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# EL PALENQUE

Volume I

Number 1

SAN DIEGO STATE COLLEGE

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1927

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*P*ALLENQUE, the Athens  
of the ancient Mayans, encom-  
passed the culture of a great race  
within its four walls. *El Palenque*,  
the magazine, endeavors to as-  
semble a representation of the  
literary culture of San Diego  
State College within its two covers.  
What measure of success has  
been achieved will be computed  
by each reader.



fare, shouts a reply. "You lazy old bachelor. And what do you suppose my Jake would be doing while I'm sitting around being at peace with the world? He'd find himself another woman!" And she vigorously clamps a clothespin on Jake's sock.

Mr. Heinburg, not at all disturbed, crosses one leg over the other. He shakes his pipe and reveals his amazing knowledge, the result of years of pondering in the sunshine. "You women are all alike, always trying to hold on to your man. The young ones do it by painting their lips, and the old ones do it by starching his shirts 'til they feel like . . . ." And at this moment Mrs. McCarty's Pekinese runs across the alley and drops one of Jake's beautifully laundered socks at the bachelor's feet. Then I move on, for I dislike disturbances.

Our alley resembles a side street in a small town. Of course, it is not paved. Pavement has been petitioned, but few families desire the expense. People seem to think it isn't necessary in a wayfare for rag-men and neighbors. True, we have scarcely any traffic in our alley, and I seldom encounter anyone, except for an occasional conversation over a bordering backfence. As for the rag-men, they have not been in vogue for several years. People are keeping their rags. But I enjoy walking through my new world, for it is a comfortable, enjoyable place. One may even whistle without being considered foolish. So I maintain that paved, or in their weedy state, alleys will always be the backbone of America.

I have always wished to speculate as to the probable origin of our backstreets. It has been whispered about that alleys were devised in Helen's time, and that Paris made good use of them. My statement may be objectionable. But I have always suspicioned that the Trojan Lochinvar came riding into the west in a vegetable wagon, disguised as a vegetable vender. You see he would have easy access to Menalaus' household. Down the alley, through the court yard . . . and there is Helen. It adds to the glamour of the famous romance to picture Paris and her seated on a crate of celery in an unpretentious cart riding to the sea.

Perhaps it is because every woman wishes to be a Helen, or it might be that I simply enjoy Mrs. McCarty's artistic washing; but I know that I shall never live in a block without an alley. In meandering down a backstreet exchanging amazingly friendly remarks with usually caustic people, one recognizes a difference in the atmosphere, the same differences which lie between the cool, formal shrubbery in front of the house, and the unassuming warmth of old fashioned flowers in the back. In the alley is a newly discovered world of friendliness, and I love friendliness. Besides, Mr. Oscar Heinburg blows beautiful smoke rings, and he is seldom seen in the front yard.





"You're new here this year, aren't you?"

"Yes, I'm from—

*The National Assembly*

"—California. Are you a Freshman?"

Stan was indignant. A Junior and an Alpha Mu, and the girl had the nerve to presume that he was a Freshman!

He answered, "Yes, this is my first year.

*Address of the National Assembly to the French people*

"Are you a Freshman?"

The girl laughed with her eyes. "Yes, I'm a Freshie." And the day's lecture was over.

The next time the class met, the girl began:

"I say, Stanley, as to the—

*Rise of the Republican Party*

"—Sigmas, what do you think of them?"

Stan answered:

"Well, I'll tell you my view of the Sigmas—

*Achievements of the National Assembly*

"—is that they are pretty good. In fact, they are the best—

*Conservative Royalists*

"—on the campus. Why?"

"Well, I just wondered about—

*Origin of the Jacobin Club, 1789*

"—the Sigmas. One must be careful about bids."

Stan mentally kicked himself. He must give up work for the fraternity and drop around the sorority houses more. Darn pity they couldn't have a party with men. He always rated with Sigma women.

Billie was nudging him to look.

"Do you like the Sigmas—

*Influence of Marat on Danton*

"—better than the Omega Gammas?"

"Yeah, I do. Swell bunch of girls. May I ask if you're bid Sigma?"

Where had he been? Before she could answer, class was dismissed, and Billie was lost in the crowd.

*The National Assembly* had completely abolished the *Feudal System* before Stan got an answer to his question. Billie was late again, and as she entered, Stan saw a tiny gold pin on her dress.

"Sigma?" he whispered.

She nodded, and he wrote.

"Congratulations on—

*Close of the Reign of Terror*

"—making that house."

She had answered in her funny little scrawl.

"Thanks, I'm thrilled to death. Especially as—

*Tallyrand forms an alliance between France, England, Austria, and the lesser powers*



"—they are giving us our dance Friday night. Our first party with men. Are you going?"

"Not that I know of," he wrote; and then added, "As yet."

She inquired. "Do Freshmen go to many things?"

Stan replied, "Sure."

So, at the bottom of her note-book, under the *Strained Relations between the Napoleonic Nobility*, she asked him to go.

Friday night found Stan, in tux, mounting the steps of the Sigma house. Their president met him at the door.

"Well, Stanley Woods! You're shrouded in mystery. Your name's on the guest list, but we can't find out who you're going with. We thought surely it would be one of us—it always is."

Stanley was early, and from long experience, chose the best chair in the living-room. Before he answered, the girl went on. "By the way, Stan, we have the most adorable Junior pledge that you *must* meet. She's been asking about you, too. Been suffering under a delusion that you're a Freshman."

Stan flicked his ashes onto the floor, smoothing them into the carpet with his shoe. "Did you say she's a Junior? You mean Freshman, don't you?"

"I said 'Junior'—two years at Berkeley already. What do you know about her, anyway? Are you talking about Billie Williams? She's coming with a Freshie tonight. Say, you aren't—Are you the one? Are you taking her tonight? Why—have you met her?"

"Sure," grinned Stan, as Billie appeared in the doorway. "We know our *Social Science*."

---

## *The Refugee*

RACHEL HARRIS CAMPBELL

You cannot hide from me:

My love would find you out  
Behind the sun's fortress  
Or the moon's redoubt.

You cannot escape me:

My loneliness would be  
Swifter than an eagle  
Following ruthlessly.

My yearning would reach you

Even should you hide  
In a vale of disdain  
By a river of pride.



## St. John's

GLADYS F. WITTET

After five days on the pitching, wallowing *Rosalind*, we were entering the harbor of St. John's, Newfoundland. As the ship slowly edged her way between two rocky headlands, we saw the landlocked Bay spread like a slightly wrinkled blue carpet between the flanking corridors of the brown hills.

On every outcropping of rock dangled crazy shacks, each with its gray fringe of salted codfish. The great drying-racks for the tons and tons of cod prepared for shipment in the port spotted the shoreline like bearded, ashy lichens.

Going ashore for breakfast, we were directed to Mrs. Tompkins' boarding-house; there were no restaurants in St. John's. Ever since we had left Halifax we had had codfish three times a day—fresh cod, smoked cod, dried cod, creamed cod, cod au gratin, baked cod, boiled cod—until the prospect of a land-raised breakfast was thrilling. We followed the reek of freshly varnished linoleum up a dark flight of stairs from the main street to the narrow domain of Mrs. Tompkins.

The only light in the dining-room filtered through a wide skylight. The long, dreary table that nearly filled the room, was cluttered with the remains of earlier breakfasts. Chairs had been carelessly shoved back, betokening the hurried departure of some twenty boarders. Now the sole occupants of the room were two bead-eyed china dogs, glaring at each other from opposite corners of the sideboard.

"How very English", we decided.

Breakfast was just as English, consisting of boiled eggs, toast, and tea with milk. Any dream we might have entertained of grilled kidneys with a rasher of bacon was quietly dispelled by the frugal Mrs. Tompkins.

After this excursion into the native life of the community, we wandered up and down the winding dirt streets. The shops were filled. This was boat-day and every one had business in town. The stocks were almost entirely British—Derbyshire pottery, Irish linens, Scotch tweeds and hose, with the tinned and potted *Messrs. Crosse and Blackwell* smiling rotundly from every window.

A stroll along the water front brought us to the fish market. Every one we met had a fish—even the small five-year-olds hooked their fingers in the gills of two-foot cods and marched barefoot up the dusty paths, fish tails tracing a silvered trail behind them.



Following the winding roads along the cliffs, we came upon primitive huts of sod and stone with packed earth floors. In and out of turf-silled doorways tumbled pigs, chickens, and babies. From one of the yards a sweet faced old lady nodded a friendly "Good day".

"You'd like to be seeing the cod, maybe," she said, leading us around the corner of her tiny house to the platform where slabs of fish were drying.

"The price is low this year and we'll all be left with part of the catch on our hands. Some we dry and some we salt down in barrels. When the price is down we can't afford to trade it in for other supplies. Many's the year we eat cod all winter with nothing but potatoes for variety. It's hard on the wee ones", and she stooped to pat the tangled hair of a toddler who leaned shyly against her skirts.

"There's five to feed, and their father lost off the Banks last winter in the first big storm," she went on tonelessly.

"Now only their gran'father and me are left to care for them. Three sons we've lost in the sea. Most houses here are the same. Last year the biggest passenger ship on the run went aground near Cape Race and all the crew were lost. They all lived here. It was a sad time for all of us. That's why you're on the little *Rosalind* this year. She's the only one left."

Quite in contrast to the huts of the fishermen was the turreted stone castle of the Governor. It dominated the town. On the slope below its formal gardens lay a grassy park. There were picnic parties on the lawns, and men were sleeping under the spreading elms and ash trees. We had not had a real sleep during the entire trip, for the *Rosalind* was a nervous, twitching thing, and we had become infected with her ailment. We found a shady spot on the grass and lay down for a nap. As we were dropping off into a deep, quiet unconsciousness, I felt a gentle tap on my shoe soles.

"Don't be funny," I drooled lazily.

But another smarter rap brought me up sitting. If you have never been rapped on the soles by a policeman's billy, and have never wakened to find yourself confronted by the steady blue stare of a Belfast Irishman, you have no idea of our consternation.

"Yuh can't sleep in the par-r-k," said Red Face.

"But they're sleeping all over. We looked first", bravely.

"Not Laydies!" and the cold blue eyes softened and showed an ingratiating Irish twinkle.

"It's all right fur men, but not fur Laydies. Of course, I can see you're nice gur-rls, but there's an awful lot of hard-r-d characters around", burring his "characters" to rhyme with "tractors".

A perfect Anglo-American entente had been struck. We sat up decorously against a tree and chatted with the now gallant stick-twirler. He took the greatest pains to direct us to all the points of interest, escorting us to the gates.

"Maybe you'll be wanting tea now. Just go over to the Bowring Gardens. There's a nice place there."



It was a very nice place indeed, a low, rambling bungalow presided over by a soft-voiced little old woman and her eager daughter. Being the only guests we were leisurely and bountifully served with toasted scones, China tea, and the most unusual brambleberry jam. Our hosts told us of the Bowrings who owned the Gardens. In fact, with their great shipping company, they controlled the town. Mother and daughter had an expansive way of saying "New-found-land" and "New-found-land-er" which was quite at variance with our short clipped "Newfundl'nd".

Returning to the *Rosalind*, we found that every available cranny in the holds and on deck had been loaded with boxes and casks of cod. At midnight the loading was completed and the ship cast off. The whole town had been at the dock since early evening and they stayed until we were well out of the harbor. Behind us the lights of the town flickered, Aurora Borealis flashed overhead, and out of the sea rose a full, red harvest-moon.

---

## Acceptance

ROY BURGE

Calmly I set my feet  
Into the silver grooves  
That stretch illimitably out  
Into my destiny.  
My way may fringe the scarp  
Or lead me down into the death-filled murk;  
I shall not fear its trend.  
Shall I be king? If so, then be it so.  
A beggar, I? I shall not rail my lot.

Serene I set my feet  
Into the narrow silver groves  
Of destiny.  
I shall not fear or cry aloud  
In perilous times,  
Knowing that by my side  
Others tread their ways,  
Silent  
Without complaint.



# Merry-Go-Round

*A Play for an Extraordinary Theatre*

CARL MAXWELL JOHNSON

## CHARACTERS:

*A Merry-Go-Round*

*Ethelwold* } *Its brothers*  
*Rastus* }

*Pinckney* } *Its mother and father*  
*Centurion* }

*Attendant at Court of Kublai Khan*

*Three Soldiers*

*Chorus of Clouds*

*Helen Wills* } *Two friends*  
*Suzanne Lenglen* }

## ACT ONE

*Same, Two years later.*

## ACT TWO

*Two years later. Same.*

## ACT THREE

*No change. Merry-Go-Round older.*

## ACT ONE

### Scene One

SCENE: Palace of the Merry-Go-Round. The main room is dark, Victorian with a touch of droll inventiveness. Three eunuchs are strewn on the table, painted to represent food; they eat themselves, and are already half-consumed. To the audience they appear like lepers. A tiger skin is in the room, with a lamb inside it; this gives the human note. Twenty-five learned scholars are having a disputation. They are deaf mutes, and their eloquent gestures give a certain air of humanity to the whole proceeding. Lying on its back front center is an old Ingersoll watch, slowly ticking and ticking its life away.

All these characters wear masks, as follows: Type 1, Old Lady. Type 2, Old Lady, Brutal. Type 3, Old Lady, Quiescent. Type 4, Old Lady, Obviously Worn. During the course of the play, these masks are worn in various sizes to allow the actors to use all their muscles vocally; no facial contortions can be permitted in an Unbound Play of this kind, the idea being that minds among minds have no faces. After the Second Act, masks will be replaced by something else, to give the impression of Modern Science battering at the



brain; the audience will be receptive to this change by the time it occurs.

CHORUS OF CLOUDS. We bring showers for the thirsting flowers.

MERRY-GO-ROUND (entering left and picking up eunuch, he nibbles). Around and around we go. Glory to God, who made the earth a whirling globe!

PINCKNEY (who has been feeling the Ingersoll's pulse, having entered a few moments before the curtain went up). Tear to shreds this upstart! You are no son of mine, dog of a Christian!

PINCKNEY (who has just entered in a fanfare). Bow down, Bedouins. Here is Merry-Go-Round, raised from the ranks. Down, Down, DOWN!

BEDOUINS. Oom to the left eyebrow, Omnigracious One.

MERRY-GO-ROUND (whirling slowly, chanting, having just finished one eunuch). Great is food, great is love, great is charity, great is motion in whorls. (Puts on mask, Type 5.) Give those hungry, struggling children in the streets a crust of bread, that the successful consumer may be half-killed in the obtaining thereof, and wholly slain when he reaches home. I wish to be original: make it unleavened bread. Teach them the meaning of life. Whirl! Whirl!

CHORUS OF CLOUDS. Lucent syrops tinct with cinnamon.

Enter AUGUST STRINDBERG and EUGENE O'NEILL. Whirl! (They whirl.)

MERRY-GO-ROUND (practically, rapt in infinite contemplation). Gus, did you bring that Parrot-Woman locked in a closet?

AUGUST STRINDBERG (practically). No.

MERRY-GO-ROUND (turning like a flash, rapt in contemplation). Gene, have you a mask?

EUGENE O'NEILL (practically). No.

MERRY-GO-ROUND (raises his hands for silence. All whirl, in profound quiet. He speaks).

Then there is naught but me.

Naught.

The home fires burn low,

And old men shiver

At the imminence

Of drafts.

Tears fall,

On barren earth,

And old women shiver

At the imminence

Of drought.

Naught, naught

But me.

All is whirl, whirl,

God is whirl, and

Naught but me.



# *The Old Man Passes*

HARRY L. ANDERSON

"Eh? Eh?" The wrinkled hand fumbled shakily around and finally extracted a curved ear-trumpet from a coat pocket. "Eh?" he asked again, and raised the instrument to his ear.

I repeated my question.

He shook his ear-trumpet until the nickel rim rattled, and then readjusted it in position.

"Eh?" He listened very thoughtfully, blinking complacently like a contented parrot, as I asked him for the third time. "Oh—you want to know the right time?" A yellowish-white tuft at the end of his freckled chin bobbed up and down with each syllable. "I left the top of this hill at half past ten." He flourished his cane in the general direction, thrust his ear-trumpet conclusively in his pocket, and went on with not another word.

I followed him with my gaze as he trudged laboriously down the slope. It was then that I noticed his pet habit; he was not ten paces past when his cane suddenly flicked a stone from the path. Before he had rounded a bend a hundred yards below, he had sent more than twenty pebbles flying from their resting places. It seemed to make no difference whether they were large or small; unerringly, the metal tip of the cane knocked them to either side, sending some perhaps thirty feet down the hillside. But when he paused to extract a handkerchief, his hand fumbled tremblingly for his pocket.

His appearance and uncommon skill attracted me, imbued me with the desire to become better acquainted with him. Accordingly, at half past ten next morning, I seated myself on a bench beside the path and was presently rewarded by a sharp click from above. A stone flew from behind a curve in the path, the sound of slowly crunched sand suddenly amplified, and a moment later the old man came into view.

He did not notice me that morning, nor the next, until he was almost past the bench, and even then gave no sign of greeting or recognition. But the third morning, he happened to look up at the bend immediately after a shot. He must have noticed my more than casual interest, for he flicked more stones than before, and I caught two or three half-anticipatory glances cast furtively in my direction. But he did not so much as turn his head as he was passing, although he blinked complacently, and the tuft at the end of his chin shook as a faint smile hovered on his lips.

From then on he expected my presence there every morning and reproached my absence of one day by flicking no stones the next. He began trying for harder shots, always with unfailing accuracy;



not content with disposing of those directly in his path, he reached out to either side, glancing at me after unusually difficult strokes. Even the fact that I once saw him practicing in the back yard of his cottage could not completely explain the remarkable infallibility of his aim. I was later to find another cause.

One morning, he had given me an exceptionally fine exhibition of difficult strokes when a round pebble in the middle of the path caught his eye. He flourished his cane self-confidently—and missed the pebble by an inch.

For an instant his features spelt amazement, and then slowly the slightly freckled roughness of his complexion was swallowed in a choleric red. He glared at me as I sat in uncomfortable suspense; his lips trembled impotently, and his hands shook, causing the tip of the cane to trace patterns in the sandy path. Then, suddenly, he hastened past, as fast as age would allow.

For a week, he failed to walk past, and when he did appear, he carefully refrained from his habit. At the end of another week, I considered it less disturbing to watch from a more distant point as he passed every day.

About two months later, a morning went by when he did not appear. That evening I read in the paper the following notice:

“Joseph B———, 79, National Golf Champion from 1890 to 1896, passed away quietly at his home this morning.”

---

## *Night Shadows*

HELEN STRAND

Dimly discerned beyond the spidery fronds  
That cast their shadow  
On a window  
Blanched with mist,  
I see a spark that twinkles its light  
Now off, now on.

More clearly seen, yet dim withal,  
The thought that flickers  
Now, and falters,  
Lost in maze,  
Is almost caught, but wavers on the verge  
To glow, and die.



# *A Country Funeral*

VERA UKENESKY

It had always seemed to me almost indecent to intrude on a fellow townsman's grief. But that was because I did not understand. Now I know that the interest is anything but intrusive and morbid; that it is deeply human response to a noble summons, and that a country funeral becomes a poignantly touching experience, rousing thoughts "that lie too deep for tears."

This was borne in upon me when I attended the funeral of a village resident.

The service was held in the church. At least an hour before the time appointed, vehicles began passing our house on their way. When we arrived we found the church more full than it ever is on a Sunday morning. There was an air of expectancy, almost of exaltation about the people, as if they sensed something great awaiting them. They sat motionless, but one could feel that their spirit was profoundly moved.

Upon the opening of the door in the rear, and the slow march of the six pall-bearers, two by two up the aisle, they rose in unison with a simple and reverent dignity.

The pall-bearers came in flannel shirts and heavy boots, and their appearance had an effect of rugged sincerity. Their simple directness made human dissolution seem as quietly natural as the falling of autumn leaves.

The casket, covered with flowers, was wheeled by a middle-aged man with a compassionate, fatherly face. He wore the professional black gloves of an undertaker. When he manipulated the casket into place on the rug before the pulpit, he did it with the tenderness of a parent thoughtful for his child.

Behind the casket the mourners trooped, infinitely more touching in their improvised, nondescript black garments than people I have seen elsewhere who look as if they had spent the last two hours in a dressmaker's hands. One woman wore a long black veil over a red hat; another had on a black blouse and a tan skirt. None were weeping; the faces looked awed and acquiescent. Only their shoulders drooped as if there rested upon them a new weight.

A quartette sang "My Faith Looks up to Thee" and "Lead, Kindly Light;" there was a prayer and a grave reading of the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians; and there was what the valley people still call a "funeral sermon." This last was delivered by a native, retired from active ministry, but frequently called on to serve with his beautiful, sympathetic gift. That day he spoke in allegory



full of the significance of the passing seasons; of the strength of the mountains and the peace of the fields; spoke as Christ used to speak to his people, in homely parables. As he leaned over the casket and talked, quietly, clearly, he seemed to be leading us all up to the great Gate and holding it open while one of us went through and the rest gazed after him.

"Now may he who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ..." There was a pause and a silence. The undertaker came forward, removed some of the flowers, lifted the lid of the casket, and stood aside.

If I had known this was to happen, I should have shrunk and recoiled. But, not knowing, I realized the response almost before the summons, and was on my feet, borne forward by the wave that swept the churchful of people. This universal movement was not a morbid one, but an instinctive tribute of life to death. Never before had I felt such a sense of oneness with any company of people as with those, when side by side, one after another, we went up the aisle. I was they, they were I, and we together were the whole human race.

Out in the cemetery the sun shone upon us through an autumn haze. The hills, stripped of their summer's burden, brooded austere, yet gentle, in a gray peace. The harvests had been garnered; the birds had flown. What a time to creep back to the silent earth, ready to begin over again.

Nobody wept. "*Dust to dust, ashes to ashes.*" The solemn rite was ended, the commitment made.

---

## *Transplanted Genius*

FRANKLIN D. WALKER

Sketches of the Sixties. By *Bret Harte and Mark Twain*. John Howell: San Francisco. 1927. \$5.00.\*

John Howell, San Francisco bibliophile, bookseller and publisher, states the nature of his work on the title page—"Sketches of the Sixties, by Bret Harte and Mark Twain, being forgotten material now collected for the first time from the Californian, 1864-67." That there are those who have greeted this find with enthusiasm is shown by the appearance of the second edition within the year. It would seem that the appeal has reached those of the reading public who are lovers of Bret Harte and Mark Twain, as well as the students of

\* On the shelves of the State College library.



American literature. It is in reality an added treasure from a source which we had assumed to be exhausted.

The book is not extensive in scope, as the material has been carefully selected. It includes some dozen polite essays on San Francisco life, written by Frank Bret Harte, some glimpses of his *Condensed Novels*, and a miscellany of essays and criticisms, notable among which is Harte's reply to the attack on his anthology of California verse entitled *Outcroppings*. The Mark Twain material is less formidable and also of less value. It consists of a series of weekly contributions on life and manners—strongly reminiscent of joshing columns in the current press—the original draft of the *Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*, and some contemporary criticism of Mark Twain which is interesting in that it gives an idea of his place in the frontier picture.

The selections go far to confirm the opinion that the fish out of water is the most active fish. Bret Harte in the San Francisco of the Sixties was a paradox. He came of no rugged western stock, he had few ideas in common with those around him. The West demanded a "jack-of-all-trades" with a pronounced taste for gold digging and unleavened flapjacks. Bret Harte taught school, rode the express, listened to the gamblers. His native sensitivity was of aid in his artistry; it caused him to leave San Francisco for more cultured centers feeling that the frontier was no longer helpful to the creative soul. He took his material to Boston and to England, and there failed to re-create the vigor and color of the life which he had left.

The Bret Harte material in the book shows him at his best. Surprising as it may seem, he flourished in California where he failed elsewhere. He writes with a skill which is far above that which Mark Twain has achieved at this date. He writes as a student of the old school, one who follows established precedent, one who is content with the detached touch of the literary dilettante; yet his wit sparkles, his satire stings, his parody is of the best. Is this a natural product of the frontier?

We usually think of Bret Harte as the creator of a special type of short story dealing with the West, but here we see him in diversified roles. We read the "Fable of Beauty, the Beast and the Perfect Gent" with joy. It is a Fable in Slang, equal to Ade at his best, with capital letters, epigrammatic dialogue, slang and the inevitable moral. "This fable teaches us that we should be a Beauty and a Perfect Gent, rather than a Beast or an Old Lady."

The tickling incongruity of Leacock's *Nonsense Novels* is surpassed in "Me" by "Sir Ed--d- L---tt----n B----lw---r." Here is laughter fit to chuckle twice over. "Dropping on his hands and feet, he crawled to the curbstone and hissed after the retreating form of the baronet, the single word: 'Bilk!'" "And the veiled son of the star-beam laid himself loosely around the room, and permeated space generally".

But the dessert is the *Dish of Tailings* consisting of suggested



morsels for a California verse anthology supplementing the inadequate *Outcroppings*. Here we see that as a parodist Harte has been excelled by few. We can give only a taste here:

“And through the valleys rose between  
The pleasant hiss of the esculent bean,  
And the jay bird’s thrilling song was stopped,  
When the luscious flap-jack softly flopped.”

*One-Horse Flat* parodies Tennyson’s *Locksley Hall* as close-fitting as veneer.

“Pard’ner, leave me here a moment; leave me here and go before;  
Leave me here, and while you’re absent I’ll prospect a little more.

In the Spring there comes a blossom on the nose of every Pike,  
In the Spring a young man fancies he is sure to make a strike.

Bill took up the dice and shook ’em with a sweet seraphic smile,  
Shook the dice and threw four sixes, and of course raked down the  
pile.”

John Howell sees this as a first draft of the *Heathen Chinee*. It is a parody of Swinburne’s *Atalanta in Calydon*.

“Which I wish to remark—  
And my language is plain—  
That for ways that are dark  
And for tricks that are vain,  
The heathen Chinee is peculiar.  
Which the same I would rise to explain.”

We think of Mark Twain as one who lived a pioneer life. And yet the evidence would indicate that the pioneer artist did not flourish under pioneer conditions. Young Sam Clemens was not happy in San Francisco, but he was paid to be funny. He *was* funny, but the fun was forced and the heart was not in it. Most of the sketches submitted to the *Californian* seemed to have been written so: the humor is often forced, the language wordy. The chief sources of humor were obvious and common; long digression, colorful exaggeration, the incongruity of drunken appreciation, the fascination of the bad smell; but occasionally we get glimpses of the artist to be. “Daniel in the Lion’s Den-and Out Again” is his best. It is a picture of the stockmarket, which greatly interested one who was always fascinated by big business but never understood it. “The Chairman cried, ‘Fift’naitassfrwahn fift’nseftfive bifferwahn fift’naitfive bitherty!’ I said I believed I would go home.”

In the end Mark Twain left for New York and subsequently Europe and the Holy Land with the pilgrims. The *Californian* anticipates, “Mark Twain in the Holy Land is about as misplaced as an Ethiopian minstrel would be in a church choir.” Thus he rode out to attack culture. It is interesting to speculate on how truly the *Californian* foresaw the result.



# PERIPHERY

BY C. M. J.

A few years ago it was "Sherwood Anderson, the coming genius of America," "Sherwood Anderson shows more promise, more power, and a fresher technique than any other American author since Whitman." Now Anderson is a declining force, and Ernest Hemingway is the White Haired Boy.

This summer there was published in *The New Republic* an article by Robert Littell. That amiable causerie dealt with Hemingway's work as exemplified by *The Sun Also Rises* in particular, and by certain short stories in general. Now these stories have been collected and published under the title, *Men Without Women*. How do Littell's enthusiastic predictions stand the fire of the press? Is Hemingway "the man to watch?"

Most emphatically, he is. Superlatives are difficult to restrain after reading "Today is Friday", "The Killers", "A Canary for Two", or any other of the fourteen pieces in *Men Without Women*. All are characterized by utter simplicity in style and superficial content; all are made memorable by a sense of infinity and boundless implication which hangs darkly over the clearest and briefest tale. De Maupassant never did anything better than "The Killers"; Poe did not surpass the gruesomeness and perfect mechanics of Hemingway's "An Alpine Idyll". But

comparisons are more than usually meaningless when they concern the incomparable. Let us take a concrete instance of the Hemingway effect.

"Today is Friday" covers six pages and the whole story of Christianity. Its setting is a Hebrew drinking-place the night of the Crucifixion. Three Roman soldiers enter, and two of them order drinks. The third is ill—he has a "gut-ache"—and can't be persuaded to try any wine, until the Jewish merchant mixes him a potation to "fix up that sour gut." "Jesus Christ!" exclaims the victim of this primitive homeopathy, as the decoction reaches sensory areas. That ejaculation calls forth comment on the day's events. The first soldier is already somewhat maudlin, and constantly repeats the formula, "He looked pretty good in there today, I tell you." The second is by way of being a cynic; the third is still sick, conceivably with something more fundamental than indigestion. Their conversation is rendered in gamy idiomatic English, in the crisply real and brutal manner of which only Ernest Hemingway is the master. The story ends at closing time for the saloon; the soldiers start back to barracks, cursing the avaricious bartender.

"(Outside in the street.)

"2nd Roman Soldier—George is just a kike like all the rest of them.



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"1st Roman Soldier — Oh, George is a nice fella.

"2nd Soldier—Everybody's a nice fella to you tonight.

"3rd Roman Soldier—Come on, let's go up to the barracks. I feel like hell to night.

"2nd Soldier—You been out here too long.

"3rd Roman Soldier—No, it ain't just that. I feel like hell.

"2nd Roman Soldier—You been out here too long. That's all."

### "CURTAIN"

No idea of what is happening, no realization of the significance or cumulative effect of the day's circumstances—that is the attitude, too eternal, expressed by the three soldiers grumbling subjectively and discussing the esoterica of crucifixion. Such a reduction of immensities to a small compass is typical of Hemingway. His stories improve in the reader's memory; often unimpressive as they are at first sight, recollection of their suggestiveness and universality grows into recognition of a new American genius unprovincial.

\* \* \*

Of all the book clubs formed in this country during the last year, the Literary Guild seemed most likely to fill a useful place in the bookish cosmos. Doubt of the God-given puissance of this organization may be expressed, however, if the Guild books for the last few months are examined critically. For December, the Board of Editors has selected Arnold Bennett's *The Vanguard*—thereby perpetuating between covers one of the lesser pot-boilers of our time.



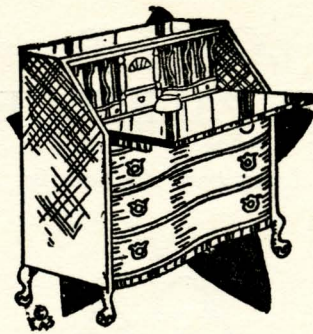
## *The Liberal Pioneer*

IRVING E. OUTCALT

Main Currents of American Thought. Volume I, The Colonial Mind; Volume II, The Romantic Revolution in America. By *Louis Vernon Parrington*. Harcourt, Brace: New York. 1927. \$6.00.

Professor Parrington admits to a "certain feeling of temerity", on account of the variety and complexity of his materials. He is obviously brave to the point of rashness, for he dares, by his own confession, to affront this reactionary decade in which we live by endeavoring to evaluate these materials from a liberal, even from a Jeffersonian, point of view. At a time when the principle of democracy is being held up to derision because of the triumphant sins of its enemies, the scholar is indeed rash who dares to present, sympathetically, the working of that principle in American thought or any other thought.

This book is one of the early fruits of the new American biography and history. Formerly, biography was elaborate eulogy and history was a tediously detailed appreciation of the wisdom of Providence in creating and guiding a particular people or nation. In those days a systematic inquiry into the quality or direction of the current of American thought would have been presumptuous or worse. Now that we know how mixed were



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the motives and talents of the colonists, immigrants, and pioneers; how burdened they were by their heredities and how mazed by their new environment; we realize what a fascinating field Professor Parrington has plotted out for exploration.

The book traces our new frontier. We know America: it is time that we should begin to know ourselves.



EL PALENQUE is a review of letters, published quarterly by the Associated Students of San Diego State College. Editor, Donovan Bess. Publication Board: Roy Burge, Carl Johnson. Art: Franklin Archer, Helen Grace. Business Manager, Charles Burch. Circulation, Virginia Monosmith.

Manuscripts are encouraged from students, alumni, and faculty members. They should be sent to the editor, in care of The Aztec.

*Beauty Comes to the Play*

ROY BURGE

A REPERTORY OF PLAYS FOR A COMPANY OF THREE PLAYERS. By Charles Rann Kennedy, the University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1927. \$2.50.\*

With the calm serenity of a child bringing gifts, Charles Rann Kennedy brings three more plays for three players.

Totally different they are from *The Terrible Meek*, and *A Servant in the House*; each of the plays sings like organ music, now delicate, pianissimo, now superbly triumphant, yet never harsh, nor loud, nor unclear.

Kennedy's sense of the symbolic fires these plays. He deals with mortals, and mortal situations, yet imbues them with the strange, still flame of immortal ecstasy. He is unafraid of his own talents. There is a surety of touch in the plays, a Nirvana, in which the flesh and the will are dead, with only the soul singing in beauty through the mouths of three players.

Charles Rann Kennedy's stage directions and planning approach the point where they cease to be sheer beauty, and approach perfection. "The Place is a lonely Upland where Three Roads Meet. Obviously the site of some archaic worship; for the

\* On the shelves of the State College library.



sacred grove, in orderly half circle still remains as witness to that long-forgotten piety. Now, the mighty boles denuded, their branches mingling, they present the image of a gaunt cathedral, windowed by fires of rose and sapphire from the skies beyond. The worshippers are the Audience in the nave below. . . The Lighting Reflects the Perfect Life: passing from clear day through sundown unto holy night. And a star burning at the end."

*The Chastening* is the first play of the collection. It is "a play for parents, pastor, and masters, setting forth in significant form by the aid of three players the whole duty of childhood." The story is of Mary and Joseph and the child Jesus, whom, Joseph insists, must be chastened for his conduct in the temple. Yet . . . it is Joseph who is chastened.

"*The Admiral*" is "a play for adventurers, setting forth in significant form by the aid of three players the price and the profit of discovering new worlds." It is, save for its deep psychological approach to Columbus, the girl and the queen, the least important of the three plays, for "*The Chastening*" is far more significant, and "*The Salutation*", more ecstatic.

For "*The Salutation*" delves more deeply into the holy beauty of the immortal Dante and Beatrice story than has ever been done before. Here is perfected vision of Beatrice talking in the garden by a "wall that glimmers in the dawn like alabaster." The final act, when the skies open on another dawn

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golden with awakening paradise,  
and the nine heavens, mounting  
to infinity, swing low into the  
view of the lovers in the garden,  
the temper rises to a poignancy  
almost unbearable. On the ninth  
heaven, opening like a great  
white rose, the lovers cry out—  
and in the deep hush that fol-  
lows, the "choristers of Santa  
Lucia" sing forth the glories of  
God.

*"Weave a circle round him thrice,  
And close your eyes with holy dread,  
For he on honey-dew hath fed,  
And drunk the milk of Paradise."*



## **Best Sellers In San Diego**

(Compiled for El Palenque  
through the courtesy of the  
Artemisia Bookshop, Carpenter's  
Bookstore, and Hutton's Book-  
store, San Diego, California.  
The report is for November.)

### **FICTION**

- 1 *Death Comes for the Archbishop* ..... Cather
- 2 *Jalna* ..... de la Roche
- 3 *Dusty Answer* ..... Lehman
- 4 *Red Sky at Morning*, Kennedy
- 5 *Gallions Reach* .... Tomlinson

### **NON-FICTION**

- 1 *Bismarck* ..... Ludwig
- 2 *Mother India* ..... Mayo
- 3 *Trader Horn* ..... Lewis
- 4 *Napoleon* ..... Ludwig
- 5 *The Companionate Marriage*  
..... Lindsey

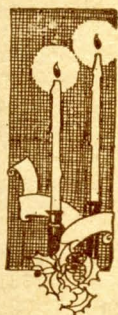




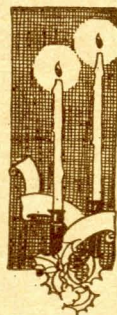
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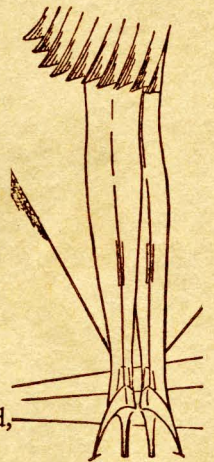
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