had prevented him from gaining any prestige in athletics and among his fellows and that this late change would in no way affect his standing in or out of college. "He should have changed his name before he came here, if that's the way he feels!" was the way Riley put it.

The Beau and his troubles were at once before the crowd and continued to demand the attention of all those with whom he came in contact. The college authorities had refused to readmit him, the Dean frankly suggesting

that he try some other college for his pre-medical credits. The others sympathized with the French-Canadian but agreed with the Dean, and the fact that they all agreed on the point caused the hapless Beau to be more than ever convinced of the injustices which were being heaped upon him.

“Rotten unfairness!” he complained to the Irishman one day. “If I ever have a kid, I’ll give him a pretty name and let him be born on Beacon Hill and then I’ll send him to a military school just for spite!”

To which Riley replied, laughing, “Than which nothing could be worse! If you send him there you can be assured that he’ll learn all the filth and rottenness that can be learned and will come back to you with a straight back and an impossible flashy-dress complex. Send him to a good private school and he’ll come back with his head crammed full of entrance exam knowledge, the latest fashions in clothes and the idea that the world is his oyster. Send him to a good public school and he’ll know more than he can ever use, will wear any kind of clothes and won’t care a damn whether his friends are legion or just one. Take your pick!”

“I’ll make him a conductor!” declared the Beau. “How about your own?”

“Mine?” laughed Riley, “I’ll send him to a good private school to learn the ropes and to Harvard to pull ’em, and I’ll break his neck if he doesn’t play the system and win out!”

The Beau got very little comfort from his friends, chiefly because they had little to give him. His case was peculiar and they were at a loss to know of any way to help him. At last he left Cambridge, bent upon “getting in somewhere, if I have to use a jimmy!”

Another matter which attracted attention was the soon apparent fact that Tom Riley had “fallen for” a girl. His case was summed up by Brat, who said, “The wiser they are the harder the fall!” And truly it seemed so, for the Irishman was an unrecognizably new man from

the start and more often than not had very little conception of what was going on in the world about him unless it concerned the girl and himself.

He gave vent to his feelings very seldom now, the chief and most frequent cause being the "general condition of the college" regarding which he held forth at great length very often. He objected, he said, "to having the place turned into a menagerie and nursery! No wonder the people around Boston are suspicious of Harvard men when they go running around town in scarlet pimpernel sweaters, yellow-and-black plaid hose, size fifteen shoes, dirty-brown sports suits, flowing uncombed hair, usually uncut, and carrying their hats in their hands! That's what ruins our reputation around Boston—things like that running around loose and unchaperoned! The place is going to hell! They'll be making nursing bottles compulsory equipment in a couple of years!"

To this sort of thing Brat and Brock had to listen, the former frankly indifferent, the latter in tolerant agreement. Brat had little to worry about during the first few days. He had returned to college a free man, eager to do great things. The image of Virginia bothered him a little—especially after he discovered that she was rather frequently engaged with a prosperous young banker and man about town. Brat, however, was content to let matters take their course; he had come to the point where the only road left for him was the middle road of his own progress; he would carry on in his own way and let his outside relations take care of themselves. And Brat was the kind that can do that sort of thing.

He was appointed a Senior Adviser and assigned to "advise" six Freshmen upon the paths and pitfalls of their college careers. Riley was not given any such doubtful honors—the office of Senior Adviser has always been more or less of a joke—but the Irishman advised nevertheless, for in this position Brat functioned very poorly, whereas Tom had only to act entirely natural to be a perfect adviser. Brat's Chinaman, Jew, Irishman, Ital-



ian and Sweet Boy Graduate (for such was the allotment of Freshmen given to Brat) all knew Riley much better than they did Brat, and doubtless they learned more of value from him than they could have from his stalwart roommate.

So the first days of the fall were passed and as the time passed every one became more and more busily engaged in the routine of work and play. Brat was kept busy from morning to night; the football coaches laid down an extraordinary program of training and besides this there were the many other phases of his life, including duties on committees and in club affairs to which he had to attend at least occasionally. During his absences, Brock and Riley fell more and more into their own company and the wheel of life turned merrily on.

#### “THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES——”

In football the Crimson tide was running strong that fall; good material and good fortune resulted in a string of hard-fought and well-earned victories. Spirits ran high in Cambridge, although the usual, traditional Harvard indifference was still noticeable—a fact which Riley explained by saying that every one was beginning to take Harvard victories for granted, with the result that no one even bothered to argue about the merits of rivals and the possibilities of defeat. This was more or less true throughout the University. When money was offered on any visiting team, the Crimson cohorts accepted whatever odds happened to prevail, and placed whatever bets were available, with very little worry about losing. During that season, they made money from the beginning to the end, and every one was happy who bet on Harvard.

Such being the case, the students had other things to occupy their minds and their attention. In the case of Riley it was a girl, in whom he had suddenly discovered the sun to be rising and setting; in the case of Brock it

was a similar amoural situation, which caused him much discomfort; in the case of Brat, it was Virginia, a prettier, more piquant, more intriguing Virginia than of the year previous, and for her favor Brat was in open competition with the wealthy young banker. Such a situation had inevitable results, in that Brat was more or less in the air most of the time.

For all, the season passed very quickly, even though it was filled with events and incidents of more than passing interest. Many things happened—they came so fast one upon the other that the crowd scarcely had time to recover from one thing before another was upon them, claiming their attention.

The first incident concerned their friend Martin. One morning in October the Boston papers carried a heavy head-lined story about the disappearance of one James Q. Martin, a Harvard student who had been interested in the Ku Klux Klan. He had disappeared without leaving the slightest clue to his whereabouts. Foul play was suspected. Suicide was suggested. Nearly every possibility was offered in explanation until finally, two days later, the police announced that a note had been found in his room, which said: "Leave town at once or suffer.—K. K. K." This, of course, clinched the argument that Martin had had a falling out with his brother klansmen, and had been threatened with punishment unless he left town at once. This theory was satisfactory to all the newspaper readers—it was the Klan! They would do anything. Nothing was beyond them. But the search for Martin continued for several weeks, with no results, except the uncovering of several features of the case, at first overlooked. One of these was the fact that Martin was heavily indebted to almost every tradesman in Harvard Square and several of the large stores in Boston, and besides this he owed many personal debts, mostly money loaned by a score of friends in and around Cambridge. However, the theory that he had been chased away by the threats of the Klan, or that he had been kid-

napped by them and hidden away, continued to prevail, and little trace of him could be found. The weeks dragged on, and he was forgotten by all but a very few people, a few detectives and a few of his creditors. Riley and his companions discussed the strange disappearance occasionally, but gradually the gentleman named Martin faded from their active memory.

At the time, Martin's disappearance created quite a furor and much excitement, much discussion about the diabolical designs and machinations of the Klan. There was much controversy as to whether or not the hooded Americans were trying to establish themselves in the colleges of the country, and a great hue and cry went up that the youth of the nation was being perverted by these secret workers for America's welfare, in the course of which young Riley reached one of his greatest heights of toleration. Said he, "I don't see what all the fuss is about! What if they are a secret order? There are a lot of others. What if they do restrict their membership? Others do. What if they do argue just as the Black Shirts in Italy argue? 'Italy for Italians' wasn't a bad idea! And surely 'America for Americans!' sounds pretty reasonable. Some of these Irishmen are a disgrace to the race; the Irish stick together like thieves, but just because some one else tries to do the same, they kick like hell, and accuse them of unpatriotic and traitorous schemes! And the Jews do the same, when they are as bad as any racial group that we have! Let 'em ride! That's what I say! If they've got anything that can help the country, give them a chance to show it!"

Thus did Riley take his stand, and, in speaking of Martin's case, he added, "Likely as not the Klan is getting blamed for something they never had a hand in. Anybody, some renegade Irishman, as well as not, could have put that note in Martin's room just as a trick, because Martin was suspected of being a Klanner." However, regardless of Riley's opinion, the discussion of the Klan and of Martin's case went on and on until his continued



absence caused all rumors to die a natural death for want of new and interesting developments.

The crowd which made a rendezvous of the rooms occupied by Riley, Brat and Brock, soon forgot about Martin and his troubles, because something happened shortly after that incident which came much nearer home, and affected them all more directly. Brock was the center of this incident, very much the center of it, in fact, for by his actions at this time he changed the course of life for them all—that is, for Brat and Riley.

Brock had made steady progress during his Junior year and through the Summer School. He was pretty squarely on his feet when he returned for his Senior year—but that over-developed, magnified sensitiveness on the point of his relations with members of the opposite sex still operated with irrepressible force in his actions and attitude.

He and Riley had spent several weeks in Maine after the Summer School closed, and while there Riley had met and completely fallen in love with a pretty little girl of the innocent-doll kind, a girl whom Brock did not rate very high. However, the Irishman had fallen, and when they returned to Boston had insisted upon taking Brock to meet a friend of his girl's and——

“She's a darlin'!” had been his very first comment after the meeting, and Tom agreed that Annette was a darlin', although to himself he said that he would rather Brock had not liked the girl so much. But Brock proceeded to disregard all of the Irishman's unspoken wishes, and before very long he was spending as much time with Annette as Riley contrived to give to her friend, whose name was Bernyce Cutler.

His Ellen-Dora complex was still functioning, but Annette so completely occupied his fancy that he once more determined to rid himself of Dora and forget about Ellen—for, in spite of the fact that he knew Brat and Ellen were not so closely bound as they had been, he still felt guilty of holding a dishonorable attitude toward his friend's girl.

But the problem of Dora was of another hue. Dora, perhaps justifiably, had in her mind the idea that eventually, when Scotty had finished his college course, they would be married—than which of course nothing was further from that worthy's mind. He had finally submitted to continuing his present relationship with her, merely to avoid trouble and to keep peace in his affairs. Many times, however, they had talked of marriage, she questioning, trying to find out various things, but Brock always took the wind out of her sails by saying frankly and bluntly that he did not intend to marry her or any one else. The psychology of the situation was simple: despite all his protestations, her attitude remained the same, her expectations intrigued by what she thought to be an attempt on his part to keep her in suspense, and their relations continued. All of which would have been all right—Brock had long ago decided that Dora was of the type that would give what she had to some other man if he did not happen to be around; Brock would have gone through to graduation, broken off with her and gone away, with little or no harm done to any one, had not he been so unfortunate as to meet Annette, a younger girl, of excellent family, such a girl as he had always imagined to exist somewhere, but had never hoped to meet.

At once he enveloped Annette with all the illusion of the ideal as his mind conceived it—the ideal of womanhood—with the logical result that upon her seeming to respond to his feeling—as any normal girl would respond—his whole attitude toward life began to change. Things began to mean something to him. Life was worth living after all. It was much as if the corpse in which he had been living since his misfortune in the Argonne had suddenly had its veins replenished with good blood, and its heart stimulated to beat again.

“Gee, I’ve been a fool, Tom!” he said to the Irishman on more than one occasion during the following weeks, and the latter invariably wanted to reply that he was now a still bigger fool in many ways, but he did not thus

reply. Brock was as busy as any man could be those days, worked hard at his studies, took an active interest in the various college activities which were going on, found time to take Annette to everything that came along, and was insensibly happy.

Riley watched the proceedings, wondering. He knew how things were going, and by what he gathered from the remarks made by his Bernyce and by Annette, he had a growing suspicion that Scotty was due for a great fall if he continued. Opposed to this suspicion was his feeling of gratification, genuine pleasure, over the fact that Brock had so changed for the better. By way of compromise, the Irishman succeeded in keeping his suspicions to himself, and waited for the developments which he knew to be inevitable.

They were not long in coming. Brock's affair lasted just long enough for the other woman, of whom he had been diligently trying to rid himself, to arrive at that white heat point of which the poet sang when referring to hell as having no furies like a woman scorned. This woman was a veritable human fire of fury, and her mother, whom she enlisted in her cause because that lady had fully expected her daughter to marry Mr. Brocker, was almost her equal in the matter of infuriation. It was at this unhappy time that the girl with whom Brock was genuinely in love met a man whom she liked much more than she ever could have liked Brock. Dog-like, Brock hung on, and he did so with such often embarrassing attentiveness that finally the girl tried to let him down easy, by inadvertent remarks about her relations with her other man. These remarks did not affect Brock, apparently, until of a sudden they came to him as direct insults; the girl made no attempt to conceal her feelings toward him; she told him that she could never marry him, that he would never probably be able to support a wife as he would want to, that they would merely be unhappy together, etc., etc.

That night, after hearing these things all together,



Brock went back to Cambridge without a leg under him; he bought a quart of moonshine poison, and had consumed almost the entire bottle before he reached the rooms, and his faculties were so confused and distorted that he could not explain anything to Brat and Riley, except to say that "everything's gone to hell!"

He finished the quart, and eventually fell into so sound a sleep that Brat and Riley undressed him and put him into bed, where he remained, unconscious, dead to all the world, for better than three hours. Several times, he might have recalled later, he heard a ringing of bells and a sound of voices, but these were registered in his subconscious mind; his conscious mind was not functioning.

What these sounds really were, Riley told him next morning. The telephone had been ringing all evening long, and every time the party at the other end had been the same—Brock's unquenched flame of not so long ago. At each ring, Brat or Riley would answer, respectfully at first, harshly at the end, and for the ninth time Riley had very bluntly informed the lady, just before Brock's entrance, that Mr. Brocker had gone to Europe for the winter and would not be back until the following summer, at least! "And incidentally, I wish you would stop calling here at all hours of the night!" Riley had taken the pains to tell her. "Mr. Brocker will get in touch with you when he hears of this, but he isn't here now and he won't be here for a long, long time! So get wise to yourself, and cut out the calling up here!" Riley did not mind his language at all. "Rough people require rough treatment," he told Brat after he had hung up the receiver.

After Brock's return, the woman called four times, and four times Riley told her the same thing, to which she invariably replied, "Well, I know he'll be there some time tonight, and I intend to call until I find him!" "Bang!" Both receivers went down at the same time.

At four in the morning, Brock's dreams came to an abrupt interruption, and for a moment he could not for

the life of him tell where he was or why. Then the telephone bell rang, and he recalled that it had been bells which had awakened him. So he pulled himself together and went to answer it.

"*Hello!*" he roared.

"Is Mr. Brocker there yet, please!" Brock recognized the voice instantly.

"No, Mr. Brocker is not here yet please!" he stated emphatically.

"Well, can you tell me where I can find him?"

"Mr. Brocker bought a one-way ticket to hell today, Madam, and we don't expect him back!" Brock heard a couple of snorts from his roommates who were now awake.

"For God's sake, Brock, tell that damned fool to quit calling up here! It's four o'clock!" This from Riley.

Brock thought a moment and then roared into the mouthpiece, "Listen, woman, what the hell's the idea of calling us out of bed at this ungodly hour? Brocker isn't here and nobody knows where he is, but if I had my hands on you I'd be tempted to twist your neck out of shape!"

"Who is this speaking, please?" The voice was very sweet.

"None of your business!" The voice was rough.

"Well—just a moment, please?" Brock heard sounds as of some one else taking over the phone at the other end, and then came a harsh, rasping voice, saying, "Listen here! I'm Mr. Brocker's aunt, and it is very important that I find him at once! I don't want to be insulted by you! I want to know where my nephew is!"

"Your nephew?" Brock laughed aloud. "Say, where the hell do you get that stuff, lady? Incidentally, you're a liar!" Brock laughed again, at the thought of such a woman being his aunt.

"I warn you, young man——!" the voice rasped shakily. "What is your name?"

Brock thought for a moment and said, very distinctly,

"This is Joe Kline! Anything else you want to know?" The name, Joe Kline, was one used by various members of the crowd to satisfy telephone callers with whom no one wished to talk.

"Well, Mr. Joe Kline, this isn't the first time I've been insulted by you! I've talked with you before! You're rude, ungentlemanly, absolutely without honor or dencency!"

"Aw—go to sleep on it, lady! I'm going to hang up!"

"Well—you can hang up, but I warn you, I'm going to report you to the authorities this very day!"

Bang! Bripazxeng! Both receivers down again.

Brock crawled back into bed and did not awaken again until noon. The first thing he heard was Brat telling of a meeting, just a few minutes previously, with the woman who had so disturbed their slumbers. "She swears she just came from the Dean's office—she said the Dean assured her that Joe Kline would be expelled forthwith from the College!" Brat laughed as he described the incident. "So poor old Joe is going to get canned!"

"Poor Joe!" Riley was almost in tears, his grief was so acute. "Poor old Joe! Who never harmed a hair on any head! Gonna be expelled for insulting the nice ladies!"

When they could calm themselves, Brock was informed of all that had happened. He did not explain anything that had happened to him, but, having dressed, he put on his hat and departed, without a word to his roommates, who stood dumbly looking at the closed door through which he had gone.

They continued to wonder until, about half an hour later, Somerford dropped in long enough to say that he had just met Brock, with a quart on his hip and a wild look in his eyes, headed for Boston. He had stopped long enough to declare wildly to Somerford that he wished "Christ Almighty would strike me dead on the spot!"

That was all they knew of his activities until three days



later, when he very sheepishly walked in, looking all of ten years older, shaky and nervous from over-drinking and other excesses, hardly able to speak above a whisper. Riley was alone when he entered, and hardened Irishman though he was, he was startled by this ghostlike apparition of his comrade.

"What—what—what," he stammered. "Where in the name of God have you been, Brock?"

"I'm married!" announced Brock, weakly, averting his gaze, tapping his cane on the floor beside his chair.

Riley wanted to laugh, but—well, somehow, he just couldn't have laughed at that moment had his life depended upon it. The best he could manage was a sickly grin, and to say, "Married? Tell it to the marines!" But, for some reason, he felt that Brock was actually married!

"Yeh—married!" replied Brock, lifelessly.

"So you and Annette have stolen a march on us, eh?" Riley still couldn't smile; he felt that something was wrong somewhere, but he was trying to keep from showing it.

Brock began to laugh—a weirder laugh Riley had never heard. It was unnatural, gave him the creeps! Such a laugh—and then Brock said, with affected bravado, "Annette spurned my honorable attentions! I've married the bimbo, Dora!"

"You're kidding, Brock!" Riley was almost pleading with his roommate, hoping against hope that he would admit it as that.

But Brock solemnly shook his head and extended his hand, saying, "Not at all! I've married the only woman I've met who doesn't think of my wooden peg when she thinks of me! The rest can all go to hell! Congratulate me!" Again that weird laugh, as Riley took the extended hand perfunctorily.

"God, Brock——" Riley did not know how to say it, but finally managed, "I honestly wish you every piece of luck in the world! Every damned big and little bit!"

Brock's lips quivered a little as his friend squeezed his hand and said these little nothings so earnestly. Riley's lips quivered, too, and he said no more until he had walked across the room and lit a cigarette, when he exclaimed, with an attempt to assume his usual easy manner, "Well it's damned good to see you again, you damned old benedict!"

Their conversation was not very lively, however, despite Riley's efforts to cheer up his friend. Brock talked so queerly, had such a wild look in his eyes, and that laugh was too weird for anything! At first Riley thought he was drunk, and said as much, to which Brock replied that he most certainly was drunk, and expected to remain so the rest of his life! With that, Riley gave up—he could talk sense to Brock at some later time when he was in his right mind. "Let's take a walk down to the Stadium, Brock!" he suggested. "Come on—you need the air!"

So they went for a walk down to the Stadium and along the river. Riley smoked innumerable cigarettes, nervously waiting for Brock to explain things to him. But Brock explained nothing. He was evidently content to walk along quietly, keeping his eyes on everything but his companion's face, and his companion had to succumb to the rhythmic crunch-crumpity-crunch beat of Brock's artificial leg, as they walked up the river and back to the room. There, Brock gave him a slap on the back, with a smile that squeaked and creaked in an inhuman fashion, said he would see him on the morrow, and crunch-crumpity-crunched off up the street.

The Irishman stood looking after him, wondering as to the cause of this sudden misalliance—and Scotty was so weird, so unnatural, so wild-eyed, almost inhuman in his talk and appearance. Riley wondered where he had seen such looks and heard such speech before—and that nervous twitching of muscles and nerve-wrecking solemnity of manner! This Brock was like a vision from the past—he could almost picture a khaki-clad figure, army

cots, bandages, and many men with an unholy light in their eyes!

That night he heard enough from Bernyce to be able to patch up a reasonable explanation for this catastrophe which his best of all friends had brought upon himself.

"Poor old Brock!" he exclaimed over and over to himself that night. "Deserves the best and gets the worst!"

Late that night he told Brat about it, and Brat said similarly over and over again, "Brock married to her! Poor Brock!" until it seemed to Riley that Brock's misadventure had gotten under his skin deeper than anything that had yet happened to them. As they went through the process of undressing for bed, Riley could not talk except in curses and Brat could not talk in any kind of language.

Finally, reaching up to turn off the lights, the Irishman said, more to himself than to Brat, "Damn!—it looks funny not to see old Brock's leg leaning against his chair."

Brat would never have noticed such a thing, but now he raised himself impulsively on his elbow to look, and just as the lights clicked out he saw, with a start, that Brock's leg wasn't leaning against the chair.

Some time later—they never knew just what time it was—they were startled from sound slumber by the noise of a heated argument below their windows. They could hear the rhythmic burr-r-r of an automobile which, from the sound, was parked near by. Two voices were raised in an argument which contained more curses and unseemly terms than sensible ideas.

"——I'll pay you not a damned cent, sir! Not a damned cent! And if you don't get in there and take that damned ark out of my sight and hearing, I'll crash you and it too with this cane—and when I crash 'em, sir—they stays crashed!"

"Nine dollars, you piker, or I'll get a cop!"

"Piker? *Piker?* You —— —— —— ——, I'll kill you!"



*Crash!* A cry of a wild man! Broken glass! Curses!

By this time Riley and Brat were out of bed and at the window. "Brock!" exclaimed Riley, as the wild figure on the sidewalk swung his cane at the other man's head—missed—crashing through the cab window. "*Don't hit him!*" he cried again as the taxi-driver stepped in after Brock's wild swing.

Riley rushed out through the hall and down the stairs, landing on the sidewalk just as Brock crumpled in a heap beside the cab. The cab driver stood over him as if waiting for him to show signs of life before he put his foot to him.

"What the hell's the matter here?" demanded Riley, pushing the driver away and stooping to lift Brock to his feet.

"I rode that damned piker all over Boston and now he won't pay up!" declared the cab driver. "Damned drunken bum!"

Riley was not paying any attention to this explanation. He was trying to raise Brock to his feet and finally succeeded in doing it, although the latter was unable to stand without his supporting arm. Riley heard Brat talking to the driver and knew that the fare would be paid and the driver got rid of. He half carried Brock into the hall and up the stairs to their rooms, finally depositing the shaking, jerking, moaning burden on his bed.

He was completely out of his head. Riley again could see the roving eyes in unshaved faces, the army cots and bandages—that was it! Scotty had gone fluey—shell-shock—madness! He began to undress him, almost fighting with him to remove his clothes, and all the while Brock continued to moan and cry out in the weirdest of tones, cursing some woman as a "dirty cheat!" and again as a "slut and a bum!" He raved on and on, cursed all womankind as cheats and wenches, trollops and prostitutes, mercenary and designing, untrue, faithless, worthless—"damned Dora . . . bed—no lights . . . damned automobile salesman!" "Annette—huh—you tincup!—Wild asses, 'swhat they all are, *Wild Asses!*"

"He's gone!" Riley told Brat as they tried to undress him. And getting worse and worse, Brock continued to cry and moan about "these wild asses!" as the night wore on. There was no sleeping in that suite that night.

"Wild Asses! Wild Asses! Dumb, stupid, stubborn, craving idol worshippers! Cheaters! Shallow-heads! Common animals!" Brock's fits grew steadily worse. For a few moments he would lie quietly, merely moaning. Then suddenly he would rear and tear, crying to be let loose! "Let me go! Let me go! I want to be away from all o' them! Wild Asses—ha-ha-ha-ha——" and he would laugh and cry at the same time, in that weird, inhuman way which sent chills up and down his hearers' spines.

Brock and Riley attended him throughout the night until he finally collapsed from exhaustion. Then they went to bed. But their sleep was only minutes long, for Brock's collapse was only momentary. Soon he was at it again, growing worse and worse, so bad that his roommates were having difficulty in restraining him, and Riley was expecting any moment to hear the sound of complaints from other occupants of the building.

"Gad, he can't stay like this!" Brat finally declared, implying a suggestion by his tone.

"What the devil can we do?" was Riley's answer.

But they could do something else, and at last, when Brock showed no signs of coming out of his madness, Riley decided to call for assistance, "before it's too late! He's liable to die like that!" So he called a doctor and the doctor came, passed judgment without any delay and advised immediate removal to a hospital.

So Brock went to the hospital, a service-man's institution on the other side of Boston, and when he had finally been left there in care of several attendants and doctors, Brat and Riley were so tired and depressed as to be beyond feelings or expression of their feelings if they had any.

They had ridden over in the ambulance. They took a

taxi back to Cambridge, and the only words which passed between them on that ride were a few reiterations of some of Brock's ravings, Riley taking occasion to say, rather lifelessly, "Scotty wasn't so far wrong about that Wild Asses stuff, either!"

But Brat was beyond agreeing or disagreeing, and Riley's mind was still filled with those damned khaki-clad figures whose staring eyes in unshaved faces kept up a merry dance across his vision.

They slept all the morning, but in the early afternoon Brat went to football practice, and Riley walked the streets trying to decide several problems. In the first place, should he or should he not call Dora and take her to Brock? Riley's impulses kept him from calling her; his reason and common sense bade him go to her, simply because she was, after all, his friend's wife, and should know about her husband's misfortunes. Finally, he decided to go to her and decide about telling her then.

"Hello!" said the tousled figure in kimono who received him. "I'm glad you came down."

Riley thought this a strange welcome for him who had always been her enemy, but he explained, "I just stopped in to see if Scotty had been here today."

"No, he hasn't!" she declared with emphasis. "He came down here last night and I happened to be entertaining an old friend of mine—Scotty was much insulted and was absolutely rude to us. Then he beat it, and he slammed the door so hard the janitor asked me about it this morning—said the neighbors were complaining about the noise in here! But——"

"Didn't he have any cause to be sore?" asked Riley. "Why should he be so upset over your having a friend in?"

"Bless me, I don't know what's the matter with him! He's been talking crazy for the last week—ever since that night when I called up the rooms for him—remember?"

"Um-m. Yeh—he's getting all broken up—guess he'd better go up in the country for a while and rest up."



“Why, honestly, he’s been awful ever since he came back! And always talking about being married! He isn’t married at all! But if he doesn’t straighten out pretty soon I won’t care if he never straightens out.”

“And you haven’t seen him today, eh?” Riley was thinking fast. He had learned too much to be true—he wanted to shout for joy.

“No, but if you’re going up to the Square and you meet him, tell him to come back here! I’ll forget about last night—anyway—also tell him to forget that he’s got any strings on me! Oh, I’ll tell him! You send him back down here! I’ll make him understand that I’m not going to sit in here all day and all night waiting for him to show up, when I can be having good times with somebody else—you tell——”

Riley was not sure, but he strongly suspected that Dora’s breath smelled of liquor, and that her frowzy state was indicative of there having been some kind of a party not many hours before. He finally managed to get away from her and walked, mostly on air, back to Harvard Square, for he now knew or suspected many things which were all pleasant to think about.

Brock was having pipe-dreams—he wasn’t married at all! Riley had not wanted to ask Dora this question outright, but he was certain in his mind that Brock and Dora were not married. And last night’s affair was the result of Brock’s finding Dora with another man—his Dora, who had always been his one-woman! And the poor son-of-a-gun had gone crazy over that! Cripes, but this was a funny life!

He called the hospital when he reached home and learned that Brocker was slightly improved, but would not be able to see any one until at least the next afternoon.

So the next afternoon he visited Brock, and found him surprisingly sane, but so nervous and erratic that Riley felt uncomfortable throughout his visit. The nurse told him, on his way out, that “his nerves and his mind” must

have been "completely shattered; he still has little spells of raving and dreaming out loud; it will be several weeks before he will be able to do much of anything, and several weeks after that before any mental work would be advisable and safe."

Back at the rooms that evening, Riley told Brat and several others who had dropped in for a call. "And he'll be out of college now for sure! He's a wreck, honestly—gives you the willies to try to talk to him! Only about three or four things he said sounded like him: one was that he didn't want to see college again, nor any of us, nor Dora, nor anything else connected with his life over here! That sounded natural. And, Brat, you know he kept harping on this Wild Ass stuff! I can't imagine where he got the idea, but it's a damned good characterization for a lot of people I know!"

"Why? How do you mean? What the devil is a wild ass?" asked McCarthy, one of the callers.

"Oh, he means that everybody nowadays is an ass: stupid, stubborn, uncaring, unheeding animals—asses! And the wild asses are all these people who are suffering from post-war mania, craving excitements and thrills and living their lives as much in imitation of the movie stories and heroines as they can! Wild Asses! By Gad, it fits a lot of them!"

"I should say it does!" declared Brat significantly.

The conversation turned back to the subject of Brock's troubles, and took many avenues, all of which showed the sympathy which the crowd had for Brock in his misfortune.

After the others had gone, Riley discussed more intimately the problems of the situation, ending with his own suggestion that they keep from Dora all news of Brock's whereabouts and condition. "If she calls up and you answer, tell her you haven't the least idea where he is—say you think he's gone up in the country somewhere."

"But how about his folks?" asked Brat.

"That's right, too!" Riley had not thought of them.

“Well, tell them the same thing—no, tell them he’s working like the deuce and is only home to sleep! I doubt if they’ll call anyway—and I’ll get Scotty to call them up as soon as he’s able to talk intelligently.”

In the days that followed, Dora called often and got the results which Riley had planned for her to get. Brock’s mother called once, and seemed but little disturbed when informed that Brock spent all his time in the library. Riley called upon Brock every day, and could see progress and improvement, although Brock’s mind still seemed to be impossibly muddled, and he continued perversely in his anti-social declarations. The symptoms of an unsettled mind were all too frequently apparent for Riley to miss them, and he was almost afraid to mention any one’s name to Brock lest the suggestion throw him into a fit of denunciation and condemnation, and thereby upset still more his shaky balance of mind.

Meanwhile Riley’s personal affairs were rather topsyturvy, and the fact that Brock’s amoural craft had been so shattered and wrecked served to set off in relief the apparent success which was marking Riley’s affairs in the same direction. He had met “the girl.” Around Bernyce he proceeded to wrap his life-long illusions; he exalted her to the skies—just as Brock had exalted her friend, Annette. But Bernyce sat among the gods and goddesses, in Riley’s opinion. She was perfect in his eyes: so young as to be free from the tendencies of the times, so pretty as to be altogether desirable, so mentally alert as to be a constant stimulating force, so sensible, so clever, so entirely the girl whom he had subconsciously wanted for so long.

And Riley was his usual self in only one respect—he was still incapable of putting into his own affairs the ingenuity with which he observed other people and their affairs. He proceeded and continued to disregard every bit of the habitual Riley sensibleness—he forgot to be even observant, or questioning; he accepted Bernyce as



he found her and, without asking for directions, or for suggestions, or for indications, he imbued her (or his illusion of her) with all the traits, qualities, virtues, beauties of character and disposition, all the elements and phases of character which he unconsciously found or had developed in his own mind. He projected his ideas of what he thought "the finest girl in the world" should be, into this little Bernyce—who was, in at least one respect, equal to his conception of her: she was clever enough to allow him to shower his affections upon her, the "her" which he believed her to be, without doing or saying anything that might shatter or dispel his illusion. It is indeed a clever girl that knows how far to go under any circumstances, particularly when in those circumstances she finds herself being made into an idol.

The inevitable result was that the Irishman was completely upset most of the time, with his worry over Brock's affairs and his own disrupted tranquillity of mind and spirit. Nevertheless time passed; the football season drew to a close, despite all the distractions which were constantly appearing on his and Brat's horizon. Harvard's string of victories lengthened; every one should have been in good spirits and healthy mind, but of the three former inseparables Brat alone seemed to travel along serenely. Brock did not improve much after the first few days—he still needed something, the same something which he had needed all through college, and Riley was at his wits' end trying to keep Dora away from him, keep his folks from learning of his misfortune, and keep Brock interested in something all the time, besides wandering about mentally seeking that something which, he felt sure, might bring Brock back to normality and set him right on the road to real progress through life. As for himself, the Irishman was in the throes of a great reform; his whole system of values and his entire attitude toward life were undergoing those inevitable, radical changes aiming toward bringing him somewhere near the

same level as that on which his Bernyce so placidly and sweetly stood.

Brat, too busy to spend much time with Virginia, and hardly bothering with Ellen at all, saw just enough of Virginia's company to stimulate him to the doing of great deeds on the Stadium gridiron. He grew tremendously that fall, broadened and gained elevation—not in physical dimensions, but in his mind and emotional equipment. Under the infrequent stimulation of Virginia's vivacious treatment, he developed in so many ways that Riley, had he not been so busy with himself and Brock, would have been surprised and gratified at many changes which were apparent in his roommate's manner and character, all of which of course had far-reaching effects upon Brat's football work.

Whereas in former years he had merely functioned as a mechanical cog in the machine of eleven players, he now broke out, covered more territory than he was expected to cover, worked every second of the time on the field, exerted his every energy toward more brilliant and effective offensive and defensive play. His friends were at first incredulous. The coaches sighed with satisfaction, feeling that their hopes for this big fellow were at last being fulfilled. "He's got it in him—but it has taken three years to get it out!" was the opinion given by one of the minor directors, a man who had worked hard with Brat as a Freshman lineman.

Steadily as the season wore on, through victory after victory, Brat improved and developed his play into wider and more effective proportions, and as the Yale game approached, he was hailed by coaches, players and sports writers as one of the most dependable linemen that had ever worn the Crimson; he was looked upon as a bulwark for the Harvard cause against Yale's best team in years. The good old Crimson steam roller was going at its best—Brown coming to Cambridge the week preceding the scrap with the Bull Dog Eli, would be taken

in stride, without a worry, probably without troubles of any kind, even for the second team.

The Thursday before the Brown game, Riley contrived with Brat to get Ellen to visit Brock in the hospital. Brat called her on the telephone, made his usual excuses for not having called for so long, and then put his roommate on the phone. At first Ellen accused him of playing a joke on her, but he finally gave several excellent reasons for wanting her to go with him to see Brock, so she acquiesced.

The scene which resulted could not be effectively described. Brock, his nerves jumping and his fancies running wild as the result of his being cooped up so long, could not believe his eyes when Ellen walked into his room. She came rather timidly forward to greet him, and sat beside his bed talking to him, while Riley paced the floor and finally found an excuse to leave the room.

Riley never knew exactly how that meeting had come off—he had been shaking in his shoes lest Brock fly off into the clouds so impossibly that Ellen would be frightened away from him; but—well, anyway, Ellen called again the following day, and on the day of the Brown game, and almost every day thereafter while Brock was in the hospital, just because, as she told Riley, “he’s so all alone over there, with no one to entertain him or talk to him—and he is such a fine chap!”

To which, or rather after which, Riley had exclaimed, “God, God! will you never cease Your miracles?” It appeared to Riley, steeped as he was in his devotion to Bernyce, that “one man’s sorrow may sometimes be his own salvation!”

All these things were not indicated, however, that first day of Ellen’s interest in Brock. Several other interesting occurrences intervened—for one thing, Riley attended the Brown game, and for another, Ellen and Brat and Virginia happened to pick just the same hour on the same afternoon in which to call on Brock.



## ILLUSION

The morning of a football day in the middle of November. Brown and its Bear were in town, with a team which had made an enviable record during the season, yet the Crimson expected to take the cubs in stride. The 'Varsity men were to be saved as much as possible for the clash with the Bull Dog on the following Saturday. No chances were to be taken.

Regardless of the form which the Crimson team had been showing, there was considerable anxiety in the minds of the student followers regarding the outcome of the tussle with the Brown Bear. The Providence collegians invariably put up a hard fight, and their team this year was even stronger than usual. The result was that, while the coaches counted upon using mostly a second team of Crimson jerseys against them, the student body in general expected to see an excellent gridiron battle.

Riley expected to take Bernyce to New Haven the following week, so he counted upon spending the day of the Brown game with the boys. As the one o'clock bell rang out from the belfry of Harvard Hall, Riley walked out of Sever, where he had been attending a lecture, and went directly to the rendezvous, where he was greeted by an uproarious shout—the boys were three drinks ahead of him, and insisted that he catch up before they went any further.

He waved them aside with a queer little smile, and afterwards wondered why he had refused them. He wanted a drink, but, well—something inside was awry: he felt as though he were about to hear some bad news.

At one-thirty he accompanied McCarthy to a near-by lunchroom for a sandwich and coffee. He saw the Square, alive with automobiles whizzing to and fro. Pretty girls tripped here and there on the arms of studious-looking Sophomores, who looked as if vanity and conceit were their chief characteristics. Little ragged Cambridge boys were crying their papers (probably picked up in the sub-

way entrances). Etruscan and Semitic venders exhorted all to "get your winning colors." Every few minutes a new group of enthusiastic fans poured from the rotunda and started down Boylston Street toward the Stadium. The talented and handsome Cambridge police, assisted by State officers, kept a lane open for the pedestrians to cross at the Riverway. Fields across the river in Allston were already black with cars. Yes, the Brown game was an off game, but the crowd turned out just the same.

Down the street came the Harvard band, led by a little urchin with one stocking down, a very dirty face and a man's straw hat. The drum major, with a saving sense of the ridiculous, made no attempt to remove the only obstacle to his glory, and the crowd grinned sympathetically as the band marched its way across the bridge to the gate at the corner of Soldiers' Field. As they reached the ticket gate the little chap was thrust aside, and he stood there before the crowd, gazing mournfully at his adopted followers as they disappeared into the holy of holies.

Riley and McCarthy went from their lunch to the Stadium, where they expected to meet the other members of the crowd. Climbing to the entrance at the top of the cheering section, they looked about for the others, but failed to see them. They waited for a few minutes, but seeing the stands were rapidly filling, they decided to get two seats for themselves and forget about the others. Having found them, they had nothing to do but sit and listen to the buzz of conversation around them. Riley did not care particularly about talking or listening; he sat with his coat collar turned up to his slouch hat, and he was so hunched down that his nose was about all that was exposed. A casual passer-by would not have recognized him, he was so covered and hidden away in his coat and hat. Thus he sat, listening now and then to something that McCarthy leaned over to say, watching the filling stands and the various preparatory doings on the field.

Of a sudden a bit of conversation came to his ears

which caused his body to grow rigid, and his wandering faculties to come to prompt attention. A voice behind him was saying, "Say, Charlie, who was that little lady I saw with this Davis friend of yours the other day? We were over at that Bohemian joint on Columbus Avenue the other night, and this Davis came in with this dame; off-hand I should say she's a wild baby!"

"Sweet-faced kid?" another voice answered. "Clever talker? Smooth line? Acts as if she's rearin' to go every minute, but sort of restrained withal?"

"Yeh—that's the one! Boy, she sure could put away the hooch!—and stories—gad almighty! she told a couple that would shame even me! Who was she?"

"Her name is Cutler. She comes from Brookline. Bernyce Cutler!"

"That's it—Bernyce! I remember now. She knows a lot about this place over here. Must know a lot of Harvard men."

"She ought to! She's practically engaged to a guy over here by the name of Riley—everybody says he's a hell of a nice man, too! Which makes it funny—she's apparently got him feased. Davy tells me she says this Riley thinks she's one of the old-fashioned sweet young knitting girls—doesn't run around at all! Don't know how he ever got that idea—she's been out with every fellow in our bunch; you know, nice kid, just a little wild and crazy."

McCarthy had begun to pay attention to this conversation also. He turned, glanced at his companion and said, "Don't pay any attention to that, Tom!"

"Well, boy, from the way she acted over there, I'd say she's got a hollow leg—she just lapped it up!"

Riley's face went white. He recalled some suspicious circumstances of a few days previous, circumstances which Bernyce had, come to think of it, neglected to explain. He was looking straight ahead, but the muscles of his jaw twitched nervously.

"Steady, Tom!" admonished McCarthy, watching



Riley's face anxiously. "Don't start a fight here—it wouldn't help any!"

"All right, Mac," replied Riley, but his tone quavered a bit. He shifted in his seat and continued to look straight ahead, but his face was still pale, with little red spots under each eye.

A few moments later the whistle sounded for the start of the game. Harvard had chosen to kick off, and the husky Crimson back sent a beautifully long and high one almost to the Brown goal line. The Brown man who received it returned fifteen yards before he was downed by a Crimson avalanche. Brown started a march toward the Crimson goal, which brought a volley of deafening cheers and exhortations from the stands. Harvard finally took the ball on downs, and immediately kicked out of danger. More cheering. A din of yells and unintelligible sounds as the play see-sawed back and forth across the field. The quarter was entirely taken up with these tactics. There was no score.

When the whistle blew for the end of the quarter, Riley abruptly arose and said, "I'm going down below for a while, Mac—I need a drink, I guess!" and he laughed a mirthless laugh with a bitterness that could not be concealed.

"Say! that's that Riley, right there!" he heard a voice whisper behind him, as he started to move out toward the aisle; arrived there, he looked back to see the faces of the men who had been talking behind him. He recognized both as fellows whom he had often seen about Cambridge, but never had known personally. He muttered something under his breath, and began slowly to climb the concrete steps. At the entrance he felt some one grab his arm, and he looked around to see McCarthy beside him. "Listen, Tom," he said, "forget about that stuff! Don't be like that—honest to God, man, you look as pale as a ghost! Sure you're all right?"

"Sure." The Irishman's voice was low and he tried to smile. "Sure—all right, Mac!"

“You know, Tom——” McCarthy slapped him on the back boisterously. “Hell!—look at me! I fall in love and out again three or four times a year. It’s good for the tortured spirit! Better come back and sit down, huh?”

Riley, however, did not think so. “No—I’ll go down and scare up a drink and see you later. I’ll probably be right back up. Go on, you’d best chase back or you won’t have a seat!” He pulled away, and his companion, with a shake of his head, climbed back down to his seat. There, he said to himself, “Hell!—he’ll be all right in a couple of days—they all learn! That diet was too steady for him anyway!” His thoughts were interrupted at that moment by the shattering impact of a piercing shriek against his eardrum. His neighbor was crying something unintelligible about a “hole in that Harvard line a mile wide! Take out those rag dolls!”

McCarthy turned to him and said, loud enough for all around to hear distinctly, “Oh, you’re one of these grandstand Walter Camps, are you! Well,” as the neighbor addressed began to turn away from him, “listen—lay dead from now on, or I’ll smother you!” The crowd laughed. The sentiment was well expressed, and the crowd was with McCarthy so audibly that the raucous neighbor subsided without further outbreak.

Meanwhile, Riley had gained the open field beside the Stadium, and was walking slowly across Soldiers’ Field and down the speedway drive. He was in a whirl of sensations and emotional reactions. He couldn’t have said whether he was angry, or just sick with himself. Gradually his clarity of vision returned to him—he had not had it for many weeks; and he began to arrange his ideas and his observations in some kind of order. Various little things, tremendously suspicious now that he thought of them, bobbed up in his memory. Funny he’d never noticed the many references to parties and “affairs” by Bernyce’s friends! He began to put two and two together, to see incidents which he had previously over-

looked now come into the light. He had been a fool—must have been!

Still—why, dammit all, how could any girl be like that! Surely—oh, damn! She couldn't be cheating like that all the time—gad, he couldn't even imagine her as doing anything, any of the things which party girls so eagerly do! It was incredible—she was so blamed sweet, pretty, innocent—unsophisticated in every way—so darned girlishly nice—she always seemed to loathe any bits of unseemly talk or suggestive lines! It couldn't be! she couldn't have been playing him dirty all this time!

He could not make himself believe that Bernyce had been cheating—he had somehow always understood that she had never gone on any regular parties in her young life! Yet—whenever he tried to make himself believe that she never had, he was suddenly overcome with almost an avalanche of recollections which made such implicit trust and faith impossible. Of course it was possible—any one might do it; why should he think that this girl should be any different from the many others whom he had known? He knew them all for double-dealers, cheats, absolutely devoid of any sense of fair play. But (there was always that “but”).

“I'll find that guy tomorrow and punch his head in!” he suddenly determined. “I'll break his face so his mother can't recognize him, the dirty skunk, saying a thing like that with a crowd of people listening to him! Dirty rat! They probably don't know her at all! But——” Very apparently they did know her—and he had heard of this Davis man before. He'd even heard a few vague insinuations before. Dammit all!—she was just like all the rest! She had been kidding him along for all he was worth!

“Gad, I'm tired, tired! They're all deceitful——.” Even the little girls in school had been cheats and tattletales. He tried not to think of it any more. He turned back up the drive toward the bridge. Flinging himself upon a bench outside the fence of the Stadium grounds



he gazed across the river. It was growing darker. Lights were popping on here and there in the half-darkness of the opposite bank.

Finally he pulled himself together and walked across the bridge, stopping at the Cambridge end to look back at the Stadium whence were emanating many cheers and yells. The great bowl of a place was melting black against the deepening gray of the twilight. He could see the tiny flames of smokers' matches being struck in the colonnades and below, flashing like fireflies in the cool fall air. A few straggling early-leavers, laughing and talking, passed him, and after a few moments he joined the growing throng wending its way up to the Square. He walked slowly, with his collar up and his hat pulled down, his shoulders hunched forward and his hands plunged deep into his coat pockets. Around him was much chattering, much laughing, much giggling, much talking, much whistling, much happiness and hearty joyfulness. "Gad, what ado about nothing!" he thought. "All over something that doesn't mean anything! A damned fine pure black world to live in!"

Eventually he arrived at the rooms, and opening the door, a wave of peacefulness seemed to come over him. Such a home, this—four walls within which he could always be at peace with himself! Some one had left a fire in the fireplace, and he pulled up a chair and dropped listlessly down, gazing entranced into the light yellow darts of flame which persistently sprang up from the embers that crackled and popped disquietingly, almost irritating his peace and calm. He finally took off his coat and began to pace back and forth, back and forth, before the fireplace.

One thing, one thought, was uppermost in his mind: he had made every effort, done everything, absolutely every possible thing, to play the game square with this girl who seemed so worth doing everything for, this adorable Bernyce! Knowing that, how could she cheat on him? Why couldn't she play fair? Damn. Damn.

Damn. Damn. Damn! Not even decent! Just like all the rest!

He went to the closet and took out a bottle and a glass, poured a stiff drink, and made a terrible grimace in swallowing it. Rotten stuff—but good enough! Another. Not so bad. Another and another. Ah, God—sweet dreams! “Oh, fancy! Lead me!” Up and down, up and down, back and forth he paced the room—at first steady and controlled, but gradually with a noticeable staggering motion. At last he slumped again into the chair, setting the bottle on its arm beside him.

He began to wonder vaguely what would happen if he were to drink and drink and drink, every day, on and on until he died—not a bad idea, at that! Probably have a hell of a time! Damned nice to be able to find such a refuge always handy! This liquor stuff’s pretty good dope after all! Good old friend, liquor—never deserts a man when the roof begins to crack and cave in! Always there—good old reliable refuge!

Suddenly he grasped the bottle tightly and stood up. “Bet she’s laughing at me now, the rat!” He hurled the half-filled bottle into the fire; it shivered to pieces against the wall of brick; the crash brought him to his senses for a moment. “Damned fool, Tom Riley! Nothing but a kid! Grow up! Snap out of it! Cut out the melodrama! Huh—there’s many another one worse off than you, you poor damned fool! What did that poet Houssman say?—

“Think I the round world over what golden lads are low,  
With hurts not mine to mourn for and shames I shall  
not know!

What evil luck soever Fate holds for me in store,  
I know much finer fellows have fared much worse be-  
fore!’

“Just like that—quote poetry by the hour! You’re pretty good man, Tom! Always pattin’ yourself on the back, too!”

He laughed, with abandon—laughed until he cried! It was such a hell of a good joke! Everything was a hell of a joke! He wasn't the only damned fool in the world! Hell, no! He'd known much finer fellows who'd fared much worse than he! Even the Greeks—bet old Vulcan felt like hell when he made the trap that caught Venus and Mars in bed! Even the gods! Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha—ho-ho-ho-ho—a hell of a joke, sure 'nough!

Guess he ought to write a letter—write a letter to Bernyce, and tell her just what he thought of her! Could write a letter better than he could tell her to her face—he wouldn't be able to think of everything while he talked to her. He walked over to his desk and sat down heavily in the chair. He intended to write the letter, but he had to pick up and examine every pencil, notebook, paper and other article on the top of his desk—had to look everything over before he could write. So he looked everything over, and eventually his hand found a letter, and he read his own name on it. Looked like Brock's writing—damned good writer, Brock—one thing he could do well! Mechanically he opened the end of the envelope and unfolded the note inside—again that awful feeling as if some bad news were just around the corner of his mind. Gradually he began to read the note before him, pronouncing every word and wetting his lips after every phrase:

*Dear Tom:*

Have been trying to get you on the phone this morning but got no answer. I want you to come over here again as soon as you have time. I want to know just what the hell you're getting me into; I ought to break your head! you're always getting me into something. I was perfectly satisfied to tell the world to go to hell when you brought Ellen over here; now, well—you know this damned fool!

Now I can't do anything! If you weren't so damned busy with your women! You're just like all the wild



asses! Chasing all over hell after thrills and excitements! If you weren't so busy you would come over here and talk things over with me—I'm all cured now; I think I got everything out of my system, thank God.

But what am I going to do? I won't be able to come back to college, so I've got to get a job—and also, how the heck am I supposed to feel and act toward Brat's girl? Snap out of it now and come over here!

Yours till I run in a Marathon!

SCOTTY.

It took several minutes for the drift of the letter to sink into Riley's befuddled mind, and then he got everything from the letter but what Brock intended. The whole letter just served to bring to his mind Brock's bucket of troubles, as it had been since Riley met him, full to the brim. Seeing which now, he suddenly had a clearer vision of his own troubles.

Poor old Brock! There can't be a God in heaven when a good fellow like Brock is continually going to hell! Deserves the best and always gets the worst, all the way through! Odd how things go—Brock sailed along for three years with only that one upset, and then came to this mess; why couldn't he have stuck it out till he got his degree anyway? Everything was all right until he met that damned little Annette! A redhead! Made a wreck out of him! A red-headed wench—thought she was so damned good, so damned proud of herself—wasn't fit for Brock to wipe his feet on! A fox-bitten party girl! And Bernyce—Bernyce probably just like her! Why the devil hadn't he seen the signs before?

Riley laughed a healthy laugh now. Oh, what a fool he'd made of himself! He, Tom Riley, had been so foolishly self-confident as to think that any girl whom he worshipped ought *ipso facto* to be an angel! When, look at poor Brock—a damned sight better man than he; why, uh—"I've known much finer fellows have fared much worse before!"

“Poor old Brock! What the hell am I crying about? What have I to kick about? Serves me right for plunging into something I ought to know enough not to plunge into—pouring out my life’s emotions without ever trying to find out whether the object would meet my demands!” He was talking aloud to himself now, trying to clarify his affairs in solid sounding words that he could hear; if he could hear them he’d remember them, and he wanted to settle this thing for once and all. “What am I kicking about? I’ve got everything—everything that many thousands would give their eyeteeth to possess! I am stupid if in a time like this I cannot find a refuge in my own mind, in satisfactions which come not from sensory stimulations!”

“Artemis! What was it Euripides has Hippolytus say?

‘Ah, perfume-breath celestial! mid my pains  
I feel thee, and mine anguish is assuaged.  
Lo, in this place the Goddess Artemis!’

Old Euripides had the dope—that’s what intelligence and knowledge are for—a refuge, a consolation, a backbone, a reservoir of stamina and strength! I ought to be happy in having such a thing—thousands and thousands haven’t it.”

He was relieved, consoled, almost happy that the strain of other-selfishness under which he had been for the past weeks was now dissolved. He felt more like himself, he could look at everything with his old laugh again. He could look at everything—why, he could even look at the pure, sweet face of Bernyce, and say to himself, “Just like all the rest—just an animal underneath—not worth bothering with unless she wants to give herself . . .” etc.

He could laugh now, and suddenly he found himself repeating other lines from Euripides’ “Hippolytus”:

“Why hast thou given a home beneath the sun,  
Zeus, unto woman, specious curse to man?”

He laughed—that old Greek said a mouthful there. Zeus ought to answer that somehow; perhaps as one author said, “There is a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we may!” That was a good thought, too—the women can’t help it that they are women, but the world would no doubt be better off without them.

It was all so funny. Riley laughed as he thought of other phrases and eternal sayings which were appropriate to his present state of feelings. Again he quoted Euripides,

“Curse ye! My woman-hate shall ne’er be sated  
Not though one say that this is all my theme:  
For they be ever strangely steeped in sin.  
Let some one now stand forth and prove them chaste,  
Or leave me free to trample on them ever.”

Another good way of putting it. “Guess I’ll be a misogynist!” laughed Riley. “Might as well be a misogynist! And a polygamist! That would be good—have no use for women except for immediate temporary satisfactions!”

Thus his thoughts ran, on and on—and thus his friends found him when they came in later in the evening. McCarthy found him so light-hearted and happy that he could not believe his senses of sight and hearing. Riley welcomed him with open arms, and began at once to talk about the prospects for a party; but his prospects fell short; there was just one quart of liquor in the crowd and every one was financially punctured, so Riley had to be satisfied with a couple of drinks and an early retiring.

Next day he saw Bernyce, but he was not the man whom she had come to know: he was his old cynical, clear-sighted self again, and now that his eyes were opened he saw through her flimsy affectations, her fabrications and artifices, her insincere pretensions, through them to her genuine, insignificant, selfish little self. He



was at his best, his wit, his sarcasm, his ridicule, his incisive verbal thrusts made a wreck of this pretty little creature who thought she was so clever, but really was so foolishly dumb and stupid. Yes, Riley made quite a thorough job of it, so thorough indeed that when he had finished he was as sorry for her in her foolish little shell of superficiality as he was glad for himself that he had been able so to see through her.

And all this happened within a few hours after he had attended the little church across the street from his rooms, for whatever strength of purpose he did not receive from his reservoir of intelligence during his cogitations on Saturday night, he absorbed from the religious services on Sunday morning—"that's what religious services are for," he very frankly admitted.

At any rate, he neglected to make any arrangements for Bernyce to accompany him to New Haven the following week-end. He went with a crowd of fellows, and cheered himself hoarse as he watched his roommate play the best game of his college career, for Brat lived up to expectations by giving more than he had to give in helping Harvard to one of her greatest victories over the Eli. And so happy for his roommate was he that Riley almost forgot about the troubles of the world as they had come to Brock and himself. The Irish iconoclast was once more the smiling knocker that he had always been, and his friends were glad to welcome him back as such.

### BLOOD SOMETIMES TELLS

Riley had many reasons for being happy at the Yale game. One afternoon earlier in the week he had gone to see Brock, and many pleasantly disturbing developments had been revealed to him.

First he learned that the cause of his roommate's hurried letter lay in the fact that Ellen seemed to enjoy coming to the hospital, and that therein lay the cause of Brock's perturbation: he was still thinking of Brat and

although he knew that Brat saw much of Virginia's company that fall, he did not know just what the arrangement between him and Ellen really was. He felt uneasy about it, but this had not deterred him from inviting Ellen, with much genuine fervor, to call again as soon as possible, and then to come as often as possible after that.

Riley did not know any more about Brat's affairs than did Brock, but he suspected that everything was turning out much better than even he would have expected. However, while they were talking about this and other matters, particularly the problem of Brock's coming back to college at the Mid-Year, another visitor was announced; when the door opened to admit them, Riley was surprised to see, not Ellen, but Brat, and with him was Virginia, carrying a huge floral donation toward Brock's comfort.

"Sorry we haven't been over before, Scotty," explained Brat, "but this is the first afternoon for weeks that we've had less than three hours' work."

"Forget it!" exclaimed Brock, delighted over these visitors. "Sit down—let's hear the hero speak! And how are you, Virginia?"

"Terrible! Simply terrible! I'm looking for a good substantial man who will pay some attention to me! Brat hasn't the time! That's why I've brought these flowers—I thought that perhaps you might be interested, Scotty." She affected a pout in Brat's direction, and they all laughed—this was the sort of thing which really captivated Brat; Virginia was continually digging him in the ribs after this fashion, and he liked it.

They talked then about football, college, Scotty's plans. Brat sat by the bed smiling but not talking much; Riley and Virginia kept up a steady fire of repartee across the person of Brock, who now and then managed to get in a comment on the subject under discussion.

Finally, Virginia suddenly recalled having an engagement which she positively could not ignore, so she and Brat, with much flurry and hurry on her part, and with the many conventional protestations to Brock, departed,

Virginia laughing and talking as they passed out of the room, and Brat beaming with joy over her verbal attacks upon him.

A moment after the door closed behind them, it opened again to admit another visitor, Ellen.

Riley noted the expression of his friend's face at the moment; there was a very noticeable lighting up of his features as he called to her, "Hi-lo, Ellen! thought you were lost today!"

And Ellen smiled and spoke to him, saying very calmly that she had just met Brat and Miss Somebody-or-other in the hall.

"Brat introduced us, but I didn't catch the name—what is it?" she asked, smiling as if it mattered not at all to her, and then, when they told her Virginia's name, she capped it all by saying with surprising sincerity, "She's terribly sweet—Brat's taste seems to have improved!" And she managed to laugh at her own expense, and laughed again when Riley and Brock both protested against her last statement.

Brock and Riley were glad to have something to laugh and joke about; after hearing that Brat and Virginia had walked into Ellen, neither knew just what to say or do. Riley thought to himself that there was something queer about the whole business, and Brock, after the first moments, was ashamed of himself for rejoicing over this meeting; but he couldn't help rejoicing, regardless of the shamed part of his feelings.

Shortly after Ellen's coming, Riley contrived an excuse for leaving, saying naïvely, "You aren't coming in town now, are you, Ellen?" To which the only reply possible was "No."

She did not go in town until much later, and when she did her thoughts were of everything but Tom Riley. She had noticed Brat and Virginia before they saw her, and had noticed particularly Virginia's manner and the very obvious way in which she dominated Brat, who with equal obviousness, enjoyed her domination. Ellen noticed



these features, but could not for the life of her recall whether Brat seemed flustered at their meeting or not—she decided that he had not.

The result of her thinking was, that the day before the football team left for New Haven, Ellen came to Cambridge to meet Brat, after a telephone call from her had arranged the meeting, the course of which meeting went much as Ellen had expected it to go. In the end, after very frank and sincere talking on Ellen's part and no denials or counter suggestions from Brat, their lifelong taken-for-granted engagement was finally and definitely declared undesirable, unsatisfactory and unnecessary. They parted that evening with just as much—perhaps more—genuine regard for each other than they had ever experienced before—it was a case of separation bringing them closer together, paradoxical as that might seem.

For all of which there was reason and explanation in plenty, but for the feeling which had so suddenly come about between Ellen and Brock, there was not so easy an explanation. There is no explaining, no accounting for a person's loves. There are those who chant about "propinquity," "matter of habit," "mutual helpfulness," and other plausible explanations, each of which may apply to some particular case; but the case of Ellen and Brock was counter to all of these. They had met not more than half a dozen times, and those times were colored by the fact that Ellen was, to all appearances and to all intents, the girl of his friend. True, Ellen was the physical image of Dora, and Dora had had a great influence upon Brock, in spite of her lack of the finer virtues of women. Then, too, there may have been the much talked of reaction on Ellen's part to discovering actually that her lover from boyhood was so obviously happy in the company of another girl; the story books are full of marriages resulting from this "woman spurned" reaction, but Ellen and Brat, as was said before, were brought much closer by their separation.

Some of the ancient Greeks held to a theory that origi-

nally the unit of human life was a being composed of man and woman, this man-woman having four hands, four feet, two heads, and being perfectly coördinated and agreeable throughout its dual system. These beings were so integrally well made that they had nothing to occupy their natural antipathies and oppositional feelings, with the result that eventually they became so restless that they threatened to roll up Mount Olympus and destroy the gods who basked in the mountain-top sunshine there. The gods, being all-powerful, took counsel among themselves as to what should be done about this danger, and it was finally decided that the best procedure would be to separate each of the human beings into a man and a woman, the idea being that once separated their lives would consist of a process of seeking for their lost halves, and they would thereby be prevented from even thinking about defying and destroying the gods. So, said the Greeks, every man goes through life looking for the woman who was cut away from him by the gods, and every woman likewise seeks her man; sometimes the two original, congenial, perfectly-suited parts succeed in finding each other, and a perfect unit of human happiness results.

Perhaps this was the case in the love which so spontaneously developed between Brock and Ellen; at any rate they did not lose much time with non-essentials and little provocations, and once Brock learned of the break between Ellen and Brat, his joy knew no dimensions.

Ellen was not really sorry about Brat—she was genuinely glad over his apparent happiness, but she also was glad, perfectly happy herself, over the sincerity and wholeheartedness which Brock evidenced toward her; this was so unlike the treatment to which a lifelong engagement to Brat had accustomed her. There are thrills left in this human society, and Ellen was enjoying them, in the healthy, wholesome way of which she was bred to be capable.

She cared for Brock because she could and did help

him—it may be true that we love those for whom we do the most! Ellen did and enjoyed doing everything possible for Brock's comfort and happiness, and Brock, unable to reciprocate in kind, did the best he could to meet her at the half-post. The Greeks were probably more right than wrong in their theory—some marriages must have been made in heaven!

### APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY

So Riley had been happy at the Yale game, and not without reason. The last football season of their college days had passed to an end in a blaze of Crimson glory, and Riley was almost bursting with pride over his roommate's success on the football field. Brat was more or less content with the way things were going, almost admitting to himself that he thought much more of Ellen now that he did not have to look forward to marrying her. It is perfectly possible for an excellent man to feel toward an excellent woman in such an apparently ignoble way, as the sophisticated Irishman might have said. Brat and Riley were more than ordinarily congenial companions during all this time of Brock's absence, it being mutually taken for granted that the Irishman was to browbeat and criticize Brat in no too-nice terms about the various things of their life, and that Brat was to do just as he pleased regardless of all Riley's talking. That was a very congenial understanding.

Brock was absent many weeks, so many indeed that he was fast becoming just a memory with his old crowd. At first most of the fellows, hearing of his troubles, expressed sincere and wholehearted regret at his breaking up, but the fact that they had been expecting some unfortunate end for him made their reaction at the time not so noticeable. When they first learned that he had gone completely to pieces, mentally speaking, they concluded that at last he had given up the fight, as he had so often said he would. They took it for granted that he was



“done for” as far as College was concerned—yet they all realized the tragedy of his case, in spite of the fact that tragedies near at hand are seldom appreciated.

The dramatists and dramatic critics say that the line between tragedy and farce is a very thin one—that things and incidents very obviously tragic in so far as emotional effectiveness goes, can be made ridiculously farcical by a few slight twists. In Brock’s case this seemed true, after a fashion. Here was a tragedy close at hand, the tragedy of a young man who had served his country with distinction and honor, of a keen mind and profound capacity for achievement; a young man altogether promising, who had come to an ignoble end. His going to the hospital a madman was, in the eyes of his younger friends, the end of all these things of promise.

It was inevitable that some one should stoop to facetiousness in discussing his case. That one was Maun, and his facetiousness broke out at a very inopportune time. Maun was rather sour on the world in general by the end of the football season—he had not made his letter; and especially was he riled against the “system” of “blue-blooded aristocracy” which he had as he thought come up against. It was quite natural in view of this that, in speaking of Brock’s breaking up, he should remark, “Yeh—Brock was a blue-blood! And ‘Blood will tell!’ he always said!”

Hearing this from Maun, Riley should have known that it was caused by Maun’s grudge against the aristocracy of the college. Indeed, he did not at once react to it, but when he heard some one laugh a moment after the remark was made, he saw red with all the courage and conviction that were in him.

“That’s a dirty crack, Maunstein, and you know it!” he exploded, his face purple with outraged feeling. “You ought to be ashamed of yourself—a great healthy hulk like you saying a thing like that about Brock! You know damned well that Brock’s as blue-blooded as they make ’em, but you also know damned well that he’s a

white man such as it's given damned few people to know! Blood *will* tell! Dammitall if he had been born of the scum he would have succumbed long ago to living his life with that damned trollop who always took advantage of his discouragement and discontent! You know that you have no cause to say anything disparaging about Scotty! You, nor any one else around here!"

Maun tried to explain by saying, "I merely repeated his own words—you've heard him say time and time again, 'Blood will tell'."

"I don't care a damn if he did say it! All right—forget it! He's had some tough breaks, and they were breaks which your head wouldn't have stood without cracking!"

"Maybe so," admitted Maun, readily enough; "I didn't mean anything disparaging, Tommy—hell, I know Scotty was true blue through and through!"

"All right," submitted the Irishman, calming down considerably; "I didn't know from the way you said it. I've heard a lot of funny cracks around different places about Brock, and they're beginning to get under my skin! I'm not listening to any more of them without an argument, even if the man is three times my size!" Riley was still belligerent, adding the last clause as an afterthought upon looking at the towering frame of Maun beside him. However, the argument died there, and Riley had no further cause for indignation, because gradually the whole incident of Brock's mishap became to almost every one a fading memory, there being so many incidents from day to day to occupy their minds.

For the most part Riley was his old self again. He was, as he often said with affected solemnity, "A student of society"—everything interested him, chiefly perhaps because in nine cases out of ten he could find something wrong or something to criticize. He was forever thinking and talking: his life was made up of it. He was an unscientific psychologist in that respect. He was convinced also that no one knew definitely what the whole business of living was about or toward, and therefore no

one could explain it to him, all of which conviction caused him much worry. He wanted to know the "why" of everything, to find the reasons for people's conduct, for customs and habits and social practices; in short, he wanted to know, as he put it, "Just what the hell I'm here for and what I'm going to do about it!"

This was a development of his former attitude toward college and life in general. Now he observed everything and noted every little incident, wondering at all times how these things could fit into his general scheme of existence and society. And he found no answers to his questionings.

In spite of this attitude, however, he did not become a bore or a chronic obstructionist, obstinate and stubborn in his line of thinking. He was merely developing along a natural line, trying to satisfy the curiosity with which God had endowed him. Otherwise he was the same good fellow, ready to go on a party at any hour day or night, liked by every one who knew him, respected much more than he dreamed by many of the snobs whom he most belabored.

And he was forever doing things, looking for things to do, or patching up things which had already been done. It was in this spirit that he broached the subject of an experimental party to Brat. "I'd like to see," he explained, "just what effect and counter-effect a party of you and me with Virginia and Georgia would have. Virginia is the typical sweet young thing looking for experience and excitement, just curious enough about things to run along the precipice that hangs over trouble. Georgia, on the other hand, is the typical party girl—she's seen all there is to see, knows no inhibitions or moral laws whatsoever, is ready to go the limit as a matter of course because it's part of the game as she understands it."

"I don't like the idea," said Brat, still wondering as to exactly what his roommate meant by his description of Virginia. "That'd be a hell of a party!"

"I don't know as it would!" Riley knew that Brat



would go if he kept at him. "I'd like to get them together with a few drinks, just to see how they react to each other. They'd get along all right, I'd bet."

After much talking, Brat was persuaded to call up Virginia and make his arrangements with her, after which Riley got in touch with Georgia, whom he had not seen for many weeks. The party was arranged, and later that same evening the four met in a grill booth at a downtown hotel.

To all appearances the two girls were neither impressed nor unimpressed with each other. Georgia and Brat were rather distant for a long time, until several drinks had been consumed, when Brat's very evident desire to be friendly finally had a similar effect upon the pretty blonde. Virginia entered into the spirit of the evening without preliminaries, danced recklessly, smoked, joked and was altogether as frivolous as she knew how to be, and, as soon as she discovered that Georgia and Brat had at one time known each other, began to make Brat's life miserable in those many little ways which have in the course of history made the female of the species more deadly than the male. Before the evening was over she had made Brat quite uncomfortable, but his discomfort was reflected in a strange manner—he thrived on just the treatment which she was giving him. It was by this method that she most easily got under his skin, and he liked and wanted her all the more on account of it.

Riley came to the conclusion early in the evening that his experiment was not working out toward any evidence which might lead to conclusions, and at last he managed to turn the conversation into a channel which, he thought, might produce some results of interest.

He began by making some facetious reference to the so-called "flapper philosophy" which was at the time so much discussed. This should lead to something, he thought, being certain in his mind that both Virginia and Georgia included themselves in the genus flapper. "Speaking for yourself," he suggested, "Virginia, what is

your idea of the philosophy of the flapper—what's her idea anyway?"

Virginia thought for a moment, trying to make some witty rejoinder, but finally said, "Oh—I don't know exactly how to define it, but the main idea is to 'have as much fun as you can before you die or grow old'." She laughed, looking at Georgia as she added, "Isn't that about it, Georgia?"

Georgia remarked that some such idea was the root of it all, "But," she went on, "what difference does it make—names don't make any difference. No matter what you call a thing, the thing remains the same. People do the same things no matter what they are called." Georgia had a hazy idea of what she meant, but couldn't explain her meaning.

"We'd best have another drink," suggested the Irishman, smiling. So they had another drink, after which Riley interested the others in studying the other couples scattered around the room.

"Oh—there's a man I know," exclaimed Virginia, pointing with her eyes in the direction of a table not so far from their booth. Then, dropping her voice, she added, "He's a married man, but that isn't his wife! I guess he's a high stepper!"

"From the looks of his fair companion, I should imagine that he is a high stepper," commented Riley. "There's something that goes against my grain, frankly!"

Both girls looked at him and Virginia asked, "Why you poor old dear, what goes against your grain, as you call it?" She smiled devilishly at this last phrase.

"Why, just that—a man who can't be satisfied with his wife, but has to go chasing off with some other woman! I haven't any use for a married man or a married woman who does that sort of thing!"

"Well, if it's fair for one it's fair for the other," was Georgia's comment. "I know a lot of women who would be crazy if they couldn't go out with other men."

"You think it's all right—it's playing fair?" asked Riley.

"Why, of course," broke in Virginia, impatiently; "you are too old-fashioned, Tom! It is not only all right; it is right. And it's also right for women to do just as they please, just as the men do!"

"You have faith in the double standard of morals, I see," laughed Riley. "I suppose you think that a single standard of morals would be the ideal thing, eh?"

Virginia and Georgia agreed that if it was all right for men to sow wild oats, it should be all right for girls to do the same.

"Which is all very well, you know," the Irishman said, "except for the fact that it doesn't exist and never can exist—the single standard is impossible! You can talk all you want to about it, but the fact remains that if a girl goes the limit and gets caught, she's cooked, so to speak! Theoretically, girls can do whatever they want to do, but actually they can't—because if they do, they pay about ten times over for it. That's a fact, and you know it!"

The two girls admitted that it was a fact, but a terribly unfair arrangement, and this admission was the cause of Riley's fall; he began to talk on one of his favorite themes, the theory of compensation, as applied to a girl's conduct.

"There's just the point of your flapper philosophy," he began. "The flapper is trying to live out the single standard, and it can't be done, without much suffering in the end. It is a stupid theory, all round—it's like hiding one's head in the sand and feeling safely hidden from wind and rain."

This broadside, a mild rebuke at best, caused both girls to retort in a very heated fashion. Riley was old-fashioned, prudish, unfair, selfish—indeed, before they finished with him he was nothing at all.

Yet he went on, analyzing their feelings, tearing them apart, breaking down their arguments and superficial



generalities on life, until finally he almost wrecked the party by specifically applying the laws of compensation to them and their friends. "Look around you, now—in all seriousness, think of all your friends and acquaintances and see if they don't fit into these categories. First, there's an old law of life which, as expressed by Emerson, says that if you want something, pay the price and take it. That means simply that if you as a girl crave some pleasures which seem to be forbidden you, you can always get those pleasures if you pay the price for getting them—perhaps that price is loss of prestige, good name, health, peace of mind, or any other of many things—but you must pay, sooner or later, for everything you get!"

"Now wait a minute,"—as Virginia started to interrupt. "That isn't the main thing. Just see how that applies. Think of your friends and see how it works out."

But Virginia would not even attempt to think about such a thing. "What has that to do with the double standard of morals?" she demanded.

"Why, everything—you girls are born into a condition of life which qualifies you to sit on a pedestal and receive the plaudits and adoration of us poor men; if you want to do the things which are implied under the single standard, you immediately come down off that pedestal whereon you were born to sit. You pay in that way! Of course, that's a generalization, but it invariably applies! Men live by women if——"

"Well, I don't see the point," countered Virginia. "Girls have to do something—the flapper might as well be a flapper as anything else!"

"I haven't anything against flappers," laughed Riley, "except the very common characteristic of them—they all try to assume an attitude of wisdom toward life. Every flapper thinks that no girl as clever as she is could possibly slip up, when as a matter of fact her cleverness is just a sham—she doesn't know half as much as she thinks she does. Because—" he stopped, looked at Georgia and

back at Virginia, and went on, "because, if they were really clever, they would know better than to do all the things they do! The flappers are too stupid to realize that there are after-effects and consequences to everything they do. There's your law of compensation: if you're short in sight, you're long on hearing; if you're short on wisdom, you're long on action; if you want something that you haven't, you must give something that you have in order to get what you want." Riley laughed at the tangle which he had made and continued, "Here's the way it works out, in the case of you girls—just to point out how stupid most girls are! A clever girl realizes this law of compensation, in one way or another, and she realizes that it applies to her as well as to everyone else. If she's pretty, she'll probably be dumb, and in order to be as attractive as possible she must depend upon her prettiness to attract. If she's rich but homely, she must depend upon her money and the things it can give her and the things that she can give others in order to attract them. If she's clever in mind, witty and intellectually stimulating, but ordinary in looks, she must depend upon her intellect. If she's just ordinary in looks and ordinary in mind, she has to give something else in order to get and keep her men. If she is homely as a mud-alley and stupid besides, well—whatever she gives up will have to be a lot. In every case, you have to give up something if you want men to admire or follow you—and that 'man' part is the center of all flapperism. The flapper ceases to exist except as regards men—they are her *raison d'être*."

Riley stopped and looked around. Georgia was watching him with a queer little smile about her mouth. Virginia was registering no response whatever. Finally he continued, "The trouble with the flapper is that in nine cases out of ten she gives up a lot of things that aren't necessary—she pays a dollar and a half check with a fifty-dollar bill! A pretty girl who is clever doesn't need to go the limit in order to have a good time, many

friends and admirers! A pretty girl with money and a few brains can have one hell of a good time without giving up a thing—but—but—” Riley began to smile as he tried to think of a nice way of saying what he wanted to say. “But if they don’t have to pay anything, they don’t get anything—so in many cases it ends in their wanting a lot of things which they shouldn’t want, and doing a lot of things which they shouldn’t want to do—whereupon the old rule comes again and says that they’ve got to give up something in return for doing these things—and, well, you know what I mean.”

Yes, they knew what he meant. Georgia’s smile was a little set now, and Virginia did not know just how to look. This man Riley was too much. “A pretty girl,” he stated with emphasis, “is a damned fool for laying around in the arms of as many men as she can find, just to see what effect it will have on them—she’s doing something for which she has to pay!”

Riley poured out a round of drinks after that, and, while drinking his, he heard Virginia say, “But petting is perfectly harmless—doesn’t do any one a bit of harm, whether it’s one man or a hundred!”

Riley laughed. “So you think, my dear Virginia,” (Riley had just swallowed a strong mixture and had to blink his eyes before he continued), “but sooner or later they wish they hadn’t. No girl, I don’t care who or what she is, can continue to be a good sport to a variety of men without cheapening herself—and it is cheap, regardless of all your theories and single standards and idle curiosities and everything else. The good sport is cheap—in the estimation of every man who benefits by her little generousities and relaxations! The party girl cannot call forth respect from any man who suspects that she does with every man what she does with him!”

“All of which we poor flappers do not realize,” finished Georgia, with such an odd soberness in her tone that Riley turned his head to see if she were upset. But she



just smiled the same little smile and calmly drank her drink, while the others watched.

Virginia was very evidently bored with Riley's tirade; she dragged Brat out to dance and they were soon followed by the other couple. The party continued in its old smooth channel throughout the remainder of the evening and, except for the queer smile on his companion's face, Riley had received no intimations that his experiment had in any way succeeded. In his own mind his idea had been to sound out Virginia; he had never given Georgia a thought; gradually, as he recalled some of the things which he had said, he began to wonder whether or not Georgia's feelings had been hurt. He might have gotten under her skin with some of those statements, but he hoped that he hadn't; Georgia was a good fellow, an exceptionally good fellow for a girl so pretty, and she came from an excellent family. She was a party girl by her own volition, the inference being that she was not clever enough to realize her assets, otherwise she would not have such a reputation for *outré* doings. However—oh, well, she was probably all right; she'd be congenial by the time they got home, anyway.

### THE BOOMERANG

By the time they went home, Riley had almost forgotten about his experiment. The highballs which he mixed for the party proved to have been more potent than he suspected, for every one was in a too jolly state of inebriation when they finally took their departure from the café.

Before leaving, Riley informed Brat that he intended to take Georgia for a little ride over to an apartment in Cambridge and that, in view of this, Brat and Virginia had best take another cab and start along. As both girls came from Brookline and had ostensibly to return there, the two-car arrangement was conceived by Riley as a means of precluding any embarrassing explanations for

Brat and Virginia. So, when Riley suggested to all that Brat take a cab and he take another, it seemed perfectly matter-of-fact and not in the least out of the way to either Virginia or Georgia—although both had a vague idea of what the object of it all was.

Riley and Georgia talked about everything in general and nothing in particular during their ride to Cambridge, both being apparently in such fine fettle that ordinary jokes and stories were out of order. Georgia, after the two couples separated, blossomed forth into a greater and more happy radiance than she had shown all evening; she teased her escort in many little ways, made many pointed remarks and laughed many times at having made some irrelevant comment which happened to catch Riley off his guard.

They arrived in front of the apartment house near Harvard Square, and Riley went in to see if it were too late for them to pay a social call on his friends.

"It's all O. K.," he announced when he returned a moment later. "Come on, Georgette!"

But Georgia did not move.

"Come on! What's wrong?" demanded the Irishman. "It's perfectly all right—you've been up here before."

Still Georgia made no move to get out of the cab. She sat there with the light from a near-by street lamp upon her face; Riley noted that she was smiling, almost laughing at him.

"Listen, Georgia—" he began, jumping into the cab beside her. "Don't you want to go in for a while?"

"Tom—" Georgia's voice was a riddle. "I never heard of you preaching before!"

"Preaching?" rejoined Tom, not understanding.

"Yes—preaching. I never knew that you could preach, as you did there tonight!"

"Aw—forget it, Georgia. And don't be kidding me like that! Come on!" He took her hand and gave a gentle pull as he started again to get out of the car.

But Georgia merely pulled back. "Honestly—you

would make a wonderful preacher, Tom! I never knew that side of you before!" And Georgia continued to smile at him, but it seemed to Tom, who sat back and looked at her in wonderment, there was a wistful something in that smile.

"Say—what the devil's eating you, anyway, Georgia?"

"Nothing, Tom. Only, I liked you better tonight than any time that I've ever seen you. Honestly!" Still she smiled.

"Well, then, let's go up here for half an hour or so, if you like me so well! You know——"

"Yes, I know exactly what you mean. I'm not a dumb dora!"

"Well——"

"Well, as I say, Tom—I never knew that you could talk like that. It was wonderful! You were so convincing—and every word you said had its effect. I absorbed it all—I believed everything you said, everything! And you are right: it doesn't pay!"

Riley was nonplused. "For Cripe's sake, Georgia—cut out the bourgeois humor and forget about that stuff I was spouting; all that moral stuff is for the herd; we don't belong to the herd!" Riley knew that was a weak argument, but he wanted to move, do something, anything but sit there and talk about that stuff. "Don't you want to stop here for a little while, get sobered up before you go home? Come on!"

But Georgia sat still, smiling. "Frankly, Tom, I should love to go, to go anywhere with you—honestly, I like you better than I ever did before—but I won't go up there!"

Riley looked at her for a moment, then asked, "But, Georgia, you don't want to go home walking like a tank and smelling like a distillery, do you?"

"Why, as you say, Tom—we have to take our choice; I'm taking mine tonight, I'm off that sort of thing—honestly!"

As she said this, the cab driver turned, thinking per-



haps that he had missed an order, and Riley, seeing him turn, abruptly exclaimed, "Oh, dammit all, let's move then; over to Brookline Village, Captain!" And Georgia smiled.

Not much was said during the ride to Brookline Village, and what little was said came from Georgia, who now and then looked up into her companion's face from her resting place in his arms to make ironic little remarks which only served to encourage Riley's discomfort. He was thinking, wondering about many things, chief of which was a vague generalization concerning the joys of anticipation and the satisfactions of pleasure unrealized—all of which thinking was more or less ironic also.

When he saw his happy lady to her door, he could not have said whether he expected anything or not, but what he received was, "Honest, Tom—you're a jewel—too damned nice to be running around loose!" She kissed him, with her arms tight around his neck, then laughed lightly and closed the door in his face.

And during his ride back to Cambridge he thought some more—wondering whether he had let himself in for a joke, or whether Georgia might be capable of being sincere. He could not decide whether he really had been a goat, an angel, or just a foolish good fellow.

#### SUBCONSCIOUS ANTICIPATION

Meanwhile Brat and Virginia had gone directly to the latter's palatial mansion in the Reservoir section of Brookline. As the cab hummed and purred monotonously along, only one corner of the rear seat was occupied, and the occupants were lulled into an all-pervading feeling of security and complete happiness.

There was very little conversation. When the two couples parted at the hotel, Virginia had laughingly said, "Oh, I think Tom is too funny for words—he's so old-fashioned and worried about us young girls! I understand, Brat dear, why you like him so well—he's just like you in his ideas!"

Ordinarily Brat would not have thought anything of this, but at the time he suddenly began to wonder just what she meant by that remark. It was enough to make any one laugh—Riley just like him! Virginia was always saying things like that—absolutely no rhyme or reason to some of her talk.

Virginia, however, was not depending upon her talk. She was, as she told herself, “absolutely, whole-souledly, intensely in love with Brat,” and it rather upset her little balance of cleverness because he took everything so much for granted and showed no responsiveness at all, as other men should and did. She was a lovely little creature, perfectly adorable in every way, and entirely normal in every way—which was unfortunate: she had grown up under nurses and governesses and later in several ultra-select boarding schools; there was very little of interest that she did not know. At school she had been a regular girl in every way; many a night she had listened to impersonal *risqué* stories after lights-out, and many a time she had blushed in hearing a supposedly personal story told by girls who professed to have experienced the story-book thrills of life. The result was that when she finished school she had a very broad theoretical knowledge of everything that matters; her only curiosity now lay in the matter of personal experience. She had had no such experiences as many of the girls related, and she was perfectly normal in being curious about the actuality of things, about learning at first-hand things which she had learned second-hand. Nevertheless, she was a level-headed girl, and when her father overlooked her sufficiently to permit a considerable freedom and liberty of movement and activity on her part, she did not proceed forthwith to abuse her opportunities. She had a very good time. She had always a wide variety of men from which to choose for companionship, and she managed to find something interesting about every one of them.

Besides which, she delighted in studying men. She was

what might be called a behavioristic psychologist—she studied men through their behavior, and learned many, many things in the course of her experiments. She tried to develop a definite technique of attractiveness, which she built up by trying out various little devices to see what effect each had upon men in general and men in particular, and she had so far proceeded in her technique-building that her formulas were rather thorough-going and complete when she became interested in Brat.

But her treatment failed to produce the expected results in Brat, and the fact of this piqued the little lady very much indeed. She resorted to all her reservoir of tricks and devices, called up many discarded formulæ, and the more she tried to affect Brat, naturally the more she was interested in him. The inevitable result was that, as she continued in her efforts, she grew to be more and more in love with him, and her efforts ultimately came to be nothing short of the fine art of teasing—for she teased and annoyed and tormented him so ardently that for the greater part of the occasions upon which they were together poor Brat was utterly bewitched beyond any ability to react as she wanted him to react.

On the night of their little party with Georgia and Riley, Brat was even less talkative and responsive than usual, and Virginia did not appear to be over-enthusiastic about anything. Of course, she did her customary little tricks to make Brat uncomfortable, but she did not exert herself in that direction. Then, that conversation or monologue of Tom's had been quite disturbing—Tom was too old-fashioned: he didn't know the first thing about women!

No, he didn't! The more Virginia thought of this, the more she became convinced, under the influence of Tom's highballs, that it was true. By the time she and Brat had reached her home she was even so convinced of it that she determined to do everything in her power to prove it correct.

She did everything in her power. She would not hear



of Brat's going right home. He had to come in for a little while, anyway. It would be entirely all right. No one would hear them. She led him into a little den which looked out upon a garden in which shrubs and bushes, bare of leaves, stood like shivering urchins in the cold light of the moon. It was comfortably warm in the den, and Brat, having shed his coat and muffler, sat down beside Virginia on the soft-cushioned window lounge, feeling that here was such tranquillity as to be the end of all desire. Virginia sneaked under his arm and snuggled her soft, warm little self so close to him that he had to take her in his arms in self-defence.

"O-o-oh—I'm chilled to an icicle, Brat dear!" she murmured, pulling him back into the soft cushions so that both might be more comfortable. But they were not at once more comfortable; a certain amount of squirming around and rearranging of pillows was necessary before they became really settled in perfect comfort.

"Oh-o-o-h, Brat—you funny old dearest, you! Keep me warm!" Virginia lay close against him in all her seductive softness. Her little feet came just to his ankles and whenever she squirmed or moved she invariably kicked him, hard enough so that each time there was cause for apologies and she said, "So sorry!" and pulled herself closer for a kiss of apology.

Brat's senses, somewhat awry from the refreshments which he had consumed, were aroused by all the little things of this situation, and by the sweet nothings which were poured into his ears. He vaguely realized that this was really the first time that he and Virginia had ever been absolutely alone and to themselves, and, realizing it, he said to himself that it surely would not be the last.

His senses, once aroused, knew no limitations, and Virginia, if she really had learned anything in the course of her adventures in technique, should have recognized the symptoms. Perhaps she did—it is probable that these symptoms were the behavioristic reactions which she had long been anticipating. At any rate, her teasing and

tormenting was carried on without any apparent qualms, and in consequence Brat was soon a whirlpool of emotions and irresistible urges.

In truth Virginia must have been delighted with the manner in which he finally did react. His arm that held her breathlessly against him was hard as steel against her neck and shoulder.

The smoothness of her skin! The softness and suppleness of her body! Such warmth, such glowing life! Brat had never desired this pretty little creature like that before—not consciously; but deep down he had wanted her vaguely, anticipating the having of her without realizing it. But now——

Virginia should have known. But she was happy beyond all knowing!

“Well, Brat,” said Riley, next morning, as they sat at breakfast in a one-arm lunchroom, “my little experiment didn’t work out as we expected, did it?” Riley could laugh at his own experience.

And Brat managed to smile—however otherwise he felt—as he said, “I should say it didn’t! Next time you keep your experiments to yourself!”

Though he smiled, there was so much of earnestness and feeling in his tone that his roommate refrained from laughing as he related his disappointing experience of the night before, throughout which relating Brat smiled queerly, especially so when his friend concluded by saying, “Which all goes to show that you never can tell how things will turn out—the best laid plans of mice and men, et cetera!”

#### ON THE TEMPER OF THE TIMES

Three days after this little episode, Scotty came back from the hospital to find Riley and a visitor in a heated argument over a variety of subjects. The visitor was Winnie Pickett, looking now very much the successful

young go-getter as portrayed in the fiction of the times.

"Just in time! just in time!" exclaimed Riley, almost before Brock had had time to remove his coat and say hello to Pick.

"Just in time for what?" asked Brock, pausing in his operations. The Irishman picked up a sheaf of papers from his desk and said, "Now, listen to this! You started it—you suggested the idea—and I've worked it up into a report for *Social Ethics*. Now tell me what you think of it—you too, Pick!"

"Fire away!" said Brock, proceeding about his business. "What's the title and where do I come in?"

"The title is *Wild Asses!* You thought it up in your sleep once."

"Wild Asses!" mused Brock, but vaguely recalling the term. "Go ahead, though!"

The Irishman lit a cigarette and began to read:

*Stupidity and stubbornness are the distinguishing characteristics of that variety of mammal commonly called the Ass, and stupidity and stubbornness likewise distinguish a great, large class of parallels or counterparts or human imitations of the four-legged ass. The species of human ass is a broad and composite group, representing in its membership all walks of life, all classes of society, all professions and all creeds—the asinine are the salt of the earth and they seldom hide their lights under bushels.*

*Sometimes an ass is crossed with an ox, and the product of these two is usually a much respected human being, a stupid, hardworking fool whose industry precludes efficiency and whose life and works and hope of happiness aim toward a single satisfaction—ultimate satisfaction—in death. Christianity has been labelled, not unjustly, the Creed of Hope in Death and Faith in the Unknown (in contrast to the Greek philosophy of Enjoyment of Life and Reality) and in at least a partial way the ass of industry is truly a solid Christian, for all his hopes are*



*projected to posterity and to his own after-death destiny. A wonderful philosophy of living—a man that wants but little here below!*

*But all asses are not of this variety. More common, more noticeable, more easily recognizable and more interesting are those poor dumb asses whose asininity is expressed in their following stupidity, stubbornly and wildly the illusion of excitement as the sine qua non of happy existence. These are the wild asses of the species, cavorting and aimless bucking being their chief occupations until such time as they come to be, as do the asses of industry, merely human beasts of burden—but their burdens are of a different kind: the wild asses, having demonstrated their strength, vivacity and endurance in their wildness, must carry a heavier burden than their brothers. The industrious ass thrives in a sort of dazed condition, for all asses best thrive under restrictions and restraints; but the wild ass is without all such restrictions until they are but added burdens conducing to no comfort.*

*Truly this is the hey-day of the wild ass! Thus much-vaunted freedom, this untrammelled liberty, this mad folly of independence, this screaming dance around the three little cold-cream idols of inalienable rights, "Life, Liberty and Pursuit of Happiness," this helter-skelter machine age of unleashed inhibitions and no morals, this ruinous "every man for himself" rage!*

*Perhaps, as one Herbert Spencer sought to prove, evolution proceeds from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, from the simple to the complex. They say that our society of today is the most complex in the history of human relations; perhaps, but the present day is also in many respects the most simple. Our progress is toward simpleness in complexity! Wild asses are harbingers of decadence—decadence, a general term, connoting simpleness and paucity of thought and physical reversion to ancestral beastliness, stubbornness and stupidity. For it is stupid to be any other than wholesomely progressive, and the wild ass in his stubbornness insists upon remain-*

ing stupid and blind to all possible escapes from that stupidity until, as the producer of decadence, he becomes of necessity a product of decadence, and his burdens are manifold and heavy; he is at the bottom of a very long ladder.

The wild ass—and he is legion!—suffers from mental gout and spiritual thirst; he knows too much and feels too little, lives too fast, seeking emotional and spiritual satisfactions which, as Faust learned, are not to be got by any process but existence with and for men. The doctrine of individual freedom and liberty is futile in its extremes, and has been proved a million times unsatisfying and ineffectual—it has, as is apparent in this day and age, but given greater opportunities for the wild ass to grow wilder.

There is a theory that history runs in cycles, and according to that theory the present post-war mania for excitement is merely transitory, and will be superseded by a reversion toward the other extreme, formality and restraint, such as characterized the age of Queen Victoria. That was an age of idealism; men lived toward lofty ends; they did not consider living as a bad lot to be made the best of, but as a privilege and an opportunity. The characters of those times, the letters of the men and women, the public and private enterprises and achievements, all the life of the English-speaking world, felt the spirit of that idealism. It was reflected in their literature, as in Tennyson, Arnold, Ruskin, Thackeray, Dickens, and countless others. Living was worth while and worth idealizing. In our post-war mania we find it not so: our literature reflects our attitude, which is that life is not worth much!

Must we submit? Must we drag along in the hope that the cycle will operate, that we will find ourselves gradually tightening our system and heightening the pyramid of worthy ideals which has been so utterly flattened in the past ten years? Perhaps the cycle will not operate—perhaps this fetish of freedom and self-sufficiency will prove

*too alluring to be relinquished by men and women who have come to worship it. We lack worthy ideals today, and men must have ideals to live by in social organization; ideals are not instinctive nor the product of spontaneous generation in society.*

*Are they being cultivated and developed? In other times the complaint was that ignorance was the root of all evil, that education would prevent wholesale madness and decadence by showing people that the socially undesirable things do not pay. But our universal educational program seems to have achieved but little in this respect. It has taught the mannerisms, the superficial aspects of living—given the young implements which they can use as they see fit; but it has failed to cultivate in them any ideas of fitness. It falls short there, with the result that our age is characterized by universal mental gout and spiritual hunger—and ignorance is bliss if the spirit is well fed, whereas it is unbelievable that spiritual stupidity or moral poverty is blissful even in genius!*

*The wild ass is typical of the times—indeed, the type predominates, and the individuals belonging to this class are allowed, under our loose and flashy modern theories, to go their wild, unheeding, recklessly crushing ways with none but the clergy to protest. Home and school are negative influences. If the activities of the wild ass were like a solitary vice, or suicidal at worst, society should worry; but they are like pagan priests who set the fashions which others follow, so that all society is permeated with the aggravating irritations to which they, the asses, have fallen prey. One phase of it all may be seen in the New Woman. Womankind could once be divided into three general classifications: the lady, the drudge, and the prostitute. But now to this must be added the Human Mule—sexless, a total racial loss! Man breeds mules by asses!*

*How many they are? Not only in the younger generation, but among the fathers and mothers of the next preceding generation. No feelings—just existence with*



*a passion for excitement, something to do! Tender sensibilities burnt out or never developed. Incapable of finding any enjoyment in themselves—intellectual pleasures are impossible when the mind has no capacity for feeling. The whole temper of the times is toward it, in this age of mechanical, industrial and commercial efficiency, this age of machine-made morals of low degree, made fascinating and acceptable to millions of stupid asses by virtue of the too human failing for believing everything seen in print—"print" meaning newspapers, scare-crow magazines, bathing-girl supplements and the intelligence-insulting movies.*

*How far it reaches! Prostitution is no longer legalized, yet probably never before have so many young girls gone in for paying for their parties and entertainment with their bodies, and without feeling that they are losing something of unreckonable value; they give themselves because they think it's all in the game. Never before have girls so had to be "good sports," or remain at home twiddling their thumbs in needlework. Never before has life been held so cheap, with divorces, abortions and crimes of outright depravity and gross excess the expected thing, rather than the shocking exception. Our education! When fathers and mothers, publicly educated but fed also on the movies, slush newspapers and musical comedies, take as a matter of course their daughters' coming home for shelter with fatherless children! When movie queens and heroes are so idealized and imitated that even their family troubles, faults and weaknesses are inspirations for the idol worshippers! When the basis of our society, the home, is almost unrecognizable as anything but a place to sleep, chiefly because of the ambition of educators! When the wild asses jump and plunge, in the very shadow of the schools, with apparent disregard for the teaching, too little taught, that there is always a day of reckoning ahead! Emotionally starved, the wild asses prance and dance!*

*They dance their dance—regardless of all, it seems—*

*but the fiddler is no fool—the fiddler's hat will be passed—and the fiddler is an ugly wretch!*

Riley stopped, out of breath from this reading; aside from a few slight comments as he read along, he had been uninterrupted by either of his hearers. Now he looked at them, so much as to say, "Well, how about it?"

Pick spoke first, looking toward Brock, "I think he's drunk again, Scotty!"

Then Brock said, "What in name of sufferin' saints is eating you, Tom? What course is that for?"

"Why—I'm going to use it as a speech in Public Speaking and as a report in Social Ethics," explained Riley.

"Old man Owl-Face will throw you the hell out of his class if you get up and give that for a speech!" said Brock.

"It's ambiguous!" adjudged Pick.

"The hell it is?" queried Riley, "You're an ass! You're too damned stupid to appreciate it, Winslow Twickenham!" He laughed.

"Well," began Brock, "I know a lot of wild asses—fit that description to a T; excitement-seeking fools, thrill-mad creatures, with about as much depth and emotional feeling as a centipede—" Brock mused on to himself; he was thinking of many people, of the observations he had made so often, all of which were so hand-in-glove with the Irishman's description of the temper of the times. "By Gad," he said to himself, "they are all wild asses—all except Ellen, that is!"

They talked about the report for several minutes, Riley and Pick doing most of the talking, as they had never been able to agree on anything, and their Senior year had done anything but bring them closer together, for Pickett had served his apprenticeship and had won his way to the leadership of his class. He was the conventional conservative, as all leaders must be, and Riley

was anything but conservative, despite his tirade on "Wild Asses."

In the end, Riley said, "Well, I'm damned glad that's done! Now I can go on that party tonight with a clear conscience! I've got a date with one of the wildest of wild asses for *ce soir*, gentlemen!"

Yes, college life is made up of inconsistencies and incredible disconnections and incongruities, and the Irishman's life was one of the best available examples.

### WHAT MEN LIVE BY

Regret had no place in Virginia's scheme of living. For several days after that memorable evening with Brat, she was much upset, but never sorry. What vexed her more than anything was the fact that she could not explain to herself just how it had happened; Brat had never seemed to mind her tormenting him until that night, then he had exploded all of a sudden, and—well, she hadn't minded his exploding, but it was disconcerting to realize that one could not be forever in perfect control of oneself. What she had permitted to be done did not in her judgment constitute a sin—she never even bothered to consider the moral side of it; the problem lay in herself, in her having played with fire and for so long that her fingers were burned and blistered. The blisters were mental blisters, not spiritual at all.

She went to a dance a few nights later with Brat's rival, the young banker—who was, incidentally, a member in good standing in half a dozen excellent clubs, a polished gentleman of the bluest of blue-blood variety, with all the apparent embellishments and social attainments that much wealth, Yale College and foreign travel can give to a man. And she went many other places with this Byron Parks Shutley during the following two weeks, and saw quite as much of him during that time as she did of Brat. Everything she enjoyed with abandon. She felt more mature, as if she were now most assuredly



a woman of experience, very certain of herself and very jolly—jolly enough at most times to make her forget certain recurring thoughts which sometimes disturbed her equanimity. Brat accepted her as she appeared. No mention was made of that memorable night. He was perfectly willing to forget it and quite successfully acted as if he had forgotten it. Both he and Virginia were quite the same (which surprised him very much the first time they met afterwards) and were apparently unaffected by what had happened.

They were just the same, with a slight exception—now Brat was certain that he wanted to marry Virginia; to him there was just one thing to do, and that was to marry her. Virginia, of course, had not thought of that, as her going out with Shutley indicated. Ultimately Brat began to realize that she did not even think of such a consequence, and as a result, the fact of her going with Shutley so often had quite the effect which Virginia expected it would have—Brat decided to crawl into his shell again and let her go her own way. When the Christmas vacation came, two weeks after that night, he took the express for Ohio a very much disturbed young man, but he was almost convinced that he did not want to marry Virginia if it meant no more to her than that.

The Sunday after his going to Ohio, Virginia went to church for the first time in many months, and prayed with more genuine sincerity than ever before in her life. And that night she prayed. And the next night. She was not so jolly now.

Brat was at home for less than ten days but when he returned to Cambridge he soon found himself confronted by a very different Virginia than he had left the day before Christmas, and he was soon informed in very delicate language as to the cause of the change, so delicate indeed that he had to ask for particulars several times before he fully understood the circumstances into which he had fallen.

Only one reaction was possible for Brat—he wanted to

get married at once, just as soon as he could scrape together enough money to consummate the wish.

"But, Brat dear, we can't do that!" objected Virginia. "What would people think of our breaking up everything and getting married so suddenly, and without any warning or planning? Why, I wouldn't think of it!"

"Well—that's the only thing to do," replied Brat. "Don't you want to marry me?"

"Oh, you funny old dear!—of course I do, but I don't want to do it in such a way as to utterly ruin my reputation! Why not begin letting a few rumors float out, and I'll speak to Dad about it, and we can plan to do it say in a month or two months—then people won't think anything of it!"

"Yes, but—" Brat had heard of suspicions aroused by situations subsequent to such affairs.

"Oh, I know what you mean—but I can go away or do something so that will be all right. Meantime maybe something will happen——"

So it was settled, in such a way that it appeared that of the two Virginia was by far the stronger personality. She told Brat no more as to her condition, and the only idea which Brat had from their first interview on the subject was that it was absolutely necessary for him to gather in money enough somehow to support a wife.

He had little idea as to whether it would be easy or difficult for him to connect with a good position. The matter of his economic welfare had never bothered him much—he took as a matter of course, as something to be expected in due time, his own economic success in the world—but all that would come later, in due time, after college. Now he was faced with the urgent demand that he find a money-making connection without delay, and, quite in keeping with his character, he faced the demand without even a flicker of an eyelid.

Which was about as far as he went in that direction, for good jobs were scarce, especially for a man who was still in college and carrying a full-time program of

work. He searched in vain, tried employment bureaus and big corporations, called upon friends and friends of friends. He received curt refusals from those whom he did not know, pleasant negatives from those who knew his friends, and smiling regrets from his friends—they could not understand the sudden decision to join the ranks of labor and refused to take his demands with any great amount of seriousness.

The further he sought, the more worried he became and the more uncomfortable he felt, until finally he showed such obvious symptoms of mental unrest that Riley was moved to inquire, "What's the matter? Somebody trying to foreclose on the family jewels? Or on the old homestead?" To which he received a reply with no information whatsoever; Brat kept his troubles to himself, thereby insuring their speedy multiplication, for troubles feed upon themselves if kept to themselves.

#### WE SUBJECTS OF THE GODDESS FEAR! ONE WAY OF LEARNING

The following weeks were heavy ones for Brat, he being especially rushed for time on account of his having to meet his requirements in the mid-year examinations. Somehow—he could never have explained how—he managed to pass satisfactorily, with the minimum of credits, but by the time he had achieved this unexpected feat, he was so utterly worn out with his work and his worries that he could not have said whether or not he wanted to pass; he would have been almost content if he had flunked, thereby relieving himself of the necessity of further studying. His college work did not interest him in the least—he had other, urgent, more important matters to occupy his mind.

Chief of which was Virginia! As the weeks rolled on—like minutes they seemed—her state of mind went through a process of changes, the exact nature of which would defy description. Whereas at first she had been



ultra-wise and self-confident, she gradually became less so until at last she came to the point of actual mental and spiritual anguish. She was frantic when the last ray of hope vanished, not long after Brat's return from Ohio. She came to realize that the so-called silver lining, so common in the tragedies of fiction and drama, was a very illusory affair—very difficult to uncover when the clouds of trouble are actually upon and around one. She came to be self-conscious, irritable, fearsome, and altogether more retiring and afraid of people and daily affairs than she ever imagined she could be. She thought often of the possibilities of her case—what if she had to go on, through with it all? She could imagine what it would be like—a terrible ordeal, without a speck of romance or excitement in it! She could never do that! What could she do? She had heard of a variety of possible escapes—but she did not really know how to go about doing any of them! Worse still, she had no one to whom she could turn for advice or guidance in that direction. She could get money easily enough—but one couldn't just take a pocketful of money and run to the nearest hospital! Especially not alone! Brat? He was of no use whatsoever in that respect—she could depend upon him for almost anything, but she could not depend upon him to find one of those escapes for her. He would never be able to understand such a thing at all. Yet she must turn to some one! What could she do? What if her father should in some way discover her condition? Or her maid?

The thought was too terrible to contemplate. Yet she contemplated this and many other terrifying possibilities during those weeks, as she realized that the passing of every single day was just an additional nail in her casket of doom.

She saw Brat as often as possible. He was so big and strong, such a refuge, in whose company she always felt safe and secure. With him she could give vent to her emotions, knowing beforehand just what response, what

sympathetic reaction, to expect from him. She had frequent spells of despondency, absolute hopelessness, and it was after one of these spells that she went to dinner one evening with Brat and Riley. It was three weeks after Christmas, just wintry enough so that the ride downtown in an open car sufficed to refresh her, with the result that she managed to appear very much like her old self when she met the two roommates. Throughout the dinner she contributed her share to the conversation and afterwards divided several dances between her two escorts. Riley thought that she looked even prettier than ever, although she was very apparently not so jolly as of old.

“And by the way, Virginia,” he remarked, as the three were enjoying cigarettes, “I want to congratulate you upon the good influence you’re having on our estimable companion here! By George, you’re doing wonders—miracles!”

“Why?” asked the girl, not knowing to what he referred.

“I mean about working so hard and going to church and everything! Brat never impressed any one as being exceptionally regular in attending church—we all thought he was a pagan or an infidel!” Riley smiled sarcastically at his roommate, who scowled back at him, saying to himself that he hoped Virginia would turn the conversation into other channels.

But Virginia did not do as he hoped. Instead, she said, “Well, I think it does one a lot of good! I get a terrible lot out of a good church service—just the act of going and listening sort of strengthens one, I think.”

“I should say so,” agreed Riley. “There’s nothing like it for reassuring one! Even when you admit to yourself that it all doesn’t really mean anything, that it is founded on myth.”

“Myth?” asked Virginia, starting as if she had been offended. “Don’t you believe there is a God and a heaven and a Hell?”

“Well, there’s a God of some kind—there must have been an ultimate beginning of all existence, all life, the universe, the clouds, the sea—there was a beginning somewhere, sometime, and behind that beginning there must have been a Creator—a force or power of some kind. But what that Creator actually was or is, no one knows. We call him or it God, and we worship God in costly temples in a variety of formalities, customs, and systems of belief. The formalities and customs, the actual way in which we worship, is unimportant—the essential thing is that we worship; we recognize some force or power greater than humankind.”

Virginia did not know just how to take this. “That sounds sort of odd coming from a good Catholic like you, Tom,” she remarked.

“Of course I’m a good Catholic—I was raised on a Roman bottle!” laughed the Irishman. “But that does not prevent me from being intelligent—exercising mere common sense about my religion. I hold no man’s religion against him—the Buddhist, the Mohammedan, the Confucian, the Christian, Catholic or Protestant, and even the so-called pagan—all are entitled to as much human sympathy and regard and respect as I am; as long as they have some systems or system of belief by which they live, they are intelligent human beings, not necessarily inferior to you or me. It doesn’t make any difference what you believe as long as you believe something! That’s the point. And a man doesn’t need to be a fanatic either! This religion business is merely a convenience for human beings who have to live together, and in our case, the Christian doctrines were evolved out of the necessities of communal existence—people have to live together, therefore a certain amount of give and take will be inevitable; things which are injurious or harmful to other people must be forbidden the individual; and it all aims toward making it possible and easy for human beings to be happy in their existence on this earth. That’s all there is to our religion—just a formalized



system of laws: they are not necessarily divine laws—they are man-made laws, made to promote man's own welfare and happiness. And common sense says that it is for one's own best interest to obey these universal laws." Riley smiled indulgently at Virginia, who was taking in his every word intently.

After a moment she repeated, "But don't you think there is a Heaven and a Hell, Tom?"

"I doubt if there is any post-mortem Heaven or Hell," he answered without hesitation. "We have no good reason to think that there is! All this after-death stuff is merely a necessary supplement to the religion—I mean, the instinctive fear of the unknown helps one to remember the laws of his religion; it emphasizes their meaning and makes them more effective, so that people think of sinning as courting disaster of a kind which they cannot anticipate because they don't know what may happen to them after death. Actually, there is no such thing as sin! There's no divine law which says that two people should be married before they have children—a woman isn't committing a sin if she proceeds to have children without getting married, but she is committing a breach of man-made laws, social laws, and she has to suffer for that breach. There's where your Heaven and Hell come in. I believe that you get out of this life just about what you put into it—you'll make of it a paradise or you'll sooner or later make of it a hell! Any punishment that is coming to a person for committing one of the so-called sins, will come to them in this life. They suffer in one way or another sooner or later. There may be exceptions to that, but they are few and far between, and it wouldn't pay any individual to take it for granted that he or she is to be the exception, for ninety-nine times out of a hundred he or she will pay fully for whatever he or she does. There's your law of compensation that we were discussing that night—" He paused as he noted that Virginia dropped her eyes at mention of that party. "The law says, if you want something,

pay the price and take it! And you can buy joys, happiness, contentment, peace, just as easily as you can buy pain, suffering, sorrow, worry, trouble, unrest. Your Heaven or your Hell is right in your own life, and most people are so born into the world that they can take their choice." Riley laughed, feeling that he had said quite enough on this subject—which he had contemplated much more deeply than his sketchy explanation would indicate.

But Virginia was still curious, and demanded that her curiosity be satisfied. "Well, what good does it do to have gods if the laws are all man-made—a person might as well be an atheist!" she stated, as if trying to convince herself.

"Well, there's no such thing as an atheist! I don't care how much a man may cry against religion and theology and God and the Devil—he may sincerely and earnestly believe that there is no God of any kind; but when he gets into trouble, when he finds himself up against something that's bigger than he can handle, when he comes to the point of helplessness and hopelessness, he's going to pray—and he'll pray harder and more hopefully than the ordinary believer. He'll pray to God for help, for guidance, for anything or everything! And in doing so he admits that there is a God of some kind!"

"But," countered Virginia, engrossed in this subject, to the evident discomfort of Brat. "But, is that all God's for then—for the pinches?"

"No," laughed Riley. "That's just when we like him most! We should worship and be thankful to him in the times of prosperity and happiness, and pray to him in times of distress! Constant faith in him is a refuge such as one can find nowhere else. As proof of which, look at the cases of insanity—a man who cannot or does not seek that refuge in time of great trouble and distress will inevitably lose his balance, go insane. But you and I, so long as we use our heads and make ourselves

welcome in that refuge, can depend upon him for just what you say you get from church services—strength and reassurance! That's what religion's for."

Virginia was much impressed. It all made her feel much better, much relieved. Tom made it all seem so simple, so sensible. According to his explanation, she need not feel eternally damned—she would have to pay for what she had done, but whatever hell-fire she had to endure would be such a one as she could see and feel. There would be something tangible at least, but—"What if a sinner should die, at once?" she asked suddenly.

"Why, that's paying—the said sinner would be deprived of the joys and pleasures of what otherwise would have been the rest of his life here—he misses a lot! That's why people hate to die—they know they're going to miss a lot!"

Yes, that sounded reasonable enough. Tom was a clever man—he might even be forgiven for being so old-fashioned in some of his ideas, for he surely could think things out sensibly, and he could explain them so that they seemed so simple. Yes, Tom was very much of a jewel—but she hoped he hadn't noticed how interested she had been in his explanation.

Tom had not noticed—that is, he noticed that Virginia seemed to be much impressed by their talk, much more so than by their previous conversation on the subject of ethics and morals, but he never suspected for an instant the tremendous effect which his ideas had had upon her. Nor would he ever know how close he had come to tearing apart a little girl's heart at a time when she needed every particle of blood and tissue that composed that spiritual organ. Nor would he know or even suspect what the direct effect of his confession of faith was.

A week or so later Brat had occasion to recall that Riley had once declaimed, "The worst fears are never realized—the worst never happens!"

The occasion was the discovery, upon calling at the Jordan home, that Virginia was confined to her bed.



“Miss Virginia is very ill!” the maid informed him. Upon hearing this, unimaginative creature though he was, Brat’s fears knew no bounds. He immediately took it for granted that the worst had happened—whatever that “worst” might be!

While he waited for the maid to call him, the Jordan’s family doctor passed him, with a smile and a hearty “hello there!” which struck Brat as being too genial to be good. He wanted to ask the doctor several questions about several things, but, try as he did, he could not for the life of him think of the words for the questions, so he waited until, a few moments later, as he sat beside her bed, Virginia very matter-of-factly informed him that all their worries had been uncalled for. “There’s nothing whatever the matter with me! Doctor Garnet says I’ve just let myself become all run-down! I’ve just worried myself into chills and fever, I guess!”

The sum total of Brat’s reaction to this information was a stupid grin.

“So now be happy and forget about all that stuff!” declared Virginia, nervously, alternately patting and kissing the huge hand which Brat, still stupidly, extended to her.

To him it was all impossible—sounded too much like a French story which he had once read—Virginia’s sketchy explanation concerning irregularities and lapses and a lot of other facts of life did not mean a thing to him.

Later when he tried to think the whole affair out, he experienced neither surprise nor regret. In his view matters remained just as they had been before this good news: he had to marry Virginia, for very obvious reasons, and before he could do that he would have to make money enough to support her. This last then was his problem, and so he considered it, while Virginia, slowly recovering her strength, gradually took up again a few of her activities of former times, most of which, she frankly admitted to herself, had no virtue at all except in that they helped fill up her days when Brat was busy.

“DEPART TO SERVE BETTER YOUR FELLOW MEN!”

At first, immediately after the ordeal had passed, Virginia returned somewhat to her normal self, and she was again able to think of putting off marriage to the dim distant future. She loved Brat, deeply and genuinely—of this she was certain in her mind; but she did not want to marry him at once. Sometime—later—not right away; she felt that she should have a chance to be free again before going into something which should bind her the rest of her days. Before her trouble, this would have sounded foolish to her—she thought of marriage merely as a convenience, a cloak which could be put on and taken off at will—people got married this year and divorced next, so that there was no “life-long” anticipation connected with the thought of marrying. Now, however, she wanted to postpone the act for the reason that it did seem to be a lifelong matter—once done, there would be no return to freedom.

As she regained her health and grew back into her old self again, she intimated her ideas to Brat. She was perfectly frank with him about it—and Brat was perfectly frank in reply. “It’s up to you, Virginia,” he said. “I’ll be carrying on and probably by the time you’re ready, I’ll be fixed so that we can have everything you want. Go ahead and have a good time now, because once you tie down, it’ll be for good!” Brat had definite ideas about this matter at least. So Virginia went ahead and had a good time, to the best of her ability.

But little the worse for the strain of study, he celebrated Class Day in proper style with his mother and Lois and Virginia watching from the heights of the Stadium. He relied for the entertainment of the three women upon his roommate, and that gentleman was very much relieved when Mrs. Bratten and Lois informed him of the necessity for their returning to Dartonville without too much tarrying. Mrs. Bratten had an engagement to address a very influential group of women on

the following Saturday afternoon, and Lois had an important part in an Elks' show, opening on the following Monday. In consequence Riley was much relieved by their going. Mrs. Bratten was so unreasonably bent upon reforming the whole of creation that the Irishman could scarcely carry on a conversation with her; and Lois—well, Riley's tender sensibilities revolted, even if she were his roommate's sister. He did his best for them, however, and to him Brat was much indebted, for it enabled him to be unencumbered in a fashion much better than he had had any reason to expect. He evinced joy at seeing his family again, and regret at their leaving, and then immediately forgot all about them, for he still had other and more binding ties. He attended the Commencement exercises, listened to an ardent youth address the assemblage in Latin (the only point of interest which he recalled was the fact that the Latin speaker addressed the Mayor of Boston's principal suburb and the latter did not know that the boy was speaking to him until a neighbor nudged him, quite noticeably, in the ribs)—witnessed the presentation of earned and honorary degrees and declared, after it was all over, that he "felt as if he had been commenced!" He took his degree to a photo-art shop to be framed, got it the following day and thereafter let it grace the bottom of his steamer trunk—traditionally that is what diplomas are for!

Within three weeks of his graduation, he was steered into a lowly position in the main offices of a shipping concern, the steering process being the work of Virginia's father, whose liking for Brat had not been reduced by further acquaintance with him. The lowly position was one of the kind which inevitably leads to a highly lucrative post, and Brat was entirely willing to serve his apprenticeship with such prospects before him. He took a small apartment with Riley, just out of Harvard Square, and they continued their relations just as they had during the four years of undergraduate life.

Riley was carrying on according to custom in the



Square, albeit without so much of the wild and raucous party habit as had characterized his Sophomore and Junior years. He was quieting down considerably, and gradually came to the point where the excitements of other days held no appeal for him. He studied regularly enough and sufficiently to ensure his degree, and with his spare time he delved into many things which before could not have interested him.

He was still wondering what everything was about, but as usual he had to go through the routine of living from day to day regardless of whether he could give himself good reasons for what he and others did. He did considerable moralizing at all times—his old faith in the law of compensation was proved to him time and again, and these proofs when they came served to strengthen and balance his own character. For example, when the news came to him that Somerford had been apprehended as a thief, stealing from his friends and acquaintances in various parts of the University, he was not surprised. "It's a damned shame," he told Brat. "That kid is perfectly all right at heart, but he got into the wrong groove! One thing led to another, he needed money to carry on in the style to which his friends appeared to be accustomed, he appropriated somebody's watch and pawned it, and of course after one misdeed like that the others came as natural matters of course. He wanted money, just to be able to splurge as the story book and movie heroes splurge, so he took a chance and got it. Now he has to pay for it!"

Upon another occasion, a man whom Riley and Brat knew but slightly was expelled from the College as a result of a complaint from a woman who very shamelessly told the Dean that this man had been for three years her common law husband and had deserted her. The man's character was immediately blasted. "Just another case," said Riley. "That man was being kept by her—she paid his bills, gave him money to spend, let him have many things which otherwise would have

been unobtainable by him. She made it possible for him to travel in the social whirl here as a gold coaster! But he had the wrong idea—he thought he could get something for nothing, and it can't be done in this bloomin' world. So, now, it serves him right—he has to pay."

As the weeks rolled by and Brat became more and more tied up with his work, Riley fell into the habit of taking charge of Virginia for his roommate. He would take her to dinner, go for long rides into the country with her, substitute in engagements for Brat, and in various other ways try to keep Virginia from becoming fed up and bored with herself on account of Brat's having to work so much. Consequently they became better friends than most fellows could be with their best friend's girl. He talked to her about everything—poured into her ears the philosophy of life which he would have poured into Brat had that gentleman not been out of reach most of the time. And Virginia, at first somewhat annoyed by his talking, gradually came to be very much interested in his ideas, his explanations of things. Somehow, by accident, many of the topics which he discussed so frankly with her were the very things which were closest and most painful to her—all of which had inevitable results.

For a long time, Virginia continued in her conviction that she did not want to marry for some time to come, but shortly after Brat's graduation she began to change her mind. Little incidents of life which before her trouble had been cause for joking on her part had come to have a significance which prevented her taking them jokingly. The newspapers, full of reports of how unfortunate girls had had to pay for indiscretions, were a daily souvenir of sorrows for her. It seemed that every book or story which she tried to read turned upon the consequences of misdirected or misused love. Every day's events had some kind of knife for her, and to top these irritations, Tom would come along with his philosophizing! Sometimes when he talked she could hardly refrain from crying aloud her feelings! He was like

an avenging angel—but still she liked him and desired his company to that of all men except her Brat.

Poor Tom! He had no idea how his chronic observing of life's little problems was affecting her, so he went serenely on his way. One night in late July, he took her to a movie in town—Virginia seldom went to movies, and upon entering the palace of the silent drama she felt that she would have many a laugh at the "romance" invariably portrayed in the movies. And indeed she did, until the main picture of the program flashed before her; it was the story of a young girl and a man, and their relations resulted as usual in movies. Virginia enjoyed it all for a while, laughing at her companion's caustic criticisms of the play and his humorous comments and parodies on the titles and sub-titles flashed on the screen. She enjoyed the fun of it, of laughing at someone else in trouble, until almost at the very end the course of action in the play was indicated by a title containing these two lines from Kipling:

"The Sins ye do two by two  
Ye pay for one by one!"

And though she laughed even at this, the lines were indelibly imprinted on her mind, and, try as she would, she could not forget or ignore them and their meaning for her. She had been paying like that, alone! One by one! One by one! The last line haunted her, jumped before her eyes and sung itself into her every thought and feeling! One by one! One by one! She'd pay no more that way—she would marry Brat at once and then they could pay two by two, together—anything but this being alone in it!

Poor Tom! He had no idea of what was going on in his little companion's mind, and without ever giving her a thought he began to elucidate upon the thought suggested in those lines; he quoted poetry by yards and rods, argued from philosopher to philosopher, and ended in



his usual vein, trying to align this thought of Kipling's with his Emersonian dictum.

Virginia drove Tom back to Cambridge and left him there, ostensibly to go home, but instead of going to Brookline she turned in the other direction and proceeded as fast as she could to Brat's office in town.

"Brat dear," she exclaimed, when she had succeeded in getting him to herself in the car, "I want to get married! Right away!"

Brat just looked at her, saying finally, "What's the matter now?"

"Nothing—except that I can't stand it to be alone any longer. I want to be with you! I can't be happy this way; I haven't had a good night's sleep for a month!"

Brat laughed at that, Virginia said the funniest things, without sense half the time. "Well—I don't know—" he began.

"Brat Bratten!" she interrupted. "You don't know? You'd just better know! We're going to get married just as quickly as it can be done!"

But Brat demurred. There were difficulties at the moment. His earnings and income were as yet much too small to warrant any such a step at this time.

"We'd best wait a while."

"We will not!" retorted Virginia. "We're going to get married now or not at all!"

But they waited, in spite of the effect of this delay upon Virginia's nerves.

But God created the Blunderbrat to be an economic success in the world and it seemed most logical and natural for his employers to recognize his worth and grant him rapid advancement. Virginia hailed the announcement of his promotion as the signal for the end of her tortures. "I've been through hell, Brat dear!" she declared in earnestness, when she heard the explanation. "But now it can be ended—and I'm so happy, happy! oh, Brat dearest!" She reckoned her ordeal as finished—she had paid mentally for her foolishness, and

now she could forget it all and be happy in the security of her wonderful big husband's safekeeping.

Brat and Virginia were married just before Christmas, two years after their first meeting, and Riley, the Catholic, served as best man in a Presbyterian wedding, after which he drowned his sorrow as it had never been drowned before.

Brock was also present, but he refused to join Riley in the drinking; since coming back to college the preceding Mid-Year he had resolutely abstained from any dissipation which might impede his academic and physical progress. The night of Brat's wedding he went home and tried to satisfy his desires by writing a long letter to Ellen, who, having finished her course at the Boston school, was now at home in Dartonville again.

Brock took his degree the following February, and immediately entered the Government service at Washington, with every prospect of rapid advancement. He was enjoying life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, all of which enjoyment centered about a certain little town in Ohio, a place which he had seen but once in his life, and then during just a week-end from Washington. Yet on that occasion he had exclaimed to Ellen, "Oh, by damn, Ellen! You're too damned good to be true! I was never so happy in all my bloody life!"

And Ellen had loved him the more for the way he expressed it; why she didn't even blush when Scotty later made an irrelevant little remark about his wanting "to have a son in Harvard 1947."

In fact, she even so brazenly suggested that he hurry and make money, "for  $22$  from  $47 = 25$ , so there's not much time to spare!"

She suspected that Scotty would not waste any time.



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*An education gives one the implements necessary in economic life, to use as one sees fit—but it fails to cultivate any ideas of fitness, and worthy ideals are not the result of spontaneous generation!*

*Said Riley: "Intelligence means serviceable living in our society . . . there are certain enduring laws. . . . Which is why the single standard of morals is a dream and nothing more! You can talk all you want but the undeniable fact remains that if a girl goes beyond the limit and gets caught, she's cooked! . . . Theoretically a girl can do whatever she wants to do, but actually she can't, without paying for it, because she is born into a condition of life which qualifies her to sit on a pedestal and receive the plaudits and adoration of us poor men—if she wants to do the things which are implied under the single standard, she immediately comes down from that pedestal whereon she was born to sit—which is often done, usually for some inconsequential principle or some more consequential but temporary pleasure."*

*"Not every virgin is virtuous! Physiological virtue is too generally confused nowadays with the real Virtue which means worthiness of character."*

*Now ask, "What price, this Learning?"  
Or, "Which avenue to Athena?"*







## CHAPTER VI

### CHANGING TIMES?

RILEY was the star visitor at the Bratten household. He was Brat's best friend—he was, in truth, the best kind of friend that a man could have. To say that he was a frequent visitor there would be a mild description—he spent most of his spare hours with the Brattens, for Virginia found in him the supplement of her husband, a friend who could extend to her the intellectual consolations which Brat himself would never have thought of.

And Riley, despite his cleverness, never suspected that he had played any central part in their drama. Indeed, wise as he was, he never realized until years later that there had been, or could have been, any real drama in the life which he and his college friends had led.

Riley was not much of a success in the world—he did not value money as worth his efforts. He knew that the worst possibilities never come true, never happen; he felt that the tragedy of life lies in living on after the climax or crisis; and he knew that he would live and be as happy without rushing through life chasing dollars as he would be with millions. He had no illusions about life—he knew that he would be better if he had some illusions. But when he thought of this, he laughed at himself—he still had a sense of humor!

He met the Beau on Tremont Street one cold winter day, and asked, "What's up now, Beau?"

To which his old roommate, smiling despite much misfortune, said, "Well—there's not much *to* do—I'm still hoping to get into medical school some day, but I can't get into a college to get my credits! I don't know what I'll do next."

"That's a shame, Beau." Riley was genuinely sympa-

thetic. "I suppose you have no use for Harvard after all the trouble they've caused you?"

"For 'em?" replied his companion, with a half-hearted laugh. "If I ever have a son, he'll go there and get through and make a reputation for himself, or I'll disown him!" The Beau squared his jaw determinedly as he finished.

"Once a Harvard man, always a Harvard man!" laughed Riley.

Afterwards, many months afterwards, Riley recalled this incident. McCarthy's younger brother was entering Harvard that fall and Riley gladly advised him. "Get the right idea, Bobby—don't start in thinking that the system is all wrong! It isn't at all; it's a tough system, but the man who can play it and win out with something to the good at graduation is a damned good man! Just use your head, play the game, forget your pride now and then, and realize that you're just one little insignificant speck in a big university—play the game as they want to play it—you can't fail to make good, and you'll be a damned good man!"

Four years it required for Riley to come to that precise conclusion, and he knew that his advice was lost on this boy, for he would have to learn for himself, just as he had done, that "dust and ashes aren't fit to make a treasure!" But Tom Riley was a born adviser!

\* \* \* \* \*

On a Monday in late September, six years after the war, Harvard Square presented a scene of hustle and bustle. Standing in the doorway of the Greek's Fruit and Flower Shop, two instructors were watching the passing show.

"You know," remarked the first instructor, waving his hand to indicate the scene before him. "They're getting so they all look alike to me—every Freshman class is the same Freshman class, just different faces!"

"Just the same!" replied the second instructor. "I'm



getting used to it, though. I know exactly what to expect—the same old classes, the same old routine, the same old excuses for work not done, the same old effort to influence the same men toward the same illusions—everything just the same, year after year, class after class!”

“The same crowd—just different faces!” mumbled the first instructor, as they continued to watch the passing show.

“And so it is with all of us in these changing times—we’re the same old crowd of human beings as worried and fretted and laughed and sang a hundred and a thousand years ago—with different faces, that’s all!” Thus spake Tom Riley to himself as he strolled past the two cynical instructors whose comments he had overheard.



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*The high gods must chuckle at even the wisest of men, for even the wisest have a plethora of wearying troubles whose disproportionate magnification is comically apparent to the Olympians.*

*Said Riley: "The price of Learning is purely relative. There is an adequately human education in the art of love, yet this hub of our life, this creed by which men live, is entirely ignored in our institutions dedicated to Learning."*









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