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Full Issue

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The Angle is an annual publication of St. John Fisher College, Rochester, N. Y.
It employs the talents of students, alumni and faculty of the college and is open to any use or words or illustrations which reveal a mind at work, particularly in an imaginative capacity.

Your thoughts have more power than kings to compel you.
You have also thought, sometimes at your prayers,
Sometimes hesitating at the angles of stairs.

T. S. Eliot
MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL

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In youth
I will be lost;
Strike out the gaining years
That mark the tender brow
With lines of toil and fears!
This pledge I do avow:
I will not give them leave,
That vibrant youth decay
And make so soon a yester-eve
Of youth's too blissful day.
Too great
I count the cost
That's burning, carefree youth
To barter for a dimming mind,
To give if one must grasp the Truth,
A bargain poor designed.

But hold!
Shall I but think
Whose Hand it is that dulls
The blade that is young thought . . .
Who toil and care annuls
And decrees with these be bought
A gem of greater worth,
A mind content, more earned
Than childhood's borrowed mirth;
A purpose clearer too discerned?
Too small
A price to pay
For Wisdom, to learned elders rife,
Is Youth; for power to apprehend
Be careful, honest, humble strife
Youth that knows no end!

FINIS CORONAT OPUS
CLARENCE A. AMANN

FLIP
JAMES BOND

"To dig" is to be in control of a situation because you have "swung" where the Square has not, or because you have allowed to come into consciousness a pain, a guilt, a shame or desire which the other has not had the courage to face. The antithesis of "to dig" is "to be beat", "to flip". This is the terror of the hipster because once he is flip, he still cannot give up the search. It is not granted to the hipster to grow old gracefully—he has been captured too early by the oldest dream of power.

NORMAN MAILER
THE WHITE NEGRO

The innocent, naive, child-like enthusiastic love play sounds of Charlie Hoxie's horn which, in the underplay of saying little, said so much, mingled with the four-to-a-bar, tiny piano sounds emanating from the catsup-red and egg stain-yellow frontage of a brick building, billeted, in purple letters, with the notice "Jesus Saves". The two sounds fled from opposite sides of Lenox Avenue and, in their mad anxiety to proclaim to the world their respective messages, met and destroyed each other, their energies dropping in a death heap on the scattered base markers, painted on the street for the Sunday game of stickball.

Guided by the overhead glistening street light, in carefully placed steps, a frog had ascended a good distance up the slime-covered, slanting wall of one of Manhattan's garbage-strewn, condom-filled sewers.

Off of Lenox, on one of those fastidiously numerated side streets, the one tottering monument to Utopia the social planners can point to in the social chaos that is Harlem, his face and figure illuminated by a street light whose jagged outer shell reflected the vented frustrations of countless young intellects to whom ping-pong and Settlement basketball were just that—inferior outlets created by "that flit with the thick glasses from Columbia", a youth appeared.
He was tall and thin, with a face as colorless and expressionless as a death mask. Indeed, it was hardly a face at all—more like a chalk-white plaster mold with slits for eyes and mouth. It resembled the way in which the “human void” might perhaps be represented by an expressionist or, perhaps, the way in which the same expressionist might paint one of Eliot’s “Hollow Men”. This, plus the other unmistakable sign—the little red, festering sores dominating his bare arm—confirmed a fact which would be obvious to even the most neophyte Bellevue orderly—he was a drug addict, a “junkie”, an inmate of a self-imposed purgatory where the only goal is the next fix. And from the same blank expression it was apparent that this latter need had lately been sated.

The youth stopped in front of a vacated building whose whole and only reason for existence seemed to be to display a large, stark-white “for rent” sign on the front window. He tried to think. He did not try to order and organize his thought, to reason, as the square would have it. This was no longer within his power; he had sacrificed it long ago on the burning altar of his own dynamic being, along with the rest of the “hollow, meaningless rope of dung” which the square had been fashioning from the “faecal matter of repressed desire from the past” and by which rope he was now thoroughly hung up. He seemed lost in oblivion, unconscious of not only his immediate environs but of the very universe of which he sometimes heard he was a part. He wanted to run. But to where? Besides, he had neither the strength nor the ambition. He thought that he would “pad” it in the vacated building, but when the door would not yield to his weak attempt to force it, he merely sat, his body propped up against the door and his legs tucked under him like a Buddha or an Indian Yoga mystic.

Gaining a temporary foothold in the slime, his abnormally large underside straining in rhythmic pants, the frog paused.

On Lenox, the strange syncopation occasioned by the two opposing harmonics was suddenly broken by the unmistakable sound of a police siren. The sound from the store-front ceased and several of its occupants rushed to the street to see the black car of the police department speed by. Hoxie and his votaries, perhaps through callousness, more likely because they were deaf to anything but the “searching, timeless, spacelessness of old daddy’s horn”, were unconcerned.

The police car turned down 146th Street and pulled to the curb, its dying siren only a hollow echo of the screech which moments before had warned of the approach of a wild predator, screaming and searching out its prey in the black night. Seeing the approach of the “fuzz” the youth broke into a wild, disjointed run. After proceeding not more than half-a-dozen yards, however, he suddenly stopped and fell in a heap in a doorway.

The frog began to slip; first slowly and haltingly then smoothly, his firm underside leaving an obvious trail in the slime.

“Here he is, Keckner.”

“Get the hell up you stinkin’ son of a bitch. You know ya killed that guy. Tore him up like a paper doll. Shreds. Its lucky there’s enough left for the coroner.”

“He’s high, Keckner, he’s soaring.”

“They’re all the same, the bastards.”

They walked him to the car and the youth’s face for the first time showed something. Color had returned momentarily but only served to foil a rather twisted aspect which was enveloping his features. A conclusive twitch had begun along the entire left side of his face. His fingers, embedded in the flesh above his cheek bone, slowly began to tear down the front of his face, leaving four streams of blood behind them.

“I can’t come on, man . . . I don’t dig, I can’t make it, can’t make it, can’t make . . .

The street light vanished as he slipped under the ooz. Several seconds passed. He dragged himself to the wall of the sewer. This time the light seemed infinitely farther away.
THE MALADY OF GENIUS
RICHARD B. OSTERMAN

Nervalian art survived his madness
For here the juice of genius flows,
Sylvie had echoed frantic gladness . . .
Poetic, plastic, vertigo.

Parisian moonlight snatches gleams of
His frosted tears and pallid face,
A madman's pockets cache the dreams of
Celestial Order, Mystic Grace.

Numb knuckles threaten doss-house doors
With desperate pleas for warmth and rest,
Scratch panes do but elicit sores
That syphiloid mind could but infest.

The man-wrought bars that spared the pane
Do now befriend an apron string
That clasps the throat that rasped in vain
And sought relief from wintry sting.

An empty wood was not disturbed
By silent acorn when it fell,
Le Bon Gerard, a voice unheard,
Has ended his Descent to Hell

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AND THE ANNIHILATION
OF THE INDIVIDUAL; CASE IN POINT—
PASTERNAK'S PASHA ANTIPOV
FRANKLIN L. KAMP

Throughout the works of literature,
there constantly appear certain characters
who, although merely products of
an author's imaginative pen, make
such a profound impression at first
meeting that they live on further within
the mind of the reader. They are
those who are deliberately molded in
such a way as to emphasize either
main, or lesser, themes of a work solely
by their own motivations and actions,
as if divorced from all other activity.
In this way, the theme itself, personified
in the character, becomes an
unforgettable *rondo*, playing itself again
and again in our memory.

One such figure is Pavel Pavlovich
Antipov, alias Commissar Strelnikov,
in *Doctor Zhivago*. Here was a man who,
although born of poverty in the tumultuous environment that was later to explode into the Russian revolution, appeared eminently successful in his life. Employed as a teacher in a provincial university, Antipov's future, with his loving and devoted wife and child, looked to be hopefully bright. Yet he was not happy; indeed he was restless and unsettled, even uncomfortable.

Leaving his family and position, Antipov joined the Russian army, was eventually taken prisoner and disappeared from sight.

Years later, when he returns, all traces of the shy, mischievous youth or the aspiring scholar or the successful husband have vanished. It is 1917 and Pasha Antipov is no more. Out of his grave steps Strelnikov, the hated ruthless leader of the Revolutionary army. Reputedly known as, "The Wild Beast" or "The Executioner," Strelnikov paves his way with bloodshed and suffering until finally, when the Party decrees that his usefulness is at an end, he is pursued into the Urals where, in front of a desolate cabin, he dies with a bullet in his head, by his own hand.

Why?

Pasternak, through the voice of
Strelnikov or Antipov, gives reasons
for this change in a man's life, but they are important only insofar as they contribute to a clearer comprehension of the central theme—the madness of the Revolution as it affected the individual. For not only was the old order overthrown, not only were existing social institutions scattered to the winds,
but truly every walk of life was obliterated, the world was thrown upside down, and man as man was lost in its confusion, as Pasha Antipov was. The new regime was welcomed and acclaimed but when it too was found failing, there could be no turning back, no further upheaval. Fear and violence engendered a giant that had destroyed society and was now beginning to feed upon the individual — upon his conscience, upon his soul.

JAMES BOND:

INTERMEZZO

Majestic movements, tumultuous tomes, counterpoint
Of solid ideas have now the air their ponderous,
Oaken, creaking, hinge-sounds quit;
For this is the voice of reality —
The ordered creaking of the cosmos —
The crescendo and diminuendo of the market place of all.
Of the iron-forger, of the human personality strangled by its ties
Selling its soul to buy another length
And of the mind, the latter where the soul-bought sweet soaks the scalp
And not the buttontdown.

Ascending to the gap
The silver tongued flute
Now bends the air
And punctuates the tunnelled vowels
Of the English horn.
Together, in a coursing diminuendo
They create in a spiral, downward
Down,
Down,
Down,
Down,
Down into the river of Tuonela,
Sheathed in nothing but a vision,
An idea,
But more a liquid,
And are alone.

THE EARTHLY INFERNO OF GRAHAM GREENE

J. W. MILLER

Faust: Where are you damned?
Mephistopheles: In hell.
Faust: How comes it then that thou art out of hell?
Mephistopheles: Why this is hell, nor am I out of it.

MARLOWE
DR. FAUSTUS

It has been said that the history of man could be written as a history of the alienation of man. What cloudy, disturbing vision lies at the back of our minds that tells of a better world, a primeval paradise from which we have all been separated? Graham Greene realizes, perhaps more intensely than any other contemporary novelist, that man, made for a more perfect world, is born with a constitutional dissatisfaction for this one. The characters in his novels are always isolated, bewildered by the immense complexity of a civilization for which they have little sympathy, and which they can scarcely comprehend. Pinkie, the boy gangster in Brighton Rock, is "shaken with a sense of loneliness, an awful lack of understanding," and this comment could be made of each individual who shuffles through the author's pages.

It is our common experience that men cannot refrain from rearranging their surroundings, hoping to bring heaven to earth. They thrust blocks of steel and concrete into the skies and carve large craters into the earth with super-atomic weapons. Each newly-weaned individual soon evidences a driving urge to place a mark of his personality upon the world, to organize either mentally or physically the vast disorganization that he sees about him. Some try to eliminate undesirable artifacts, like slums or criminals or capitalists. Others project a mental order upon the external world, and are satisfied. Few persons are content to accept with approval and unconcern their contemporary environment.

For centuries men have labored under the delusion that an earthly Utopia can be brought about. When Swinburne exclaimed, at the end of the nineteenth century, "Glory to man in the highest, for man is the master of things," he was articulating a belief that has possessed men like a devil incarnate ever since the Renaissance. There was the doctrine that man was naturally good, that if he
could be educated to separate good from evil, he would reason and act properly. Adam by one act attained this ideal: he became educated, he invaded the temple of truth, he came to a knowledge of good and evil—and he lost the sight of God.

A Faust is continually with us, in one form or another, selling his soul to the devil that he might comprehend the nature and meaning of existence. Centuries ago, knowledge itself was sufficient: to understand why the rains fell, what the moon and stars were, whether a face can stop a clock, a bullet a heart. But now we know, with a savageness that drives us to despair, that knowledge is not enough. It does not tell us how to live, why the performance of one action is preferable to another, or why it is better than doing nothing at all. Objects exist and events take place, but what do they all mean? In our private lives an absence of conviction about what is the good life frustrates our reason, takes the zest out of living, and creates a general boredom.

Faust demanded knowledge, but Mephistopheles cautioned him that happiness was not its handmaid. Heaven is the only real Utopia, the vision of God the only real fulfillment of man’s yearning. There can be no Valhalla on earth: “All places are hell that are not heaven,” Mephistopheles warned.

Raven, the betrayed and pursued hero of A Gun For Sale, thinks that “The only problem when you were once born was to get out of life more neatly and expeditiously than you had entered it.” He has no faith in this life, nor in afterlife. He has sought a share of earth’s temporary pleasures, but bad luck has marked him from the start. He was born physically deformed; he has a harelip, and people turn from him in disgust. As a youth he witnessed the self-slaughter of his mother, and he carries this familial image with him throughout life. He looks for no happiness in any personal or social relationship. As Greene comments,

He wasn’t used to any taste that wasn’t bitter on the tongue. He had been made by hatred; it had constructed him into this thin, smoky, murderous figure in the rain, hunted and ugly.

“Hunted and ugly.” Such is the very soul of man on earth. Raven is at odds with society, but this is not important: being made for God, we are all at odds with Him, for each of us owes Him a death and until then—“... the foxes have their holes, but the son of man...” observes Greene as the bullets of Raven’s enemies finally reach him.

But what of those who are at ease in this earthly life? Mr. Savoy, a writer and one of the travellers on the Stamboul Train, sees his mission “to bring back cheerfulness and 'health to modern fiction. There’s been too much of this introspection, too much gloom. After all, the world is a fine adventurous place.” Because of his own writing, he claims, the public is being brought up on healthy traditions. But Miss Warren, a journalist recording this statement for the Sunday supplements, can only remark:

I’ll put that in about healthy traditions... the public will like it, James Douglas will like it, and they will like it still better when he’s a Hyde Park case, for that’s what he’ll be in a few years.

Arthur Rowe, watching a hotel clerk in The Ministry of Fear, listens as he gives his commands: “Show this man to number 6, Mr. Travers. Mr. Travers has given orders that he’s to be allowed in.” Rowe reflects that the man had very few phrases and never varied them. Rowe wondered on how few he could get through life, marry and have children...

Mr. Wormold, in Our Man in Havana, has a fairly pleasant occupation selling vacuum cleaners, and a daughter in whom he is proud and happy. But, He was aware, whenever he entered the shop, of a vacuum that had nothing to do with his cleaners. No customer could fill it...

Pinkie, the teen-age hero of Brighton Rock, thinks of social existence in terms of the Saturday night routine his parents engaged in a few feet from his own miserable bed. Rose, the girl he marries in order that she might not betray him to the police, lives with parents who seldom speak while in their ‘moods’, and who balk at allowing her to marry—until money is offered in compensation.

Throughout all of Greene’s work is the theme reiterated, pounded rhythmically into the reader’s brain like the incessant strains of either music in his movie The Third Man, that man is not made for happiness on earth. Holly Martins, the protagonist of this film, wanders about Vienna in a veritable mental fog; events happen to him and he sets them off by his very presence, but at no time can he either understand or orientate himself to them.

Bertram, in Laser Lake, reflects upon his employer in a statement that has more meaning than is obvious at first glance:

He makes the world visible then he goes and rests on the seventh day and his creation can go to pot that day for all he cares.

Human existence often seems like an eternal seventh day. In the entertainments: a vast parade of alienated souls wanders through a lonely world. The many characters reflect the modern temper: they are restless and adrift in a discordant environment. They cannot understand what they perceive, they feel isolated, and their reason is impotent against the deluge of knowledge it has itself released. In vain they try to comprehend all, to embrace multiplicity, but it is useless. Yet they must act, because their very natures demand some positive expression. This often results in crime and brutality. Greene himself has noted, in Journey Without Maps, that

Today our world is peculiarly susceptible to brutality. There is a touch of nostalgia we take in gangster novels, in characters who have so agreeably
simplified their emotions that they have begun living again at a level below the cerebral... It is not, of course, that one wishes to stay at that level, but when one sees to what peril of extinction centuries of cerebration have brought us, one sometimes has a curiosity to discover, if one can, from what we have come, to recall at which point we went astray.

Man, when he acts, must choose either good or evil; his glory lies in his power to choose, and in the possibility, as T.S. Eliot as noted, of his choosing either salvation or damnation. All of Greene’s characters, even those who most thoroughly enwrap themselves in a net of evil, are aware of a possible existence beyond the material. Bertram in Lesser Takes All comments:

I suppose in all lives a moment comes when we wonder—suppose after all there is a God, suppose the theologians are right.

The murderer Pinkie, wandering the streets of London, is suddenly startled by an unsuspected presence:

He heard a whisper, looked sharply round... In an alley between two shops, an old woman sat upon the ground; he could just see the rotting and discoloured face: it was like the sight of damnation. Then he heard the whisper: “Blessed art thou among women,” and saw the gray fingers fumbling at the beads. This was not one of the damned; he watched with horrified fascination: this was one of the saved.

Ill at ease in this world, man is born to carry with him the burden of the next. St. Augustine’s refrain, “I am restless, my God, until I rest in Thee,” is a perennial one. Man is forever conscious of the aridity and transitivity of his daily life. Within him he knows, instinctively, that there is an ever-recurring choice. But men are weak; many check out of life without any convictions about it, and for some it is only “between the saddle and the ground” that “something is sought, and something found.”

The vision of God is one of love, and this love is reflected on earth as the only tie between humans, and between them and God. Love, trust and sympathy are the only forces that can bring peace to men on earth. Arthur Rowe says in The Ministry of Fear that “It is impossible to go through life without trust; that is to be imprisoned in the worst cell of all, oneself.” Raven, having experienced the first intimations of love from his contact with Anne, balks for a second at slaying her fiancée, and in that moment is himself killed. Scobie, in The Heart of the Matter, because of his love for both his wife and mistress, cannot bear to hurt either. If love is the only bond between humans and he sees it—At the creeping paralysis of the fatal drugs he has taken reaches his brain, his last words express the frustration of ambiguous love: “Dear God, I love...”

Wormold, in Our Man in Havana, aims his gun at a spy and murderer. But he hesitates to shoot, for as the man pleads for his life, Wormold realizes the common humanity they share:

I have to do it, Wormold thought, before he confesses any more to me. With every second the man was becoming human: a creature like oneself whom one might pity or console, not kill.

The old priest in Brighton Rock, whistling and sneezing in the dark confession, tells Rose of a strange Frenchman:

a good man, a holy man, and he lived in sin all through his life, because he couldn’t bear the idea that any soul could suffer damnation... This man decided that if any soul was going to be damned, he would be damned too. He never took the sacraments, he never married his wife in church. I don’t know, my child, but some people think he was—well, a saint... It was a case of greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his soul for his friend.

Are the characters in Greene’s world mirror-bearers for the author? Possibly. But the fact that in literature there have been so many Infernos and so few Paradises must signify something. Those who are conscious of the shallowness of existence invariably take it upon themselves, consciously or unconsciously, to heighten here on earth the charge and tension of the spiritual. Material life quickly tires us out, and the evil lies in remaining tired. It is only a brief step from being beat to being conquered. There is more to life than the material; earth may be hell because it is not heaven, but into this hell was placed, for a short duration, man—with the ability to love and the necessity to choose. And he was not queried for consent when he was made in the image of God.

CLARENCE A. AMANN

The judge was I—
’Twas given me
To set Him free
Or see Him die.

They took him high
Upon a hill—
As was their will—
And saw Him die.

Loud rang the cry
This thief of fame,
Of Kingly claim
To crucify.

The judge was I—
’Twas given me
To set Him free
Or see Him die.

His brow was calm;
A flash of pride
All light did hide—
I washed my palm.

Might one day He Before me stand
To wash His hand, The judge of me?

Pilate’s Reflection

https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/angle/vol1959/iss1/14
CHESTERTON: THE YOUTHFUL JOY

FRANK SALAMONE

In a wry moment Wordsworth remarked that "the child is father to the man." The insight which he meant to convey was that by some undesired mental growth we have the nasty habit of losing our youthful joy, acceptance and wonder. The process of maturation jades our vision; the awful sense of loneliness, of isolation from our environment, enters and warps all. Chesterton rose like an anachronistic experience to] the modern author who writes of his despair and seems to have forgotten the lost childhood, he has already swept from consideration half of experience. Chesterton retains this vision of youth even in his twilight. In his novels, notably *The Man Who Was Thursday* and *The Napoleon of Notting Hill*, together with the delightful *Fr. Brown* stories, the reader often has to pause and rub his mental eyes, glancing self-consciously about to reaffirm his previous conception of things. He knows that the fictional world of Chesterton is just that, yet he wonders. The implausible events of the author's books are made to seem real to those who have but a portion of Chesterton's unique vision. For something of our own childhood remains always with us, waiting to be recalled.

Cheserton combined the youth's love of argumentation with the child's faculty of remaining friendly with those who would change his opinion. He who does not recall the image of seeing children squabbling over candy one second and sharing it the next?

Cheserton himself in his autobiography describes childhood as the real world of Chesterton is just that, yet he

We have been taught to question joy; melancholy is the norm. If we are prepared for suffering and unhappiness, the shock when it comes will be small. It is joy that fades; sorrow, like the poor, we have always with us.

Cheserton rose like an anachronistic Chaucer to point out with a mocking smile that it is only the idealist who expects to discover happiness; that where there is no joy we should bring joy, and we will find joy. To carry sorrow on our backs is to predetermine our vision: it is hard to view a sunny sky with such a load. And in any event, we will at least see the bombs before they land.

The difference between Chesterton and other writers might be said to be one of intellectual maturity. And part of this maturity consists in the fact that he always retained the wonder of the child. Many writers, friend and foe alike, point this out as one of the most loveable and fascinating aspects of the man.

Cheserton himself in his autobiography describes childhood as the real life, the real beginning of consciousness, to deny which would be to deny a part of oneself. To the adult it often seems like a lost experience in the land of the living, an unreal prelude to maturity. But it is only the child, Chesterton notes, that knows the value of both the real and the ideal world, and who can mingle contentedly the aspects of both.

When a modern author writes of his despair and seems to have forgotten the lost childhood, he has already swept from consideration half of experience. Chesterton retains this vision of youth even in his twilight. In his novels, notably *The Man Who Was Thursday* and *The Napoleon of Notting Hill*, together with the delightful *Fr. Brown* stories, the reader often has to pause and rub his mental eyes, glancing self-consciously about to reaffirm his previous conception of things. He knows that the fictional world of Chesterton is just that, yet he wonders. The implausible events of the author's books are made to seem real to those who have but a portion of Chesterton's unique vision. For something of our own childhood remains always with us, waiting to be recalled.

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Among Chesterton's closest personal friends were two of his most radical intellectual opponents, Shaw and Wells. These men often debated together and rarely agreed, yet maintained a genuine admiration for each other.

For enemies too are part of life, and there is a real fascination with life in all of Chesterton's writings. He is no callous contemporary; he is never disgusted with the world, only disappointed. He looks for beauty in all of creation and since "love never wanteth shifts" he usually finds this beauty. Compare his writings on feminine beauty, for example, with those of many modern authors. Chesterton does not see beauty through the sex-filled eyes of the neo-Freudian nor does he see it through the eyes of an extreme ascetic who views all women as detriments to the salvation of mankind. His vision is that of St. Thomas Aquinas, who held that nothing natural is of itself evil.

This leads us to two of his books that deal with subjects seemingly contradictory in their beliefs: Aquinas and St. Francis of Assisi. But when viewed in light of Chesterton's philosophy they are not. For Chesterton was what we might call a romantic realist. That is, he knew the difference between what ought to be and what is so; what can be valid for a select few and what can be valid for the many. He could hope for the best and expect the worst, without contradiction. St. Francis appealed to the romantic side of Chesterton, the side that would adjure the chaotic aspects of civilized existence; Aquinas appealed to the rational side, the one which knew and accepted the order of the universe. In his treatment of St. Francis, Chesterton makes a point that is not easy to forget: that Francis did not give up the good things of life because he felt they were evil in themselves—if he had done so for this reason there would have been no especial merit, for such was his duty—but because in themselves they were good, and desirable. His way of life was not for all. But he was true to a personal vision, to a vision of youth; and so was Chesterton.
less; he was often over-effusive and perhaps stressed his points too much. At times he was unrealistic, at others playful or cute. But his vices were the innocent ones of a child. Self-assurance and enthusiasm are merely out of fashion today. For Chesterton can be read if only to refresh minds troubled by the staleness of life, by the chains of regimented depression. In Chesterton they will find a person who hated melancholy and uniformity just as they did when they were children.

ROBERT G. RITZ: TWO POEMS

TIME REVISITED

(with due respect to P. B. Shelley)
I met a traveler from a southern land
Who said: Two vast and rocketless platforms
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a battered nose cone lies, which form,
And contour, and steel of cold command,
Tell that its inventor well those passions read
Which yet survive (stamped on these lifeless things),
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed:
And on the launching pad these words appear:
"My name is Juniper XXVII, missile of missiles:
Look on my potentialities, ye Mighty, and despair!"
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and once-radioactive sands stretch far away.

SAYS WHO?

The soil anchors and nourishes the plant.
The plant grows, propagates and feeds the animal.
The animal accomplishes these and moves about freely.
Man combines all these characteristics... and thinks, too!

THE PIT AND THE PENCIL

DENNIS K. MURPHY

D. P.: PROSSÉ... the usual professor
DICTUM... the usual student
PASSE... the yesterday's idea

About now. A classroom. PROSSÉ is in front of his class: DICTUM. PROSSÉ has been worrying because he has only one student. Shortly after class begins, PASSE enters, and helps PROSSÉ through the catastrophe.

PROSSÉ: I can't help it; or perhaps I can
   If I had taken the time.
   But since the time has passed so
   There is hardly time for understanding!
   Can it be that I was unfortunate
   In my calculations? Is it possible
   That HE was wrong? (Certainly John
   And the boys knew this would happen.)
   Didn't they? What a world!

DICTUM: I can play the part, but to what
   Avail? Certainly you should have
   Had the essence all wrapped up before
   Partaking? Why admonish the fools?
   The mind is worth the effort... if it's
   There! (The mind, that is.) But let's
   To the problem at hand. Since you
   Have copied, and I might add, to no
   Avail, you must conclude that the
   Copy was faulty, or that the method
   Was all wrong. Since...

PROSSÉ: (Interrupting.) But this isn't all
   My fault. You see...
DICTUM: Precisely, my dear Prossie, I do see!
If this had happened to you, you might
Today, have more than my mush to mangle.
You had benefit, but belittled it! You
Had fortune, but fought it. You had
Might, but mashed it. You read Aquinas,
Aristotle, and why many others, but
Either failed to see the significance,
Or were too clouded, clinging to the
Face of far fetched nonsense!
Instead of now, why not then? Why is it
Procrastination had become so deep-set?
What mighty boulder blotted out the
Profundity of it all?
PROSSE: Now just a minute! I am the lecturer
Here. (Were this wise?) See here!
If I had talent then, I have it now.
This is something that is just not lost.
(At least not all of it.) Profundity?
Certainly. They said what I said, You
Know, Aquinas and the rest. But they
Seriously lacked one point:
Society. We live here, so we must be
Adapted. Now, they had made this point
Quite clear: (Of course I mean John
And the boys), That unless you take
The best and mould it into an individual,
You have lost the significance of
The whole thing. Progress is made, only
By taking the sprouting nucleus, and
Developing it into the perfect example
Of what we are searching for, if it
Happens to be in keeping with what we
Have found! (I think!) You see,
Don't you?
DICTUM: Quite clearly. However, the question
Should be: do you? I believe you are
One of the best examples of the mis-
Users of the 40's and 50's. (And a
Few years before.) Of all the fine
Teaching gone before, they had mis-
Construed the Doctors of the Psyche.
They said one thing, you did another.
In reality, you are still searching.
As a matter of fact, we shall be so
Until the last day. But, what can you
Find in nothing? Nothing! As the
fish swims around the bowl, he merely
Retraces his path. So too, man is
Hardly progressing when he aims at
What he has already accomplished.
PROSSE: You sound just like all the other
Pupils I recently expelled. How long
Must I teach before you realize that
You must learn from me, not caution
Me about what I think?
DICTUM: But sir, or dear Prossie, I have
Learned from you: precisely, what
Not to do or think!
PROSSE: Ah, what am I to do? I try, and try
But what ever I do, never seems to
Right itself. There must be an answer
Somewhere.

At this point, PASSE enters, and begins to enrich the teacher PROSSE with
some of the old points—arguments from the old school.

PASSE: What ho! Who's this? What question?
Not that it comes entirely as a surprise,
But isn't it a wonder that you have
Missed so much?
Surprise, surprise for the unwise,
Not wholly here, yet not otherwise!
PROSSE: Who are you? And what have you to lend to the functional classroom?

PASSE: O cad, you’re quite mad. O what a bother. Quick crush the jeer: lend me an ear—o bother!

PROSSE: Sir, your insolence is not quite in keeping with the dignity of the lecture hall. If you don’t mind, sir, please paddle in another direction—and for another cause.

PASSE: Don the cap, you merry sap—How rude; Humble soul! I will do—prude!

PROSSE: I suppose you’re about to tell me (In that infernal gibber) Jack and Jill Went up the Hill surpasses Auden? Or that Crusty argument of my spiritless student?

DICTUM: It might be well to listen for awhile, Is it not true that many have lent ears To your deathly treatises, and have conquered only themselves? Is it not true that your attempts initiate the individual incentive to cope with all circumstances that embody the wholeness of wisdom to thwart teeming tributaries Of now termed “Nonsense?” Now’s no time To blank the effort of the individual, But to lay open the wherewithall and See what you have produced,—if this Is your production.

PROSSE: I suppose I should listen, although this Victim doesn’t appear on my list of Graduates. Although I don’t suppose any Others would have the gumption to strike At ME! You there—say what you will!

PASSE: Clown prince, never since—(O why?) The end of the bend... (I’ll try!) Has it occurred, (O my word!) That you are blue, (sound absurd?)

Not because... (a little pause.) You need a deed,—(close your jaws!) But here it is: (a short quiz.) Riddle, raddly, foamy fizz, I got what really is! Eat from the plate, O hapless mate, Food for thought—which is this I brought.

PROSSE: Effortless! No wonder, it’s all kindle. Burned in effigy years ago. Sounds the same now as it did then: blabber! Why, what does this lend to the matter? The smattering of ignorance is sufficient To round out the end of the farce. Out! Boastful solicitor, mimicker of the Monument, and purger of the prone!

DICTUM: This is rather haughty for a most usual occurrence in this classroom. How many times, my dear Prosse, have you let men Ramble, and then in few words, completely Shatter their whole idea? Why not now? Does the intruder hinder or hamper your style? Is the match finally made for your Almighty wishdom? Take him, Prosse. Point out to me, prove your points! Lay hold and be firm on your stand—or can’t you? Is he too much, or too little? Too strong or too weak? What’s the answer? Why it was only a short minute or two ago That you confided in yourself. Do it now! Or don’t you understand his intellectual Tongue?

PROSSE: If the man is to motion to me, he must Do so straight forward. My mind works so Acutely that I cannot help but misinterpret His venture. I find so many inuendos— So much ambiguity. Why can he not say What he will, and put it out meaningfully?
DICTUM: It seems quite clear to me. Why should
You have any trouble? After all, I am
Only the student! How many times have
You been confronted, yes, and thoughtout
The solution? Once? Twice? Never?
Come, come, Prosse. He's only telling
You to think!

A ROOM AT ARLES
J. W. MILLER

Van Gogh once picturized his room, illumined it
For humanity with a sable brush.
I ask your contemplation of his canvas, though I suspect
You have not time; your thoughts are not your own: long ago
The merchants in the temple purchased them.
Yet pause and view the scene. Here pulsate no machines,
Their motors beating rhythmically by calculated friction;
So much is wood and cloth and fibrous glass.
Observe the straw-seat chairs, the pillowed bed:
The artist may wish ease; or is he reluctant to stand?
Vertically perhaps he'll run, knowing something.

Peace, not fright, exudes the temper here.
There's no amorphous and imperious lore
Of Buddha and de Sade, no projection
Of desperate self-hatred onto the race of Eve;
Gainsborough's craft is not desired, nor that of Ginsberg,
Who calls the common heart a spade and howls
Because he cannot integrate the prosiness of others,
Whose speech becomes the sole viaticum
Of syncopated minds that mimic their machines—
Minds erupting with the quick, impassioned,
Hollow beat of sax and clarinet, springing

Upward to the consummating crescendo
Of Gabriel's horn: searching, searching,
Carrying their intransient messages of salvation,
As if they too had infused knowledge of man's end.

The clear quiescence of the artist's room
Suggests that regulation which is his birthright.
There is no hint of the infernal isolation,
The tense, satanic loneliness that melts all grand designs,
Of the despair that consumes, the contemplation
That partakes of death. Where is the painter himself?
Does he softly pace outside the frame, gently,
Ironically deriding his own creation? Or is he
Damning his congested consciousness, the chronic
Claustrophobia of his personality, the thirsting
After knowledge that twisted mankind's root,
The hunger for experience that has no merit?

There is a benefaction here, a serene goodness;
It matters little: to Adam, that first human artist,
That cosmic joker who created Cain,
Goodness was the natural and accustomed
Order of things: yet he chose evil.
To mate, but for an instant, the aged melancholy
With the youthful joy, to still the lusty
Hunting for life-interest!
To banish mental pride and moral imbecility,
To disavow subconscious fancy,
Compact of heaven and haystack, where
Phantom spirits fornicate to string guitars;
To sleep through the Seven Ages of Man;
Or, best of all,
To sit and listen to the myths of gods,
To linger serenely in darkness until the Orderer of all
Again cries Let there be light,
And then to stumble peacefully away,
Telling the vision to no one.
JAMES JOYCE'S ULYSSES—WHITHER?

THOMAS LIMNER

Unable to find the freedom of spirit which of needs must cohabit with the mind of a genius, finding the parochialism and the wide gap between myth and reality in his native land paradoxically too constricting, James Joyce at an early age, left Ireland and made the world his home. Residing in Trieste, Paris, Zurich and Vienna, he taught language and attempted to fill his insatiable thirst for symbols of thought by imprinting on his mind the words of all men. The juxtaposition of sounds and their meanings were the vehicles of his genius. Experimenting with the words and letters of many languages, he created his own language, one born of complex word play, of alliteration and assonance, a cadence of many tongues.

With Joyce, his language and his "stream of consciousness" style were limited exclusively to fiction and the novel. Joyce had, it is true, written for the stage, but not in his own singular language and style. Nor has his prose work, where his style and language reached the intended chaotic apex, ever been taken out of context and adapted to other art forms. That is, not until recently.

On June 5, 1958, Ulysses ascended to the boards. Immediately, Ulysses in Nighttown (the Circe episode of the novel) was faced with several problems. On the one hand, was the problem of censorship. The novel had been banned in the United States from its writing until 1933, on the rather naive charge of obscenity. Secondly, the seemingly insurmountable problem of staging Joyce was present. Still, there was a problem in communication. The same communication problems (situations, language, meaning and effect) inherent in the novel were present in the play.

The Circe episode was the logical choice for dramatization. Written as a play, it had a special coherence of its own. Again, it seemed to epitomize the theme of the novel. Its rewriting for theatrical purpose resulted in an excellent script which retained the essence of Joyce and, which is important in view of the problem of communication mentioned above contained much needed explanation. Where necessary, fill-in material was provided from other section of Ulysses and also from Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. Still additional explanation and background was provided by a narrator.

Stage directions in Ulysses in Nighttown provided for exotic personifications and, often, dual characterization. Through the dance, these directions are more easily conveyed and made acceptable. In spite of this, the prevalent criticism of Ulysses in Nighttown has been that the technique of the play was one of dramatic reading; that the play was, perhaps (to draw upon a dichotomy delineated by T. S. Eliot in his discussion of another dramatist), poetic rather than theatrical drama. It would seem however, to be more than this. It would seem to necessitate more than Joyce's own words, more than his playlingual puns. The action of the play cannot help but be aided by the other expressive and visual arts—stage sets and props, acting (gesture, movement, etc.) and, most important, the dance.

Ulysses in Nighttown's parallel, the palace of Circe, provides a host of references and they are all in the play, from the wand which Circe used to change the wanderers into swine to the metamorphase, the orgy, which, by way of the dance, has kept all its grotesqueness and its meaning.

It is obvious that such a Walpurgisnacht could present gargantuan problems in staging. Countless devices were used, extensive lighting, the use of two translucent screens behind which occurred flashbacks and manifestations of the thoughts of Leopold Bloom were two. Superb acting and direction was required for the constant atmosphere of hallucination depended much on the expressiveness of the actors. Still, the Circe episode required a tremendous cast.

Upon viewing the pièce de théâtre, it seemed to this writer that these difficulties, inherent in Joyce's work, were successfully surmounted by the theatrical company which undertook it. The acting, direction and production were indeed superb. The question remains, however, as to whether or not the novel should have been tampered with at all. Would it have been better to leave Joyce in the original milieu of the novel, suspended as the original writing seemed to be in a spaceless, timeless vacuum which only the printed word, however imperfectly, can come close to? This dramatization of Joyce was an obvious theatrical success. Television and movie rights have been acquired and public success has been won. But this seems to be more an accolade to the superb treatment of an essentially bizarre and exotic entertainment rather than an acclamation to the success of treating Joyce in drama. But what seemed to be most apparent to this writer (handicapped as he perhaps was by a first-level interpretation of the play) was that the Joycean idea reached a new fulfillment on the stage. This was accomplished through the use of other art forms, particularly the dance, as delineated and explained above. The drama remains Joycean, but as Ulysses and Finnegans Wake were literary experiments, so also is Ulysses in Nighttown.

The only definitive thing that might be said about the transferal of media is that it is a challenging prose experiment, grafted into a drama, but so radically composed that it is difficult to say whether it belongs to either realm.
NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

CLARENCE AMANN, a senior, has finished requirements for graduation and is now teaching History and English at McQuaid Jesuit High School. A prolific and talented poet, his work has appeared in several national reviews. . . . JAMES BOND, this year's junior editor, marks, with his short story and essay, his second appearance in the Angle. . . . FRANK KAMP, a junior history major, is also on the editorial staff of the Pioneer, the college newspaper. His provocative discussion of the novel form of one of history's most shattering revolutions, distinguishes his second appearance in the Angle. . . . THOMAS LIMNER, a sophomore English major, is a neophyte to the Angle but not to the other college publication. He is cartoonist and feature writer for the Pioneer. . . . J. W. MILLER, an alumnus (class of '58), is now doing graduate work at the University of Rochester. His essay and poem mark his third appearance in the Angle. A serious creative writer with many credits, he is now at work on a novel. . . . DENNIS K. MURPHY, another alumnus, teaches English at Aquinas Institute. . . . RICHARD OSTERMAN, a junior English major, has been a regular contributor to the Angle since his freshman year. A talented writer, he is also editor of the Pioneer. A serious exponent of film art, he envisions making his own movie upon graduation. . . . ROBERT RITZ, the senior editor of the Angle, marks his first appearance in the Angle. . . . FRANK SALAMONE, a sophomore honor student who is also a transfer, marks, with his essay, his first appearance in the Angle.