

# TrinityReporter

Magazine Issue/October 1975

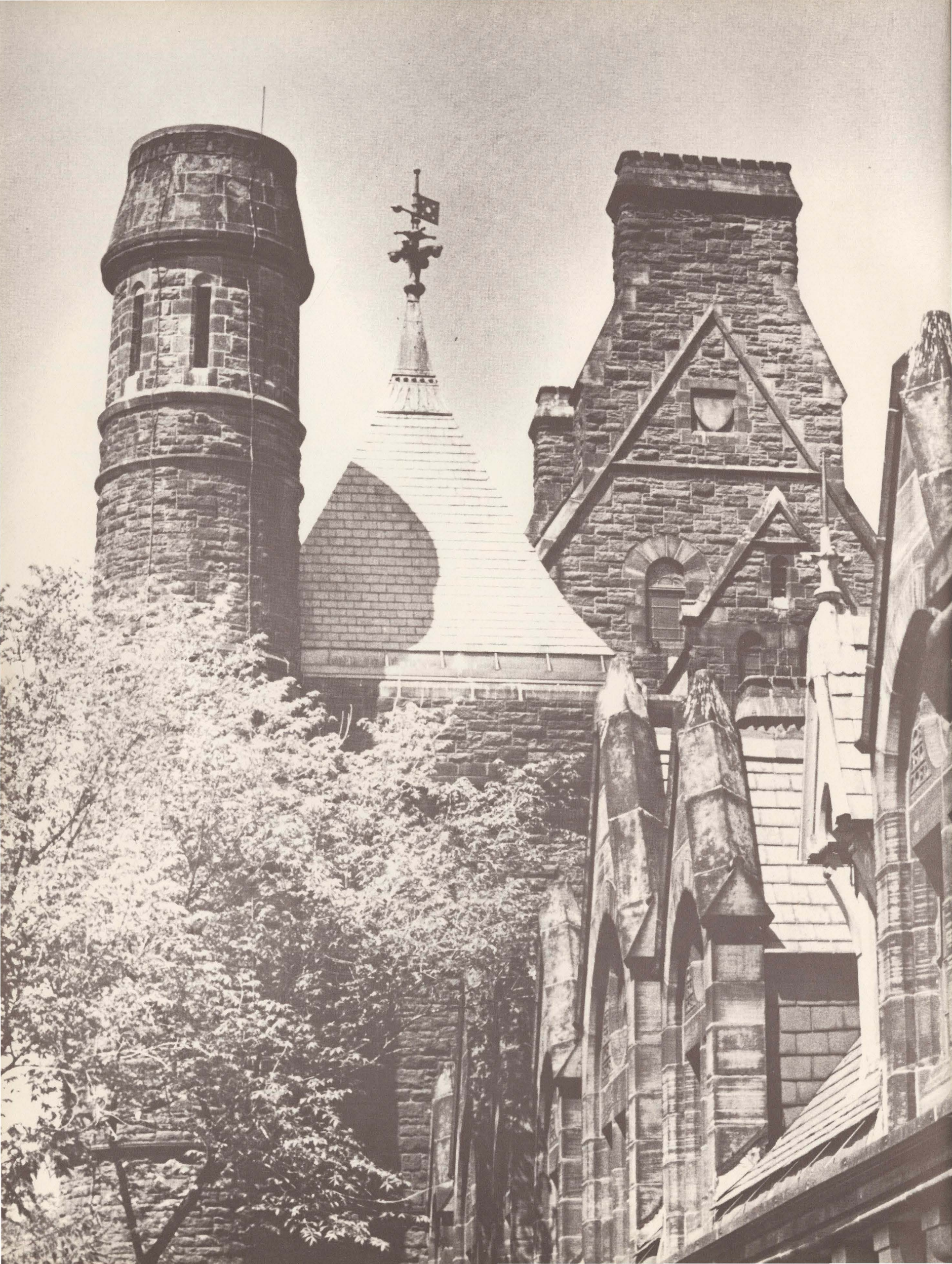
Volume 6 Number 2

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# TrinityReporter

Magazine Issue/October 1975

Issued seven times a year in  
September, October,  
November/December,  
January/February, March/April, May  
and June.

Published by the Office of Public  
Information, Trinity College,  
Hartford, Connecticut 06106. Second  
class postage paid at Hartford,  
Connecticut.

The *REPORTER* is mailed to alumni,  
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## THANKS.

*We wish to thank those who took the time to write and to comment verbally about the concept of the new REPORTER Magazine. At latest count, the bouquets far outnumber the criticisms. Comments like —*

*"... it's the best thing to come out of Trinity in years."*

*"It is something I have often felt was lacking at Trinity. Bravo for putting it out."*

*"... it speaks of the quality that exists at Trinity."*

*were not only encouraging but bringing the purpose of the Magazine into sharp focus.*

*We agree with one general criticism and, beginning with this issue, we will include an article directly related to the College.*

*But here is where we need direction and, therefore, ask the following question: What would you like to know about Trinity? As we pointed out in the editorial in the last issue, it is difficult to operate in a vacuum. Your suggestions for planning future issues would be much appreciated.*

*One other thought. To date, we have received one unsolicited manuscript from an alumnus. Of course we can't promise to use all material that comes in over the transom, but we would welcome the opportunity to discuss possible articles with all who would like to make a contribution.*

L.B.W.

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# Perspectives on the People's Republic of China

by Robert B. Oxnam

Today as always the Chinese have a justifiable reputation for hospitality and organization. For three weeks in February-March, 1975, I watched with amazement as China International Travel Service handled our delegation of twenty-two persons from the US-China People's Friendship Association. Three guides accompanied us throughout the trip, and three or four more guide-interpreters were added for each city we visited (Peking, Wuhan, Changsha, Soochow, Shanghai). We stayed in fine hotels, ate good and abundant Chinese cuisine, and travelled in first-class railway carriages similar to the best in Europe (the Chinese call first-class "soft seat" as opposed to the less luxurious "hard seat" carriages where most ride). Our days were planned from early morning to late evening; a typical day would include breakfast, a morning visit to a school, lunch and a short rest, an afternoon visit to a factory, dinner, an evening trip to a ballet, opera, circus, or acrobatics. At each location we were received by local "responsible persons," given a briefing and a guided tour, and then given a chance to ask questions. It was a beautifully orchestrated trip in which the Chinese always had the solution when Americans became ill, had toothaches, were tardy in getting to the bus, wanted windows opened, desired warmer clothing, or lost their glasses.

But, as I am always asked, "did you really see China, or just what the Chinese wanted you to see?" It's a fair question, and it deserves a careful answer. The Chinese were very receptive to our pre-trip itinerary requests and included most of the organizations we wanted to see. I had wanted to see educational institutions and the Chinese provided visits to two universities (Peking and Wuhan universities), two middle schools, a primary school, a kindergarten, and a day care center. Visits to such places, however, often had a stale quality and it seemed like the administrators, teachers, and students had been through the "seeing the foreigners" routine many times before. When I asked how many foreign delegations visited a particular Peking middle school in a week, a student proudly responded "five or six delegations on the average." At the same school a brightly-painted sign announced, "We warmly welcome . . . Our American friends"; later I learned that the "We warmly welcome" part of the sign was permanent, the last part was changed daily as the new delegations arrived. I also found the visiting routines to be tedious and not very productive: a briefing loaded with statistics and with assurances that things had improved immensely since the Cultural Revolution and the Anti-Confucius Campaign; a quick guided tour which allowed little time for interaction with the people at the organization; and a formal question-and-answer period in which the Chinese frequently took all of the questions at once and then gave an overall answer to the lot.

But one could scratch beneath this surface and learn a great deal. Having some facility in the Chinese language, I

was able to single out a professor or a student and have a quiet chat in the corner. Here I learned that the professors were far more interested in my own research and teaching methods than in listening to the standard briefing. One was also quite free to move about the cities without any restrictions. I often passed up a planned visit to a factory and instead walked the streets and alleys, chatting with people I encountered in shops and restaurants. Usually people were very friendly and would talk at length about their own lives, their families, and their places of work. Sometimes large crowds would gather around as I chatted with people on the street; on several occasions I would play guessing games with the hundreds of children and teenagers who huddled around. Where is Switzerland? Almost everyone responds, "in the middle of Europe." How many cities do you know in the United States? "Washington, New York, Chicago, and Boston" were the usual answers. Have you ever travelled more than two hundred miles away? Very few say "yes"; occasionally one in a crowd from central China will smile and say that "I've been to T'ien-an-men Square in Peking." What courses do you like best at school? "Music, dance, physical education, and mathematics" were the most frequent answers. In short, a lot can be discovered on the streets of Chinese cities, and the authorities made little effort to interfere.

Sometimes being a little pushy reveals some interesting details. Our delegation was taken to a new brick apartment complex attached to a textile factory in Peking. The guides ushered us to an apartment which had been readied for our visit. I took one of the guides aside, told her I wanted to see another apartment, and to my astonishment was informed that I could see any apartment I liked. So I picked another flat at random and was welcomed in by a delightful couple, served wine and candies, and shown around their immaculately-kept rooms. We talked for some fifteen minutes and then I rejoined the group in the originally-designated flat; to my surprise it was somewhat dirty and disorderly compared to the apartment upstairs. When I asked the residents why, they answered "you can't keep rooms in shape with all these foreign visitors coming through."

So one can probe beyond the tightly-organized itineraries to truths which are sometimes more, and sometimes less, than the Chinese had planned. But most important to what one learns in China is the attitude one brings to China. So permit me a brief digression on American perceptions of China. Over our history China has had a mysteriously magnetic effect on American attitudes, pulling at our deepest sympathies or repelling us with strong sensations of disgust. Harold Isaacs, in his famous work *Scratches On Our Minds*, puts it very well: "Like China's great rivers, flooding and receding and shifting their courses to the sea, American images of the Chinese have traveled a long and changing way, from Marco Polo to Pearl Buck, from Genghis Khan to Mao



Tse-tung. The name of Marco Polo is scratched onto the mind of almost every American school child. Attached to it are powerful images of China's ancient greatness, civilization, art, hoary wisdom. Genghis Khan and his Mongol hordes are the non-Chinese ancestors of quite another set of images also strongly associated with the Chinese: cruelty, barbarism, inhumanity; a faceless, impenetrable, overwhelming mass, irresistible if loosed."

The last great swing in attitudes came only a few years ago when "ping-pong diplomacy" paved the way for Kissinger's secret trip to Peking in 1971 and for Nixon's China venture in 1972. The Cold War images suddenly vanished. Gone were the references to blue ants, faceless masses, yellow hordes, the bamboo curtain, and Chinese Hitler youth. Journalists vied with each other to give insights into the "New China" America had just discovered. Television crews covered every facet of the Nixon voyage; the viewing audience was gigantic, almost as large as watched Armstrong first walk on the moon. Joe Alsop, in one of journalism's most remarkable about-faces, came back from his trip with glowing reports. Chinoiserie was again in fashion. Chinese knick-knacks and panda bear facsimiles were found in department stores. Bookshops jumped on the China market, ordering visitors' accounts, Mao's little red book, and studies on acupuncture. America was again in its Marco Polo mood, leaving Genghis Khan in the dust of the 1950s and 1960s.

Nixon and the television cameras took all of us to the Great Wall and the Forbidden City, to the Peking Zoo and the Ming Tombs, to the banquets at the Great Hall of the People. It was a remarkable moment in diplomatic history and it has had great repercussions. The Shanghai Communique, signed in February 1972, set the stage for detente. Liaison offices have been established in Peking and Washington, staffed by senior officials from both countries, and providing many of the services of full-fledged embassies. Sino-American trade reached almost one billion dollars in 1974 (though it has fallen off to an anticipated half billion dollars for 1975). Detente assisted efforts to extricate ourselves from the morass of Vietnam, and it has tended to produce a four-power balance in East Asia consisting of China, the Soviet Union, Japan, and the United States. Several American organizations have been formed to promote cultural, educational, scientific, and commercial exchanges with China. Since 1971, about five hundred Chinese from the People's Republic have visited the United States, and almost ten thousand Americans have had the opportunity to visit China.

As a result of these changes, Americans began to probe beyond stereotypes and see some extraordinary accomplishments of the Chinese revolution. It became apparent that the Chinese had made great strides in solving the problems of food, health, housing, and literacy for over eight hundred million people. For Americans who

could remember the horrors of "Old China" with its beggars, disease, inflation, and constant warfare, Mao's China seemed to bear little resemblance. For anyone interested in developing societies, the Chinese model appeared to offer important guidance in terms of social and economic engineering. The Chinese were up to something new and exciting. Their pride and purposefulness touched the millions of arm-chair travellers who watched television sets and read papers and magazines. We had all become Marco Polos.

But now it's been three and a half years since the Nixon visit and the passionate fixation on China is beginning to fade away. The President who took us to China with such pomp and splendor has been exposed as a crook and a liar. For Secretary Kissinger the China venture now seems his solitary exploit of unquestioned success; elsewhere his foreign policies have shown less forthright direction and have frequently led to outright failure. America finally lost its war in Vietnam, a war that kept our attention focused on Asian affairs for over a decade. Post-Vietnam headlines deal with domestic crises and the Middle East. President Ford's announcement that he will visit China sometime in 1975 produced yawns in most quarters and anger from the Republican right. It seems unlikely that the Ford visit will produce dramatic changes in Sino-American relations or that it will rekindle the curiosity many felt back in 1972.

Perhaps the waning of our early 1970s "China high" will have a salutary influence on American attitudes in the future. Perhaps for once we can avoid the "love-hate" syndrome, and instead try to perceive Chinese realities with critical understanding. The dangers of extremism remain strong. I recently encountered a high-placed American official who observed, "from my experiences, the Chinese have put the timetable for 1984 ahead about a decade." On the other end of the spectrum, a visitor to China commented, "flying from Shanghai to Tokyo is taking a trip from mankind's new future to mankind's oppressive past." I believe the truth lies someplace in between and that we still have much to learn about the Chinese revolution. I hope that China will not become the polemical plaything of Cold Warriors seeking to vindicate misguided policies of the past, nor of frustrated activists searching for a panacea to human ills. In both cases we find Americans more interested in reinforcing their own prejudices than in understanding the accomplishments and problems of the People's Republic of China. Indeed the Chinese themselves encourage a more balanced approach. On several occasions our guides and hosts admonished us: "When you return to America please report honestly on what you saw here. Talk about our achievements and our difficulties. Otherwise no one will believe you." In that spirit I want to explore some issues and themes that emerged from a three-week visit and a decade of study about China beforehand.



**Interaction of Past and Present.** A trip to China provides a rare opportunity to see a quarter of earth's population in the process of revolution. It is revolution begun, but it is not revolution completed. As an historian, I was constantly aware of the tension between tradition and modernity that underlies the Chinese revolution. The Chinese possess the world's oldest continuous civilization, and the past is everywhere even today. The visitor can find a quiet corner of Peking's Forbidden City, look up at the magnificent palaces covered with gold and vermilion, and imagine the ceremonies and intrigue of the old imperial court. One can walk beneath the Great Wall and almost hear the pounding hooves of Mongol and Manchu war horses bringing armies to conquer the Middle Kingdom. One can sit in isolated spots in the lovely rock gardens of Soochow and think back to the refined life of elite officials, artists, poets, and merchants who built them centuries ago. But as soon as one leaves these secret windows to the past, he confronts the throngs of today's Chinese who are visiting these vestiges of an earlier era. A century ago any commoner who entered such places invited death. Now the Forbidden City, the Great Wall, the gardens are public monuments frequented by soldiers, school children, families, and visitors from the minority areas of Tibet and Mongolia. Tour guides and signs point out the need to "make the past serve the present" and to "criticize the oppressive Confucian society" which produced such architectural creations. The message is clear and powerful — appreciate the native Chinese genius handed down over the generations, but realize that the imperial state and society brought untold costs in human labor and suffering.

Prompted by the same motive of using the past for present purposes, some university students and professors are beginning to re-examine China's imperial history in search of heroes and villains. Their research, available in pamphlets at state-owned bookstores in major cities, has drawn some interesting conclusions. The arch-enemy is Confucius and those followers of the Confucian doctrine throughout traditional history. Confucianism is seen as a major cause of economic, social, and psychological oppression during the dynasties. The Confucian influence is portrayed as strong force in today's China as well, leading to the oppression of women by fathers and husbands, students by professors, young people by elders, and so forth. The heroes in this re-evaluation of Chinese history are the philosophers and statesmen who belonged to the Legalist School which criticized the Confucian tradition and instead emphasized law and administrative systems. To most Western historians, the Legalists make for curious heroes since they were ruthless authoritarians and advocated horrible punishments for offenders. A current hero is the first emperor of the Ch'in dynasty, who conscripted tens of thousands to build the famous Great Wall and punished those who came late to work with immediate execution. But this emperor also burned the Confucian classics and purged Confucian advisors, thus earning him praise in contemporary China.

Much of the historical interest deals with more recent events, with the revolutionary experiences of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the exact center of Peking's T'ien-an-men Square one finds the Monument to Revolutionary Martyrs which depicts the struggles of Chinese in the Opium War, the Taiping Rebellion, the Boxer Movement, the Sino-Japanese Wars, and the Civil War. Our itinerary also included visits to famous spots in the Chinese Communist movement: Mao's birthplace at

Shaoshan, Mao's middle school in Changsha, early Party headquarters in Changsha and Wuhan, and so forth. I found the religious devotion to Mao a little overwhelming — we saw more "beds Mao slept in" than I like to remember, hundreds of "Long Live Chairman Mao" signs in neon lights above buildings, and thousands of Mao pictures including one with a halo around it. But through it all comes the sense that modern history is living history for the Chinese. They genuinely identify with the revolutionary martyrs, with the Communist movement, with Mao's leadership. It is strangely dislocating to come from an America full of cynicism and confusion to this New China where ideology reigns supreme, where none seems to disagree about the basic lessons of the past and the basic needs for the future.

The great turning points in recent history are the Liberation of 1949 which ended the civil war with the Nationalists, and the Cultural Revolution of 1966-69 which led to a great political purge and an ideological revitalization. The Cultural Revolution was a cataclysmic event with even deeper impacts than I had imagined. Almost every conversation makes some reference to "before 1966 . . . and then since the Cultural Revolution." At a textile factory: "Before 1966 our production was low and workers had difficulty expressing their opinions, but now production is 210,000 meters of cloth a day and workers are well represented through the revolutionary committee and their trade union." From a student at a middle school: "Before 1966 the slogan was 'study, study, study, examination, examination, examination,' but now classes are more open, grades less important, and professors less domineering." A former Red Guard now studying to be a "barefoot doctor" (the Chinese term for a paramedic): "Before the Cultural Revolution we had adequate medical facilities only for the fortunate few who lived in cities, but today all Chinese receive vaccinations, check-ups, first aid treatment, birth control and hygiene information." Sometimes one feels that the Chinese exaggerate conditions before and changes since 1966, but there was no doubt that everyone believes the Cultural Revolution was a real revolution. For the younger generations in particular, 1966-69 was a great period in which they went on their own "long marches," grappled with the problems of revolutionary ideology, and attacked the domestic and foreign "enemies of the revolution."

The past also has strong influences on how the Chinese deal with foreigners today. The visitor is officially treated with grace, efficiency, and kindness. It is assumed that you have come to see the new Middle Kingdom, so that while you can ask questions freely, very few questions will be asked in return. It's frustrating indeed to have thousands of people stare at you every day, but to have no one probe beyond the "I am an American friend" level. The crowds that gathered were usually very friendly — cheers and waving frequently greeted our bus as we travelled through the bustling urban streets. In the city of Wuhan, however, I found a different reaction. Wuhan has been a revolutionary hotpoint for over fifty years and its tradition of anti-foreignism is very strong. Here an old woman kicked and hit children whose curiosity had led them to gather around our hotel door. Here a mob forced me to expose a roll of film because I had taken a picture of some older dwellings on a main street. "Taking pictures of the old society is an act against Sino-American friendship," they yelled with anger in their voices. I tried to explain that I had several pictures of new apartment buildings, that



there were newer apartments in the background of the photo I had just taken, and that our guides told us to photograph whatever buildings we liked. Such arguments were to no avail — the revolutionary traditions of Wuhan, and perhaps also the influence of the recent campaign against Italian film director Michelangelo Antonioni, led to the loss of my film.

This range of experiences underscores the fact that China is still deeply caught up in the forces of revolution. Social and economic changes have occurred with remarkable speed. Under the pressures of revolution, people's moods shift rapidly. After the violence and turmoil of the late 1960s, China is now in a period of relative quiescence but the embers still glow and occasionally burst forth in flame again. Perhaps there will be other cultural revolutions in the future as the Chinese seek a continuing battle with tradition in quest of Mao's goal of "permanent revolution." But that's a question in the domain of the futurologist, and is certainly outside the realm of the historian.

**The Countryside.** The interaction of past and present is nowhere more apparent than in rural China where eighty percent of the population lives. From the vantage of a train window, the countryside looks much as it has for millenia. When we visited the peasants of the Yangtze valley were preparing the paddies for the spring rice crop. Standing up to their knees in muddy water, the peasants still rely primarily on their own labor and the help of water buffalo to flood the fields, soften the soil, and move the seedlings to the paddies. The land is rich in color with greens, yellows, and browns. Small clusters of houses, with stucco walls and thatched roofs, are scattered across the hilly landscape. And everywhere one sees people — planting crops, herding sheep, wheeling pigs to market, bicycling on roads, caring for children, chatting with friends. Suddenly all of the facts I have lectured about take on a new significance — China is roughly the same area as the United States, only a quarter of China's land is arable, population density in rural China frequently exceeds a thousand persons per square mile.

How can people live under such conditions? Millions have died over the past two centuries as the result of population explosion, drought, flood, famine, and warfare. As recently as the early 1960s, the Chinese suffered badly from natural disasters and the aftermath of the Great Leap Forward. Yet on our travels through rural China by train and bus, I never saw any signs of starvation, malnutrition, or widespread disease. The population has almost doubled since the 1940s, from 500 million to current estimates which exceed 900 million, and yet food production has more than kept pace. Some of the answer can be found in increased state investment in the agrarian sector, in new seed varieties, new fertilizers, rotation methods, and farmer training institutes. Another part of the puzzle is solved by Chinese exports of rice from the productive central and southern regions, to pay for imports of wheat to northern China from Australia, Canada, and the United States.

But the deeper answer is found in the profound revolution that has shaken rural China. It's a revolution that began with violent land reform and took shape in the various stages of collectivization culminating in the commune movement. Today the Chinese countryside is divided into 25,000 communes which can pool human labor and provide services on a widespread regional basis. In traditional China the basic economic unit was the

family working tiny plots of land for survival. Through the commune movement, at least in its ideal form, the Chinese have brought the notion of "economies of scale" to agrarian production. The commune movement did not develop tranquilly, land reform and the Great Leap Forward of the 1950s brought considerable death and dislocations, but at least the Chinese avoided the extreme brutalities of the Soviet approach in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

For some reason the Chinese failed to schedule any visits to communes on our itinerary in China; and it was only after our strong protestations that we were permitted to spend a day at Kao-tan-ling Commune in the central rice lands. It is a commune set in lovely rolling countryside along the banks of the scenic Hsiang River replete with sailing junks moving slowly in the mist. Kao-tan-ling is surely an above-average commune, perhaps even a model commune. But even as an ideal, it's an impressive example of Maoist accomplishments. At the time of the Communist takeover in 1949, only one-third of Kao-tan-ling's land was suitable for rice farming. The rest was marshy floodplain of the Hsiang River or arid, rocky hills back a mile or so from the water. For over a thousand years, the peasants had simply worked around what seemed insuperable obstacles to greater productivity. Then through collectivization the labor of the commune's 18,000 residents was pooled and they tackled the problem of land reclamation. A long dike some fifty yards high was built along the river, and then a hydraulic system was established to pump the water from the marshes to the uplands. Suddenly all of Kao-tan-ling became arable. The former swamps are now rice paddies, and the hills have been terraced and irrigated to grow cabbages, peanuts, cotton, lettuce, rapeseed, and tea. Using their own physical labor, hand tools, foot-operated water pumps, water buffalo, and a few small hand tractors (a combination motorcycle and tractor), residents claim that annual productivity has increased 70% since 1966.

The commune is a relatively self-contained social and economic unit, and it is subdivided into 10 production brigades (roughly the size of a village in earlier days) and 150 production teams (each representing the collection of a few households). In addition to grain products, the commune raises some 27,000 pigs, and runs a variety of small factories producing farm machinery, bricks, plastics, noodles, and clothing. Although commune children begin working in the fields at age nine, Kao-tan-ling provides twelve primary schools and four middle schools for their basic education, political study, and development of agricultural skills. There is one communal hospital with twenty-two doctors, and each production brigade has its own clinic run by a barefoot doctor. While many farmers still live in the old-style homes of stucco and thatch, several new one-floor brick apartments have been built in the hilly sections. Throughout the commune, in the fields, factories, schools, and clinics, the peasants are assisted by urban middle-school graduates, teachers, soldiers, doctors, and cadres who have been "sent down to the countryside."

As we left Kao-tan-ling, having been treated to a magnificent feast of commune-grown foods (the best meal we had in China), we agreed this had been our most impressive experience in China. Throughout the commune, as we chatted with peasants and looked at their achievements, we had felt that there was indeed a living reality behind the Maoist slogans of "self-reliance" and "serve the people." But it was only one commune and a





*Lovely gardens in Soochow, formerly the property of scholar-officials, have now been turned into public parks for urban residents and visitors.*



*Women now comprise a large percentage of China's labor force, as in this Soochow silk factory where they are selecting cocoons for various qualities. The world's finest silk thread comes from this city.*

one-day visit. To see whether our enthusiastic assessment of Kao-tan-ling would apply to many other communes as well, we would have to wait until our next trip.

**The Cities.** It is difficult to generalize about communes because we saw only one; ironically, it is difficult to generalize about cities because we saw five — Peking in the north, Wuhan and Changsha in central China, and Shanghai and Soochow near the seacoast. Although these cities have been transformed by the revolution, each still vividly reflects its historical heritage. Peking, the capital of China for the past eight centuries, remains a sober and hard-working administrative center with its broad avenues and huge government buildings. Shanghai, headquarters for foreign commercial interests before 1949, is a cosmopolitan seaport harboring ships from all over the world. Along the Shanghai waterfront, and on adjacent shopping streets, one finds people leisurely strolling, doing shadow boxing and martial arts exercises, and buying goods from a wide array of department stores, markets, and smaller shops. Indeed Shanghai was the only city where we saw young couples holding hands, openly expressing affection in contrast to the strict puritanism which reigns elsewhere. Soochow, a lovely city of canals and formerly a major center for affluent merchants and intellectuals, retains its relaxed atmosphere. Its magnificent gardens, parks, and temples, preserved by the new regime and now open to the public, symbolize the calm and aesthetic qualities of the city. Wuhan, by contrast, is a major industrial center on the Yangtze and, as I suggested before, retains its fierce commitment to revolutionary idealism. It was the only city where we saw "big character posters" covering city walls as students and workers made personal critiques of national and local political trends. Changsha to the south, reflects its proud Maoist heritage, and has converted several buildings where Mao studied, taught, and worked into major museums of the Communist movement.

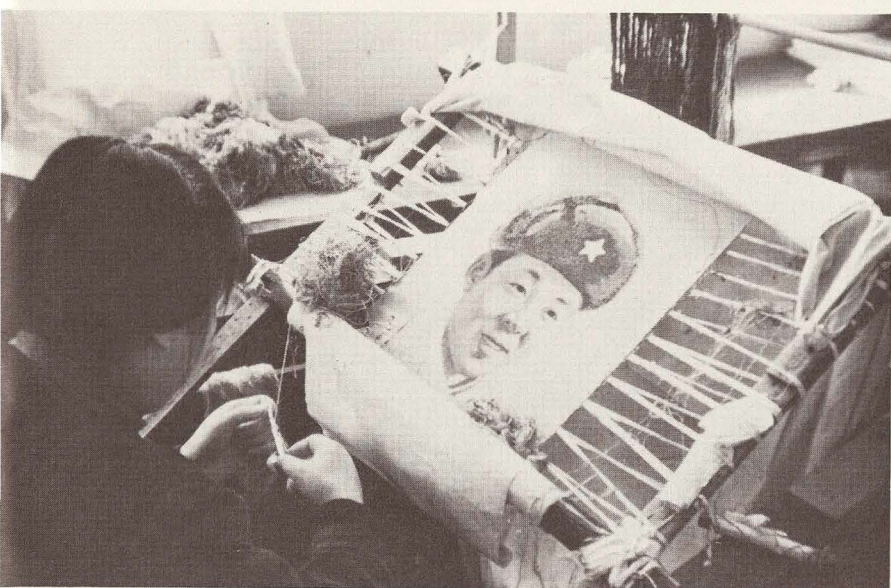
Overriding these local differences, however, are the strong unifying influences of the past quarter century. Ideology and organization are the hallmarks of the new urban China. Revolutionary committees, a creation of the Cultural Revolution, provide governance at every level of urban life. These committees are composed of cadres,

soldiers, and local personnel. They offer administrative services as well as ideological training within the municipalities, districts, neighborhoods, hospitals, factories, universities, and schools. About half of these committees are members of the Chinese Communist Party, thus ensuring both continuity in policy and strong emphasis on political thought.

In the cities, as in the countryside, the Chinese have promoted a Maoist route to social and economic development, a route that makes a compromise between guidance and participation. While in Peking, we were taken to Ho-p'ing-li Neighborhood Committee, a grass-roots organization which supervises the activities of 66,000 residents, divided into 23 resident's committees. At one of these resident's committees, I talked with a family. The father and mother both work in a local factory; one son, a doctor, still lives at home with his wife, the other son and the daughter both work in factories outside Peking. They noted that the committee provides medical care, laundry facilities, an all-hours market, and a day-care center. They spoke with great pride about their living conditions, contrasting their three-room apartment to their earlier one-room dwelling, and observing that "we are among the very few in Peking who live this well." Several times they mentioned their sense of involvement in local functions — political study meetings, adult education classes, and recreation programs. Again, like at the commune, I left impressed by the ideals I had seen, but uncertain how far the ideals have become reality elsewhere in Peking and in urban China.

Another ideal that emerges from a visit to Chinese cities is that of balanced economic growth between light and heavy industry (just as Mao espouses balance between the industrial and agrarian sectors through the slogan "walking on two legs"). We did tour some big plants, a Peking Cotton Mill and a Shanghai Machine Tools Factory, which utilize relatively modern machinery and emphasize ever-increasing production. But we visited many smaller factories as well, producing clothing, bicycles, embroidery, sandalwood fans, arts and crafts. These factories are former household industries which have been collected into a single location and put under coordinated management. After having been stung by the Soviet Union in the 1950s, the Chinese have moved to a





*An embroidery expert maintains the ancient skills while focusing on this contemporary portrait of a soldier in the People's Liberation Army.*



*A large demonstration on the streets of Shanghai celebrating middle school graduates who are going off to work in the countryside.*

more moderate pace in creating industrial capacity. Having developed sufficient military potential to ward off foreign aggression (including nuclear weapons and ICBMs), the Chinese are avoiding the more typical developmental pattern which relies on heavy industry, foreign trade, and foreign technology. Balanced growth and self sufficiency seem more important to the Chinese than heavy involvement in the international economic community. Whether recent discoveries of substantial oil deposits in China will move them to a more active foreign trade policy is a question for the future, but at present the economy is remarkably insulated from outside forces.

The goal appears to be that of keeping city and countryside working in tandem, avoiding the obsession with urbanization, mechanization, and heavy industrialization that has characterized development in Japan, Western Europe, the United States, and the Soviet Union. Remarkably, the Chinese have maintained their pre-modern population ratio (20% urban and 80% rural) into their modernizing period as well. To accomplish this, they have resorted to several devices: urban birth control, the "down to the countryside" movement, and strict limitations against rural movement to the cities. Through these devices, and through periodic mass campaigns, the Chinese have sought to narrow the urban-rural gap, to overcome the affluence and elitism that usually characterizes urban life in developing countries.

Whether this approach can outlive Mao is an issue that deserves close attention in future years. The potential for elitism and consumerism is there. City dwellers do make more income and have access to more goods than their peasant counterparts. City department stores stock an attractive supply of products including transistor radios, television sets, wind-up toys, well-tailored clothing, cameras, books, musical instruments, and the like. Some urban residents, particularly cadres and army officers, seem to enjoy the more comfortable life, buying these goods, eating in more expensive restaurants, riding in pedicabs and state-owned automobiles. No one knows if the post-Mao leadership will attempt to overcome these materialistic tendencies, keeping political training and revolutionary ferment in the forefront, or if more familiar Western and "revisionist" patterns will emerge. This is an issue which none can predict with confidence.

**Education.** China's educational system may hold the answer to the question of elitism or egalitarianism in future years. In the old society the Confucian tradition was strongly elitist: the commoner worked only "with his hands" and must be kept separate from the scholar-official who worked "with his mind." Education was the great social dividing line, and eighty percent of the population remained illiterate. In recent decades, however, the Chinese have attacked illiteracy through mass public education, through night schools and part-time schools for adults, through simplification of the written characters. At present the literacy rate in the People's Republic of China is approximately 70% of its gigantic population. The huge New China Bookstores in major cities are always jammed with peasants, soldiers, and workers browsing through the paperbacks on literature, Marxist theory, history, science, medicine, art and music.

While seeking solutions to illiteracy, the Chinese have also given careful consideration to the content and structure of their educational system. In the 1950s the Chinese copied the highly-centralized Russian educational plan — one engineering school in Shanghai even established ballroom dancing classes just as the Russians had done since Peter the Great. Feeling that the Russian system produced a new technocratic elite, Mao tried several educational experiments in the 1960s seeking to mix revolutionary politics with technical training, all under the slogan "red and expert." Finally Mao embarked on the famous Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution from 1966-69. Millions of students became Red Guards, criticized their teachers, and left school to preach to workers and peasants. China's entire educational establishment closed down for three years.

The schools began to reopen in 1970, and university enrollments still remain a fraction of their numbers in 1966. Any visitor can see that the Cultural Revolution wrought a radical transformation in Chinese education. Teachers, students, textbooks, teaching methods, classrooms, research techniques, libraries — everything was touched by that violent convulsion in the late 1960s.

Under Mao's slogan, "put politics in command," political study now plays a predominant role in education at all levels. The famous little red book of Mao's Quotations has now been replaced by pamphlets and



textbooks on the new themes of "Criticize Lin Piao, Criticize Confucius" and "Study the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." Factory workers, schoolchildren, peasants and university students spend several hours a week discussing these themes and applying them to their personal lives. China is no longer caught up in the furor of the Cultural Revolution, but the processes of group-criticism and self-criticism continue to operate in the schools, factories and communes. To assure political awareness, government cadres and intellectuals are sent off to May 7th Cadre Schools for a period of three months every three years. Here they spend some of their time doing manual labor, and the remainder engaged in deep political study and discussion. The Cadre School we visited outside Shanghai had several hundred students who helped plant the spring rice crop and build dormitories, while they pondered the implications of Lenin's "State and Revolution." While I found this obsession with political study intellectually stifling (a day as a participant in a May 7th Cadre School would have driven me crazy), one must admit that the Chinese have clearly avoided our own dilemmas about how to mix values and education.

Because of this political indoctrination, and because of the enormous achievements of the People's Republic, one senses a remarkable commitment to the revolutionary cause. After a century of humiliation, the Chinese have regained their pride. Such pride is obvious in the faces of peasants showing off their crops, families their new apartment dwellings, barefoot doctors their clinics, and laborers their newly-created factories and machinery. But such pride has not been won peacefully, and one frequently feels the physical and psychological violence that still accompany the Chinese revolution. First graders perform a song and dance routine about "Eliminating the Class Enemies" and, at the end of the performance, raise wooden swords and slash out at the imaginary enemies, shouting "kill." Students and teachers at Peking University, China's most prestigious liberal arts institution, hold up the brilliant philosophy professor Fung Yu-lan as an example of a "reactionary worshipper of Confucius," who after undergoing criticism and confessing his wrongdoings, now "follows the road of the workers and peasants." And the Chinese continue to use the simplistic but effective device of portraying fallen leaders as scheming, vicious, diabolical figures. Liu Shao-ch'i, once head of state and author of "How to be a Good Communist," is pilloried as the "number one capitalist roader." Lin Piao, a great military hero and Mao's declared successor in the Party Constitution of 1969, is now linked with Confucius (a dubious combination) and vilified as a revisionist, opportunist, and capitalist. Perhaps this is a tactic the Chinese have learned from Stalin — Stalin incidentally still has heroic status in China and his picture is always on the walls of public rooms along with Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Mao.

As political education has increased, so has the assault on elitist tendencies. Students no longer go on to college directly from middle school, instead they go off to work in factories and communes for several years, and must be recommended by their laboring colleagues for admission to institutions of higher education. At all levels of education, the Chinese place great stress on work-study programs. University and middle school students operate their own factories making chemicals, transistors, gears, truck parts, and other small mechanical products. Agricultural and technical schools frequently have direct ties with particular

communes and factories to enable a fluid interchange between workers, teachers, and students. At some institutions, like the famous Children's Palace in Shanghai, factory workers provide much of the instruction in engineering, electronics, drafting, and Morse Code. Most universities now offer short courses in everything from medicine to ship-building.

The attack on elitism and Confucian traditions has led to a strong women's liberation movement in Chinese education. Women now comprise roughly a third of the students in China's technical institutes and liberal arts institutions. On-the-job training and apprenticeship programs have also prepared many women to hold jobs previously reserved for men. We encountered many women in heavy industrial jobs, including crane-operators, high-tension wire workers, truck drivers, and dock workers. Most of them had struggled in their families to convince skeptical fathers and mothers that there was something to Mao's slogan that "women hold up half the sky." In the industrial city of Wuhan, one woman in her twenties told of her fierce arguments about working the high-tension cables with her father who had used an old Chinese aphorism, "having a woman do a man's job is like hoping that a rabbit's tail can grow longer." In cases like this, the support women receive from the educational system, from fellow workers, from the ubiquitous propaganda helps them break through the Confucian tradition of male dominance. The woman won her victory. Now she not only does dangerous high-tension cable work, but she is also a leading member of the Wuhan Revolutionary Committee and a member of her provincial Women's Federation.

For male and female alike, the new educational establishment emphasizes political commitment and egalitarianism, as it also strives to provide basic technical skills for a developing society. In kindergartens, elementary schools, and middle schools, students learn basic and higher mathematics, physics and chemistry, history and politics, Chinese language and a foreign language (English is the most popular, Russian fell into disfavor in the early 1960s). Some schools offer more specialized training; for instance, many elementary schools teach basic techniques of Chinese and Western medicine. It's a bit of a shock to see a twelve-year-old sticking acupuncture needles in herself and her friends, but out of this training emerges that huge corps of barefoot doctors who have carried first aid, hygiene, vaccinations to the countryside.

Surely the most impressive aspect of Chinese education is its emphasis on physical and cultural development. From nursery school onwards, children are trained to sing, dance, play musical instruments, and perform acrobatics. By the time they reach elementary school, many Chinese are remarkably adept performers. First and second graders sweep gracefully across the floor as they do dances imitating Mongolian horsemen, ice-skaters, flocks of ducks, and bears and bumblebees. Grammar school students sing popular revolutionary songs with great vigor and precision — the favorite song at the moment is taken from the movie "Shining Red Star." Many students are accomplished musicians by the time they enter their 'teens and can play both Chinese and western instruments with remarkable facility. Several schools have their own student orchestras using Chinese instruments (two-stringed violins, zithers, flutes, and drums) which accompany student dancers, singers, and musical soloists. Physical exercise is also a major part of



the daily regimen. At regular intervals students march in the courtyards, run through obstacle courses, play tug-of-war, and develop that physical stamina that Mao prizes so much.

Many schools also stress art and calligraphy. The writing brush, formerly the tool and symbol of Chinese elitism, is now wielded by those who would have been illiterate in old China. At department stores, Chinese flock to the brush, ink, and paper sections, so that they too can practice the difficult strokes of the Chinese written language and Chinese painting styles. The products of their work sometimes become "big character posters" which are publicly displayed to express political sentiments. Others produce what is known as "peasant art," landscapes and portraits that emphasize themes of importance to the laboring Chinese. Good "peasant art" is in great demand and it is virtually impossible to buy it in art stores.

In short, China's educational revolution in recent years has addressed some very basic problems in Chinese society: elitism and the emergence of a privileged technocracy, the historical subordination of women, widespread illiteracy and the absence of basic skills, minimal medical services for rural China, and the cultural and artistic deprivation of the commoner. Beyond these issues lies an even deeper aim of the new educational approach: the effort to keep alive the revolutionary spirit of egalitarianism and altruism among Chinese youth. That was the purpose of the Cultural Revolution, and that is the purpose of the educational experiments today.

**Some Unanswered Questions.** Where China goes from here is a most difficult question to answer even tentatively, impossible to answer conclusively. All too many "three-week experts" have returned from their visits and made pronouncements about China's present and future with far greater certitude than Chou En-lai has ever expressed. For me the trip to China resolved a few issues while opening up a range of questions that can only be answered by future visits and ultimately by the course of history in the late twentieth century.

One question I can answer now, though I found it impossible to answer for several weeks after returning, is "how did you like your trip?" At first the experience was too immediate, the images too many and too confusing, but slowly the visit has come into clearer perspective. I liked the trip a great deal and it has left a deep and enduring sense of sympathy for the Chinese revolutionary experiment. I keep recalling faces and people, and comparing them to the chilling images of poverty and disease one encounters in photographs of early twentieth-century China. Smiling children, proud mothers holding up babies for photographs, giggling teenagers hiding behind each other, families picnicking at the Ming Tombs, Tibetans strutting about in the fur coats and black boots, schoolchildren reciting English lessons in unison — these are memories that reflect something of the spirit behind today's China. I especially recall a peasant woman at the commune who was so excited about our visit, about showing off her new apartment and her family, that she just stood in the background, beaming and nodding, as her husband carried on the conversation. From our experiences China emerged as a clean, proud, resourceful, purposeful country not just on the surface, but at very deep levels of people's thinking and feeling. When an old longshoreman in Shanghai described the docks in the 1920s and 1930s, graphically recalling the low wages, beatings, and futile strikes, his leathery face became full of emotion and

his voice began to tremble. China has come a long way in a quarter century and you see it and feel it everywhere. It is a moral and committed society, one that raises some deep questions about our own conditions and goals.

But the Chinese must also confront some fundamental problems of their own in the years ahead, problems that may become more acute after Mao's death. First, will the Chinese in their passion for levelling the society undercut the creative insights, the new ideas, the inventions that have come from intelligentsia in other societies? China's universities are still reeling from the sharp blow of the Cultural Revolution. Peking University, for instance, has a teaching staff of 2600 and has only admitted a total of 8000 students; that makes for a tiny student-teacher ratio, but it also makes for very few graduates. The total enrollment in all of China's institutions of higher education amount to 450,000 or .05% of the population. The atmosphere in the two universities we visited, Peking and Wuhan, was rigid and formal; answers to questions were long-winded, stereotyped, and boring. Perhaps the new intellectual cadre is emerging outside the universities, at special training institutes and within government service, and the leadership has decided to use the university system as a public service organization. If this is the case, then the Chinese will protect their future intellectually, while giving the impression of absolute egalitarianism in higher education. If it is not the case, one wonders where the Chinese will find the intellectual energy to face the great domestic and foreign dilemmas ahead.

And a second unanswered question: must the Chinese people withstand a series of physical and psychological shocks like the Cultural Revolution in the future to counter the forces of revisionism and elitism? Indeed can they tolerate such stresses indefinitely? Without an ongoing series of mass movements, Mao's ideal of "permanent revolution" may fall into abeyance and the signs of elitism and materialism already present may multiply and eventually swallow the communal and egalitarian ideals. But continued pressure from above, especially without Mao's sensitive hand to guide mass movements, could result in serious domestic strife as factions develop throughout the state, society, and army. Under such conditions the "safest" route would be to lie low and remain uninvolved, hardly an appropriate posture for a revolutionary activist. At present it remains uncertain which route China will take, or whether the post-Mao leadership can continue to walk the difficult path which has meandered from feverish national campaigns to periods of extended quiescence and regrouping.

But as the verdict remains out on these issues, it is evident that the Chinese are asking some basic human questions about elitism vs. egalitarianism, about revolutionary commitment vs. material comforts, about human needs vs. ever-increasing industrial production. The Chinese surely have not found all the answers, but they are posing provocative ideas for other developing countries. ■

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# The Admissions Venture

by *Larry R. Dow*

In seeking this fall's entering freshman class of about 400 students, the Trinity Admissions Office received applications from almost 3,000 candidates — more than ever in the history of the College.

At a time when many colleges find themselves confronting severe problems in attempting to maintain enrollments, the volume of our candidate pool is particularly encouraging. However, the figures are no cause for complacency. Factors and conditions such as mounting college costs and skepticism about the value of the liberal arts pose great challenges to Trinity and other comparable colleges as they strive to enroll the most capable students possible. Since the overall strength of any September's entering class cannot exceed that strength present in February's pool of candidates, the admissions venture seems clearly two-dimensional. Indeed, if we are to engage in the selection (and enrollment) of students whose intellectual and personal energies seem most evident, the College must continue to attract as applicants those who will best contribute such qualities to this academic community. Perhaps the efforts to achieve this can be explored by reviewing the process which, through correspondence, interviews and other meetings, brings our admissions staff into contact with approximately ten thousand secondary school students each year.

During June, July and August, when many students and their families find it most convenient to visit campuses, the admissions staff, consisting of W. Howie Muir, director, Susan Martin Haberlandt, associate director, and two assistant directors, Donna L. Irish and this writer, meets with hundreds of prospective candidates. Tours and group information sessions are conducted daily by a Trinity undergraduate, while the staff schedules individual appointments for those who request them. These meetings familiarize potential applicants with many aspects of the College, enabling them to consider Trinity more realistically in terms of their own academic abilities, learning style, social expectations and curricular and extracurricular interests. In turn, we are often able to gain a preliminary appreciation of a student's general academic progress and personal achievements.

Scheduled interviews and group sessions continue through the fall months, at which time the admissions staff spends an aggregate of twelve to fifteen weeks visiting over two hundred secondary schools, seeking to communicate to groups of seniors the kind of college Trinity is and defining its singularity as an institution with unique opportunities, purposes and characteristics. We stress, for

example, that if Trinity's curriculum were measured on a scale of flexibility, it would probably emerge as one of the most flexible in the country, for it offers a wide range of internal possibilities — student-designed majors, interdisciplinary study, open semesters, internships, etc. — within a fairly traditional liberal arts framework, while also making available such external opportunities as foreign study, consortium cross-registration and exchange. We also discuss such topics as the make-up of the College's population, the cost of attendance, financial aid, the physical campus and our athletic programs.

School visits are an important part of the admissions process, since they take place when seniors are thinking of their goals and options, beginning to ponder more seriously which colleges they might wish to attend, and perhaps specifically whether Trinity represents an appropriate choice for them. Moreover, we are able to speak with college counselors about the various academic programs and learn of changes which may have taken place since we last visited. This is of major interest to us, as the Admissions Office maintains files on hundreds of schools in an effort to comprehend fully the nature of each program. By reviewing the information we have received and by updating the files with current data and commentary, we are better able to judge the quality of a student's performance at a given school. (We also pay attention to the student's work once he or she is enrolled at Trinity, and are able to note whether students from any particular school seem unusually well or poorly prepared.)

We value greatly the relationship between our office and a school's college counselor. Unfortunately, some schools have lost interest in college representatives' visits and no longer urge us to schedule meetings. As more and more admissions officers from more and more public and independent colleges actively recruit students, guidance counselors find it difficult to accommodate them. Occasionally, our visits are poorly publicized, since it seems the urgency to meet with admissions officers has somewhat diminished over recent years.

Nevertheless, group meetings, whether in the form of on-campus information sessions or secondary school visits, are valuable to candidates in that the format of these sessions elicits far more questions about Trinity than any one candidate might think to ask in an individual meeting. These sessions also allow students to think over criteria for choosing a college by listening to the other students' comments.

It is difficult to isolate or analyze all the criteria seniors weigh in going through the process of college selection, for every decision is prompted by a different pattern of reasoning, a different perception of what a given college may offer or require. But cost is a growing concern. Independent institutions whose costs have risen significant-



ly during the past decade must be increasingly sensitive to the burden of expense higher education places on the student and parents. Consequently, one of Trinity's most pressing challenges has been, and will be, to maintain its reputation as a distinguished small college without succumbing to economic pressures threatening to inflate tuition and other fees to unmanageable dimensions. There are no simple solutions to this problem; the need for acceptable faculty salaries and the rising costs of fuel and plant maintenance constitute the most compelling pressures involved. Nevertheless, Trinity must continue to cope effectively and efficiently with these requirements if our attendance costs are to remain reasonable and within the financial bounds of our candidates. (Although efforts are made by Trinity and comparable institutions to find solutions to their common problems, each college recognizes its independence and the competitive necessity of holding its own costs down, for failure to do so would lead to its elimination from consideration by potential candidates.)

Inevitably rising costs put additional pressure on financial aid. As the admissions staff attends fall group sessions and "college nights," concerned parents invariably raise questions regarding the College's program of student financial aid, and their eligibility for assistance in meeting the expense of higher education. Trinity's Financial Aid Office, working closely with the Admissions Office much of the year, is able to offer assistance to a majority of candidates who qualify for aid and who will be admitted to the College. Without this assistance, or at least its availability, our applicant pool would soon consist exclusively of candidates whose families are able to afford expenditures of well over \$5,000 per year for a student's education. (This year's schedule of College fees consists of: Tuition, \$3,325; General Fee, \$125; Room, \$800; Board, \$760; Student Activities Fee, \$70; General Deposit, \$50. Books and personal expenses are additional.) Surely, if the ability to meet all such expenses unaided were a requisite for initiating an application to Trinity, the size, diversity and quality of our pool would be appreciably diminished.

So, throughout these fall months, our objective in traveling and interviewing is to generate interest in the College and to help students and their families learn more about Trinity, thus to produce the strongest pool of realistic candidates possible. It should be emphasized, too, that although we are able to speak with an enormous number of persons in this way, our efforts from June through December only partly account for the amount of interest in Trinity suggested by the size of our candidate pool. The number of candidates is augmented by the

participation of students, parents and alumni who, through their comments of advice and description, encourage friends, acquaintances and relatives to learn more about this College. This sort of interest and support has real significance in terms of our success in attracting a strong group of applicants, for often we hear from candidates that persons who know Trinity have spoken well of their experience at the College, either as students or otherwise.

As January approaches, the number of applicants continues to increase, although the traveling period is over, and interviews are no longer possible. We then turn our attention to the evaluation of applications and to the selection process itself. By January 1, all personal applications have been received from freshman candidates to be considered for entrance in the following September, and for the next four months we will be fully immersed in the business of reading files, commenting, reading more files, reacting, discussing, deliberating, counting and finalizing the nearly three thousand decisions by mid-April. It is an extremely consuming effort, requiring members of the staff to devote seventy or eighty hours each week to the evaluation of files.

Predictably, the process of selection begins with the reading. Each folder is studied by two officers ("first round" readings) before being discussed by all members of the staff during the so-called second round, which normally doesn't get under way until mid-March. Each candidate's file includes a personal application, two evaluations written by secondary school teachers, a report of the applicant's Scholastic Aptitude Test scores, the results of the Achievement Test in English Composition, an evaluation by the applicant's college advisor or guidance counselor, and a complete transcript of secondary school work. It is not unusual for the file to contain letters from alumni and others interested in an individual's candidacy.

Undeniably, any college admissions process has its limitations. It is subjective; it is imperfect. Recognizing this, we feel that the elements of a Trinity candidate's file do render a comprehensive and reliable indication of a candidate's academic and personal profile. Since most of our applicants are well-prepared, having demonstrated their ability to perform well scholastically, it becomes the difficult charge of this office to determine as best it can which individuals seem to evidence serious academic interest, intellectual vitality and personal promise, and strong commitment to extracurricular activities.



Much of our attention focuses on the candidate's academic program, and the task of evaluation is never easy. How, for instance, should we compare the record of a Chicago-based independent school student with that of a student who attended public school in Lebanon, New Hampshire before moving to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania during the junior year? Or one student may have pursued an accelerated program in the sciences, enrolling in Advanced Placement biology, chemistry and calculus with two other major subjects in the senior year, while another may have elected a standard college preparatory course sequence with little advanced or accelerated work, completing the senior year with four courses. Our updated school folders become very helpful in this way, since considerations such as these override shallow interpretations of grades and class rank.

As a sometimes helpful standardized measure, the candidate's SAT scores are reviewed, although there is no formula for determining their significance in any one decision. Students at Trinity have SAT scores which vary widely in range, but a majority of admitted candidates will have scores of 600 or better in both the math and verbal areas. Similarly, class rank is a limited device which must be interpreted in the light of what is known about a particular school, but most of our admitted candidates will be in the top tenth of their public school classes or in the top fifth if ranked in independent schools.

Because our intent is not to select or reject candidates on the basis of a single piece of information (SAT or class rank, etc.), the file of each candidate is considered in its entirety, allowing each reader to react to the whole person as depicted in the folder. Remarkable personal qualities, unusual background or experience, physical impediment or extenuating home circumstances are considerations inseparable from SAT scores, varsity letters and grade average. These very intangible elements of a candidate's file, impossible to quantify, are essential to our understanding of the individual.

The candidacy of a son or daughter of a Trinity graduate is favorably affected by that familial bond. Consequently, one of our most difficult moments occurs in anticipating the disappointment that will be felt by the "offspring" and family when we find ourselves unable to invite that candidate to Trinity. All other admissions factors seeming equal, the Trinity son or daughter will receive the fullest consideration, although the competition for admission often requires that we turn down many personally qualified, academically sound men and women, or applicants with especially appealing personal characteristics.

By mid-March the "first round" readings are completed, which means each file has been read by at least one officer and the director of admissions. A portion of the

candidates will have been designated as definitely admissible or not to be admitted — applicants whose bids are decidedly strong or weak, and whose applications will not require further discussion by members of the staff. Since the vast majority of candidates are still in the undecided group at this time, the staff begins to discuss these remaining applicants one by one, a slow but crucial process which helps us arrive at that final group of the best qualified candidates expected to yield a class of desired size.

In seeking this year to enroll a class of about 400 freshmen, it was necessary to admit over 1100 candidates, since almost all students admitted to Trinity receive offers of admission elsewhere, most often from institutions such as Harvard, Yale, Williams, Brown, Wesleyan, Tufts, Dartmouth, Princeton and other prestigious and competitive institutions.

Candidates notified in mid-April of their admission here are requested to respond by May 1. Those final two weeks of the annual cycle are an anxious time for the admissions staff, at once gratifying and disappointing, as we begin to learn, response by response, which persons will take their places in the next entering class and which persons will not. Trinity generally fares well in this sense, but the intense competition among colleges to enroll these students reminds us of the importance of having a strong applicant pool from which to choose, since there is never a guarantee that a student who is admitted to Trinity will eventually elect to attend.

It would seem apparent that, in the coming years, the continuing admissions effort will have to be broad and vigorous if this institution is to weather the strains of the future and maintain its popularity among those students who will attend college. Trinity's selection process is aimed at enrolling a diverse student body with wide ranges of interest and achievements, but Trinity's reputation as an intellectually exciting college will continue to be the critical factor in attracting these able candidates. That Trinity will continue to compete with other prestigious colleges emphasizes a challenge we all face, for it is that segment of the student community consisting of the academically potent which establishes the milieu for intellectual activity at the College, and Trinity's ability to sustain its reputation for academic excellence may be both determined and measured, at least in part, by our success in the admissions venture. ■

*Larry R. Dow, Class of 1973, is assistant director of admissions.*



# POETRY *by Hugh S. Ogden*

## THREE POEMS

I The bus arrives at dawn.  
I get out on State Street and begin  
walking. A half-hour  
later I am on a local  
going westward again.  
At the end of the line I walk  
down to the bay.  
Susan's hands are on the window  
lifting shades.  
She does not see me.  
When I get home he is still  
asleep and I do not want  
to scare him. I sleep  
in the front seat of his car until mid-morning.  
I walk into him standing  
in the kitchen, his hands shaking  
over the orange juice he would pour.  
Oh, it's you, he says turning.  
I shake a hand as skeletal as rock  
and sit down at the table  
with a piece of toast  
and talk about the twenty-hour  
bus trip: Springfield,  
Albany, Syracuse, Buffalo.  
He does not move,  
his eyes knowing something I would know.

II There were times when  
he wanted to be alone  
and he went down to his boat  
and slept the night.  
Once he asked if I would come.  
I wondered what such things offered:  
mosquitoes, flies, the dampness  
of nightfall on the bay.  
Everything sticky and fused.  
Excuses.  
I said no,  
fearful of how I would say good-night  
when we turned out the light.  
And he went alone at dusk,  
mother watching over her book  
lifting her eyebrows out of another world.  
The door closed on the lake,  
his boat, a night upon water.

III There was the bay with its shaky  
legs of sand  
that protected water.  
The milestone harp,  
buoyant, marked the channel  
where the oreboats docked.  
His boat fed with dreams  
in the waters of Presque Isle,  
close-hauled in the eyes of children,  
comes through its channel homeward  
berthing. So many times  
he was its solitary sailor,  
the tiller on his leg, his grey  
eyes seaward, until his hands  
failed and the range opened  
to infinite pilings and rocks.

## NIGHT

*for Anne Sexton*

When I look into the fishbowl  
one more fish has died. The water  
is green with algae. The others hover  
near the surface wanting air.  
They breathe a deep perfume.  
It is like a river in August.

It is like the night you saw  
with its eleven stars, a limb  
rising up out of the petrified town.

The dark took all your interest,  
so pure, so restful, so endlessly blank.  
All around you history was swimming  
with predators, a backwater  
of deception: fins circling love  
preparing attack, sharks at their own hearts.

All denied themselves, denied the level  
you lived at, your writing desk opened  
upon your secrets where stars hung:  
until the hose ended at the window.  
The moon bulged with carbon monoxide.  
You wanted to float into peace

as if your gills would take in ether,  
a possessed being summoning the self  
and out of a dream your heart frozen  
in light. But the galaxies were only candles,  
your words on loan and water.  
It was the night, finally, took your breath away.

*Dr. Hugh S. Ogden, associate professor of English, has had  
his poetry published in numerous periodicals.*



# To Scotch a Canard

by Arthur H. Hughes

Despite the title I have chosen, this is not to be a culinary exercise and will not require an invocation by Julia Child. As a matter of fact, I shall start to unravel the skein I have in mind by picking up the loose end that has to do with the famous, ill-fated, and short-lived flagship of the White Star Line. Incidentally, if the events described had involved one of the ships of the White Star's British competitors, or an injudicious use of the broiler in somebody's kitchen, the temptation for me to indulge in paronomasia in my caption might well have proved irresistible. I do not, in any case, feel bound to observe here the prescriptions of the style sheet of the Publications of the Modern Language Association of America. For instance, there will be no footnotes.

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## 1. SS Titanic

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April 14-15, 1912.

"A night to remember," as we have come to think of it since the appearance of Walter Lord's book about the disaster. There was also, I believe, a later moving picture with the same title.

Sixty-three years have now intervened. That is exactly a quarter of a century less than the interval between the midnight ride of Paul Revere and Longfellow's poem celebrating it. "Hardly a man is now alive, who remembers," he observed, but in the case of the *Titanic* we have a different story. Practically everyone seems to know the principal details about the shipwreck, and the name of the liner has become a symbol for a stunning disaster.

For example, we were watching a British "soap opera" on television at our house not long ago. At the end of one episode it was necessary to send a wire to Lady Somebody or other, who at that moment was on shipboard en route from England to New York. Thus it was disclosed quite casually that she was on the *Titanic*. Enough said. One did not expect to see *her* around when action was resumed the following week although, after the fashion of the genre, a certain amount of suspense and curiosity had been generated concerning the way in which the news would be broken to her loved ones and acquaintances, and what their reaction would be.

Most people know about the *Titanic* from their reading, and so do I. However, I am old enough to remember a little about the day after the event itself. We were having a garden party, as I recall, and many of our guests arrived with copies of an "extra" that had been put out by the local papers. Everyone was expressing disbelief and shock. My father called up the editor at one of the newspaper offices and was assured that all the passengers had been saved and that the ship itself was still afloat. How different from modern times, when we learn about cataclysms practically before they happen. And when they do not happen often enough, people pay good money to watch simulated catastrophes on the silver screen. Escapist films are circulating nowadays about a ship that turns turtle, an earthquake, a fire in a skyscraper, with more to come. What a strange way to "escape"!

At this point, it will serve my ultimate purpose to recount briefly the chief events that go with this best known of maritime disasters. We shall want to have them in mind later.

Built and fitted out in Belfast, the *Titanic*, 46,000 tons, 882 feet long, four funnels, triple screw, was the sister ship of the *Olympic*, 45,000 tons, 900 feet in length, and the later *Britannic*, which was restyled considerably after the *Titanic* went down.

She was a floating palace with paintings and period art that would grace any museum. Every luxury was available to attract the wealthiest travelers.

The ship was thought of and advertised as unsinkable.

Her potential speed was such that she was expected to capture immediately and hold the "blue ribbon" for the fastest crossing of the Atlantic.

On her maiden voyage to New York, the *Titanic*



sailed from Southampton on April 10, 1912 and stopped at Cherbourg and Queenstown.

The passenger list contained names of famous and well-to-do people too numerous to mention. These "jet setters" of 1912 included many who had paid over four thousand dollars for their passage. More than a few families were attended by staffs of servants.

Hundreds of emigrants and less fortunate passengers were quartered below deck.

In all, including passengers and crew, there were 2207 souls aboard. There was room in the lifeboats for 1178 persons.

The speed record for an Atlantic crossing in those days dated from 1910 and was held by the *Mauretania*. She had steamed from Queenstown to New York in 4 days, 10 hours, and 41 minutes. Those figures were etched in the minds of all ocean travelers.

The weather was fairly good in the first days of the *Titanic's* voyage. On the fourth day out of her home port the sea was especially calm. The ship reached her maximum speed of 22½ knots.

Warnings of icebergs in the vicinity of her present position had been given regularly. Furthermore, it was known that the French liner *Niagara* had been disabled thereabouts by a collision with an iceberg only three days earlier.

Nevertheless, the *Titanic* went on sweeping through the night of April 14 without decreasing her speed.

At 11:40 PM, the lookout sighted an immense iceberg dead ahead. Immediately the helm was spun and the course of the *Titanic* was turned abruptly to starboard. It was too late. The ship grazed the iceberg, receiving her death wound.

Although there was no real panic, the course of events that followed is not easy to believe in some respects. Great courage, touching acts of kindness were recorded. But the handling of the evacuation of the passengers and the manning of the inadequate lifeboats was disorderly, not to say chaotic.

The *Californian* was close enough to be able to see the *Titanic* but was not maintaining radio contact with the stricken liner. Ignoring the distress rockets and oblivious to the disaster she went on her way. The *Carpathia* was 58 miles away. Other ships were sufficiently close to be of aid if reached by wireless. The SOS was not sent nor received in time to prevent a catastrophe.

As we all know, the band played on. Some say *Nearer My God to Thee* and some say the Episcopal hymn *Autumn*. Finally, watched by the survivors in the lifeboats, the *Titanic* stood on end and, at 2:30 AM, began its two-mile dive into water that had a surface temperature of 28°.

Fifteen hundred lives were lost that night. Less than a third of those aboard reached terra firma.

Iceberg patrols and stricter safety rules were instituted after the disaster.

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## 2. A Nobel Prize Winner

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He was born in 1862.

He was the son of an innkeeper in Obersalzbrunn in

Silesia. For 83 years of his 84 year life span, his native village was in Germany. In 1945 it became a part of Poland, and the Germans in Silesia were uprooted and expelled. To the credit of Poland it must be said that the Polish government preserved the birthplace of Gerhart Hauptmann and allowed him to live there if he wished to do so.

Hauptmann is best known as a dramatist, having written 27 plays as well as a number of novels, epic poems, and short stories. Beyond doubt, he is one of the major literary figures of modern Germany.

Although he was an exceptionally talented and prolific playwright through all of his life, one could say that he figured most prominently on the international scene before World War I. *Before Sunrise* was produced when he was 27, and it was followed by a number of plays in the tradition of Naturalism. Perhaps the best known was *The Weavers*, the tragedy of the working class in the Industrial Revolution. If it has some Dickensian overtones, the rest of his naturalistic work, treating such subjects as alcoholism, heredity and environment, the rights of women, would earn him in our terms the title of the German Ibsen.

Hauptmann was unusually skillful at shifting from one literary style and movement to another, depending on current problems and interests. Only four years separated *The Weavers* from *The Sunken Bell*, yet it would be hard to conceive of two plays more unlike one another, although there is perhaps a parallel in *A Doll's House* and *Peer Gynt*. *The Sunken Bell* is largely Romanticism, full of symbols, written in verse, idealistic, and was immensely successful on the stage.

To go on with his life and work would lead me too far afield. I dare say one reason why his plays are not more familiar to the American and English public was Hauptmann's failure to join many of his compatriots who left Germany after the National Socialists came to power. He was essentially an apolitical human being in his later years and, rightly or wrongly, his motivation was not that of Thomas Mann and others.

In any case, Gerhart Hauptmann received the Nobel Prize for his literary achievements at the age of 50. This was in 1912, the year in which the *Titanic* sank. No doubt the prominence that came with the Nobel Prize had something to do with the attention that was given in England and America to his otherwise, although undeservedly, obscure autobiographical novel *Atlantis*. It was also a product of the year 1912, even though the writing of it had been occupying him, along with other, more distinguished works, during the preceding two years. And thus I come to . . .

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## 3. SS Titanic and a Nobel Prize Winner, and Vice Versa

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In order to provide a handy recapitulation of this topic, it will be convenient to turn to the student's friend: *Thesaurus of Book Digests*, where we find the following under Hauptmann, Gerhart: "Of particular interest to Americans is perhaps the novel *Atlantis* (1912), based on the crisis of his first marriage and the resulting trip to the



United States and describing in amazing detail the disaster of the *Titanic* two years before it actually happened."

Now, there we have it. My interest in German letters goes back many years and, although *Atlantis* is not a book that one finds oneself discussing frequently, the cumulative effect for me of statements like that last sentence quoted above has become wearisome and downright annoying.

Item: On a later trip to America, Gerhart Hauptmann came to our town as a lecturer. A former professor of mine, a good friend of Herr Hauptmann, arranged to have him stay at his house overnight. I was asked to run errands, to arrange transportation, to act as a chauffeur and, in general, to make myself available wherever the unforeseen but inevitable embarrassments cropped up. As a reward, I was allowed to ride in the same car with the playwright after his talk, since I was invited to the professor's house for beer and pretzels or coffee and doughnuts and a small soiree. Herr Hauptmann held the floor and gave us his opinions, as I recall, about the current German and American theater. Eventually, someone interrupted him to ask how it happened that he had described the *Titanic* disaster before it actually occurred. I could see that Herr Hauptmann became a bit impatient. Whether this was due to the interruption or the comparatively trivial nature of the question, I do not know. However, I remember thinking that this was obviously not the first time he had been asked about the *Titanic*. "Pure coincidence," he said in effect, "I did not know anything with regard to the *Titanic* when I was writing *Atlantis*, and I have not given the matter much thought since the event. Naturally, I have heard it said that there must be some connection, but I think such statements deserve very little consideration."

Item: In the following year I was in Germany carrying a letter of introduction or, more precisely, a letter of reintroduction to Herr Hauptmann. I presented myself duly and found myself invited to be a member of a small theater party to see one of Hauptmann's own plays on a Berlin stage. Of course, I accepted. That evening was one that I did enjoy most thoroughly. I was familiar with the principal theaters of Vienna but I had never been in the *Staatstheater am Gendarmenmarkt*, in which German theatrical history had been written every year since 1821. As it developed some years later, the lights went out and the shutters were closed finally in Berlin theaters on October 10, 1944, and the old *Theater am Gendarmenmarkt*, like so many other stages in Berlin, became a heap of rubble during the nights of the bomb. I am glad I visited it a few times in its days of glory and I have certainly not forgotten the night of Mr. Hauptmann's theater party. No doubt you have guessed what question was directed to him, this time by a young British student whose father had gone down with the *Titanic*. The famous dramatist remained imperturbable. "Yes," was the gist of what he said, "I know about that, but I must confess that I cannot see any similarity between the sinking of the *Roland* and that of the *Titanic*. Two ships that went down in the North Atlantic. There have been many others."

Now we have had a good look at our canard. It has been quacking around for many, many years. I would not wish to give you the impression that I have heard it with

great frequency, yet I have come across this web-footed yarn often enough so that it triggers my reflexes when I read or hear it.

A short digression is in order here. Let us not ignore the *SS Titan*, without an "ic." She was the creation of one Morgan Robertson in his novel *Futility*, which appeared in 1898. She sank in the North Atlantic one April night after colliding with an iceberg. It had been thought previously that she was unsinkable. Her tonnage was 70,000 tons (displacement), her length 800 feet. The *Titanic's* measurements were 66,000 tons, length 882.5 feet. The *Titan* and the *Titanic* were driven by three screws and their respective top speeds were 25 and 22½ knots. Now, if someone wants to tell me that there is a remarkable coincidence here, I am prepared to believe him. Nobody ever mentions Robertson to me, though. Few people have heard of him or his novel. With Hauptmann it is a different story.

Gerhart Hauptmann could not detect any resemblance between the fate of the ship in his story and that of the *Titanic*, nor can I. And I do not think a person could compare the two as being similar if he had really read the novel *Atlantis*. This brings me to . . .

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#### 4. SS Roland

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The novel *Atlantis* is ostensibly the account of a trip to America by young Dr. Friedrich von Kammacher, a physician and bacteriologist. It quickly becomes patent that the story is autobiographical to a large extent, and that Hauptmann is speaking through his protagonist. The tone of the novel is deeply pessimistic. Dr. Kammacher is suffering from galloping *Weltschmerz* and seldom wakes up without a headache, which can be explained either by the kind of weather that the steamer is continuously encountering or by the dreams that torment his fitful sleep. Many of his observations are of a philosophical nature and seem to derive from the points of view of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche as well as Buddhism. The style of the writing is frequently Kafkaesque and at times would remind an American reader of Poe. Symbols float about like derelict wrecks in the Atlantic Ocean, which the voyagers seem to fear more than icebergs (975 wrecks had been counted along the Great Circle Route in a five year period, someone says), although they seem to be thrown in to achieve a kind of "Bermuda Triangle" effect. However, it is one of them that finally does the *Roland* in.

*Atlantis* can mean the new continent America and it appears, without receiving a name, in Kammacher's dreams, first as land resembling the Canary Islands or the Azores or Madeira (traditional sites of Plato's *Atlantis*), or second as the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean. In that second dream there are some really macabre descriptions of the way in which the drowned corpses on a sunken liner would appear to a living diver.

Yet those are but details of style. It turns out that the *Roland* is carrying a full complement of crew members in addition to first class and steerage passengers. Hauptmann brings some of these people to life most strikingly. I shall mention a few as I describe the ship's voyage and, in any



event, one is taken quite convincingly aboard a liner and surrounded by persons such as one would have expected to find on board in 1892, supposedly the year of this journey. Somewhere it is said that the *Tout-Berlin* seems to be traveling on the *Roland*, but Friedrich Kammacher's contacts are chiefly with his colleague and foil, the ship's doctor, and with a rather Bohemian group consisting for the most part of variety *artistes*. They serve here to permit discussion of different aspects of the problems of the artist as opposed to the *bourgeoisie* or the Philistine, a theme which had interested Hauptmann regularly in the past. As far as the passengers on the *Roland* go, however, I would defy anyone to find a reason for thinking they resembled those on the *Titanic*.

*Atlantis*, I want to say, pessimism aside, is rather good reading. At the same time, I should like to make the point that to isolate from the wealth of tangential descriptions and digressive philosophizing the pertinent details that concern the *Roland* itself, her last voyage and her end, is like attempting to remove intact the bony skeleton from a baked shad. However, I am about to try.

The German mail and express steamer *Roland* left Bremen on her last trip to New York on January 23, 1892. She was one of the oldest ships of the "North German Steamship Company," obviously meaning the North German Lloyd. Her name is a fitting one, for *Roland*, whose statue occupies a prominent place in the center of the Hanseatic city, means Bremen to a German. Furthermore, Hauptmann is able to play on the symbolism of *Roland's* horn as the vessel sounds her sirens while she is approaching her "Roncesvalles" in mid-Atlantic, not to mention the regular use of a trumpet call instead of a gong to summon the ocean travelers to meals.

The *Roland* sailed from Bremen with a captain, four officers, six machinists, a purser, and a storekeeper, each of the last two having an assistant, a chief steward and a chief cook, each with an assistant, and a ship's doctor. Also seamen, stewards, stewardesses, cook's helpers, a barber, stokers and other employees below decks, several cabin boys, and a nurse, 160 in all. There were 100 cabin passengers and 400 in the steerage. By the Needles, at the mouth of Southampton harbor, the *Roland* lies to, and a half dozen more passengers, including Dr. Friedrich Kammacher, are brought out on a tender. They have to climb aboard by means of a rope ladder while the ship rocks in choppy seas. The ship's orchestra is on deck playing a march for the benefit of the climbers. Then the steamer starts off again for New York with 666 souls on board.

The *Roland*, we learn in the course of the story, had been built in June, 1881. This year was therefore her tenth in her company's service from Bremen to New York. She was a single-screw ship with two funnels. Her registered tonnage was 4,510. Her top speed was 16 knots. Compare these measurements with those of the *Titanic*, if you will.

The weather is bitter cold, for it is mid-winter, and the seas are running high in the English Channel. In the North Atlantic, the situation goes from bad to worse. The *Roland* pitches and rolls so much that only fifteen to twenty people show up regularly in the dining salon, which makes it unnecessary for the author to introduce us suddenly to a

large number of characters. Some of those whom we do meet are indeed "characters," though. There is an armless man, a vaudeville performer with an engagement in New York, who eats his meals (all alone, in a smoking lounge) by using a knife and fork held between his toes. I hasten to add that he has a valet in constant attendance. In fact, such intrusions of the grotesque in the midst of elaborate, realistic, and convincing details about everyday occurrences on shipboard are a reason why I was often reminded of Kafka while I was rereading *Atlantis*. Hauptmann, of course, knew nothing of Kafka's work, though during the following year the latter, in his turn, began to write a novel about a fictitious trip to America.

There is a loquacious ship's barber who shaves Friedrich daily and successfully in spite of the ship's gyrations and fills him with information about the passengers and the sea. There is a postmaster who answers every question with "Why?"

Dr. Wilhelm, the ship's physician, becomes friendly with his colleague. The two of them discuss the rights of women, illnesses that are transmitted genetically, the political situation in Europe, and a miscellany of other topics. Among various routine duties, they are kept busy professionally by the death of a stoker, who succumbs while at work and who is buried without ceremony at sea, and by the abortion of a fetus, a result which appears to have been the main and only reason why the pregnant girl had embarked on an ocean trip.

Despite the continued bad weather, Dr. Kammacher manages a couple of amatory interludes which must have involved a certain amount of acrobatics. One is with a sixteen year old dancer who has lately been the toast of Berlin and of whose presence Dr. Kammacher had been aware when he took passage on this particular ship. The other affair is with a Russian Jewess who is a passenger in the steerage. Friedrich does not "forget himself" below decks, however, but in the office of his colleague.

The days and the nights come and go. Ordinary events and unusual ones occur, but the weather remains uniformly bad. The waves are mountainous, ice forms on the decks and on the tackle, a catastrophe is felt to be looming in the background at all times. Once the engines stop and the ship drifts helplessly, but that crisis is weathered.

To be sure, there is one brief period of a few hours of sunshine and calm weather. The ladies and gentlemen who have been confined to their cabins come out, bask in the sun, although it is still cold. Dinner is a gala occasion. Everyone wears evening dress. There is music and dancing after dinner. The affair is enlivened by a meet with the *Fürst Bismarck* (a real ship, incidentally, of the Hamburg-America Line), which steams past while passengers cheer and wave handkerchieves and the orchestras of the two ships play the national anthem. Hauptmann observes that the *Fürst Bismarck* was just returning from its world's record crossing of 6 days, 11 hours, and 24 minutes. According to the *World Almanac*, however, the world's record was held in January, 1892, by the White Star Line's *Teutonic* and amounted to 5 days, 16 hours, 31 minutes, Queenstown to New York. Perhaps the author had in mind a passage from Bremerhaven or Cuxhaven to America.



The whole chronology of some parts of *Atlantis* is a bit confusing. In the first paragraph of the novel we learn that the *Roland* left Bremen on January 23, 1892. The calendar for that year (again, courtesy of the *World Almanac*) shows that to have been a Saturday. The author puts the afternoon of good weather and the meet with the other German liner on an evening three and a half days out of Southampton, and on the next morning there are Sunday services. So the *Fürst Bismarck* must have gone by in the evening of Saturday, January 30th. After searching out and counting breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, sunrises, sunsets, and nocturnal activities, I agree with the author that three and a half days had then gone by since the late afternoon boarding of passengers off Southampton, which, in turn, must have taken place on Wednesday, January 27th, although there is a possibility that half a day got lost somehow. The *Roland* did not stop at a French port after leaving Bremen, for Dr. Kammacher had to travel from Paris to Le Havre by train and by packet boat to Southampton in order to make his connections. To me the greatest mystery about the voyage of the *Roland* is how she managed to take at least four days to cover the less than 500 miles between Bremen and Southampton.

From Southampton on, to be fair to Hauptmann, the chronology is accurate, though it is a bit hard to follow. Saturday had been the lull before the storm, which strikes with full force on Sunday morning, becoming a cyclone. The wind howls, the icy waves sweep over the decks, the passengers are confined to their quarters and a few public rooms. Monday, if anything, is worse. By Monday night nobody dares close an eye in sleep but clings instead to his bedframe and tries to avoid being thrown out onto the floor. In the gray light of the early morning of what must have been Tuesday, February 2, 1892, the sixth day out of Southampton, the stewards come around to each stateroom to arouse the passengers with the word "Danger!"

Although we are never quite certain what happened, it is the consensus that the *Roland* struck one of the drifting derelicts that have already been mentioned. In any event, it is soon manifest that she is sinking, and chaos ensues. By sheer coincidence, and inasmuch as he has close connections with the author, Friedrich finds himself in the only lifeboat that is launched without being swamped. The account of the sinking of the *Roland*, preceded by riots and desperate struggling for any advantage, the attempts of drowning and freezing men to climb into Friedrich's boat only to be clubbed by oars and boathooks — all this is gruesome and horrible and unforgettable. Nevertheless, I can find practically no resemblance between this account and the stories of the survivors of the *Titanic* as collected by Lord in *A Night to Remember*.

Friedrich Kammacher and his fellow passengers in the lifeboat row and drift all day as the storm slowly subsides. Stiff from the icy spray and almost drowned, they are picked up on the evening of the same day by the freighter *Hamburg*, en route from the Azores to New York. Fifteen people are in the lifeboat, but one is already dead. There are thus fourteen survivors from the *Roland* out of an original company of 666. They include Dr. Friedrich von Kammacher, Dr. Wilhelm, the blonde toast of Berlin and

— did you guess correctly? — the man without arms. And, fortunately, his valet.

So much for the voyage and the sinking of the *Roland*. The *Hamburg* proceeds slowly to New York and sights land on February 6th. All these events to this point have required 175 pages of a 320 page novel. I find nothing prophetic concerning the *Titanic* with the single, unimportant exception of the fact that the orchestra was playing a march while the ship went down. Most probably this occurred to the author because the orchestra had been playing a march when the voyage started.

If there was a passage in the novel in which Gerhart Hauptmann might have been foretelling the future, it came after Dr. Kammacher had just landed in New York City. "It seemed inconceivable," the author wrote, "that a minute could go by in this hopeless, roaring chaos without collisions, violence, bloodshed, and murder."

Just the same, the doctor stays in New York for some time, following closely the career of the blonde bombshell and associating himself in general with people in show business. Before heading back to Germany, however, he takes a trip in the United States. Since we were led to suppose at the beginning of the book that he was interested in Niagara Falls and Yellowstone Park, it came as a distinct anticlimax for me when I discovered that his trip (to visit an old friend) was a ride on the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad from Grand Central to Meriden, Connecticut.

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#### 5. Enough, already!

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At a luncheon of our local Rotary Club during the Ides of April last we had a visitor, a youngish German engineer from Stuttgart. Since he spoke very little English, the gentlemen at the head table arranged for him to sit beside me. Naturally, I started to probe into his chief interests in my search for topics of conversation. They were thermodynamics, rocketry, transportation, bathers on the beach (female), and Walt Disney World. I think I have them in the proper order.

I do not know just how it happened. Maybe it was the time of the year, the anniversary. I cannot remember exactly. However, one of our table companions said something about the *Titanic*. English or German, that rang a bell in the mind of my new friend. He turned to me and said: "Did you know that a German author described the sinking of the *Titanic* two years before it actually happened?"

"Yes," I said, "I believe I *have* heard something of the sort."

But this is where I came in.

\* \* \*

Dr. Arthur H. Hughes, M.S. 1938, Hon. L.H.D. 1946, is professor of modern languages, emeritus. He retired in 1971 after 36 years of service to the College as dean, vice president, professor of modern languages and co-chairman of the department, and twice as acting president.



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## A Story of Hope *by William B. Walsh, Jr.*

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*Project HOPE has been an important part of my life. My father is Founder and President of HOPE. My brothers and I worked aboard the S.S. HOPE virtually every summer of our high school and college years. Since graduation from Trinity in 1968, I have served with HOPE in Latin America as well as domestic projects. I am currently Director of Middle East and Africa Programs. I have seen firsthand the effects of severe health problems on a society and the need for their solution.*

*It gives me great pleasure to tell the story of HOPE. I am truly committed to its ideals and am proud to be a part of it.*

For the past 15 years Project HOPE has been dedicated to improving the health of people in developing countries. HOPE has trained more than 8,000 physicians, nurses, dentists, and allied health personnel. The benefits of these educational programs are manifested by improved health service and health education systems.

Project HOPE embodies several contemporary U.S. attitudes toward countries less fortunate than our own. It reflects a spirit of the 50's demonstrated in U.S. efforts to help nations help themselves recover from World War II. We are sincerely devoted to the promotion of constructive change in health reminiscent of the call for commitment echoed on college campuses in the 60's. We hope that the '70s and '80s will be a period in which the people of the United States will continue to help developing countries because of their sense of compassion for others.

### A Short History

In 1958 Dr. William Walsh, a practicing cardiologist in Washington, D.C., presented to President Eisenhower the concept of a peacetime hospital ship whose purpose would be to bring modern techniques to the developing world. Its primary purpose was not to be treatment but rather the education of local health professionals and technical workers. With the support of the President and the Navy, a World War II hospital ship was obtained.

The next two years were busy ones. Two million dollars was raised. A staff of medical teachers was recruited. Supplies and equipment were procured. Plans were made for the first voyage. The name HOPE was selected because of its meaning, its easy translation to all languages, and because its individual letters effectively represented our purpose — Health Opportunity for People Everywhere.

The S.S. HOPE sailed on her maiden voyage in 1960. That trip was to Indonesia and South Vietnam, and missions followed to Peru, Ecuador, Guinea, Nicaragua, Colombia, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, the West Indies, and Natal and Maceio, Brazil. These missions averaged ten months. Upon the request of a host country, HOPE selected a cadre of medical personnel to remain when the ship departed after a mission. The success of these followup programs furnished the basis for HOPE's present-day emphasis.

Project HOPE embarked on domestic programs for the first time in 1969, employing the teaching techniques learned abroad in existing facilities of two communities in the American Southwest. These programs were in the Mexican-American community of Laredo, Texas, and at Ganado, Arizona, on the Navajo Indian reservation. An additional program in El Paso, Texas, opened in mid-1974.

In April, 1974, the decision was made to retire the S.S. HOPE, a decision based primarily on the fact that the Project had outgrown the ship. Operating from a ship limited the Project to those countries which possessed adequate harbors and docking facilities, and HOPE found it essential to respond to the repeated invitations of landlocked nations equally in need of HOPE teaching and training programs.

### The HOPE Approach

Project HOPE's approach to the improvement of health conditions is based on six concepts:

1. Treatment alone does nothing to alleviate an area's long-term health problems. It is essential that the host country become more capable of dealing with the conditions. HOPE's objective is the preparation of personnel for this task.
2. It makes more sense to bring education to developing areas rather than to finance the training of their citizens in developed countries. Students participating in such a program very often do not return to their own countries. We tailor our projects to the needs and culture of the individual areas in which we work.
3. Long-term assistance in a broad range of health-related fields is a prerequisite to significant impact on an area's health system. HOPE programs are generally comprehensive involving several health professionals, including physicians, dentists, administrators, nurses, laboratory technologists, physical therapists, medical records librari-



ans, pharmacists, health planners, environmental engineers, health economists, medical maintenance personnel, etc.

4. As a private organization HOPE has a large degree of flexibility in the selection of approaches for solution of health problems. We can work easily with the public or private sector. It cannot be construed that our motives include anything but a sincere interest in helping.

5. People learn by doing. Our approach to the training of host-country counterparts is more often through informal discussions concerning joint projects than formal reports filled with recommendations. We dream, plan and implement together. Formal teaching methods are used when the program involves the education of students. We believe that we have a great deal to learn from health professionals in developing areas.

6. Project HOPE goes only where it is invited and where it can realistically expect to make significant contributions to the health care system of the country.

The invitation may come initially from the government of the country, the medical profession, or a health sciences faculty. Before HOPE accepts the invitation, however, all organizations which will be involved must agree to participate.

#### HOPE Today

HOPE currently has programs in Maceio and Natal, Brazil; Cartagena, Colombia; Cairo and Alexandria, Egypt; Krakow, Poland; Tunis and Nabeul, Tunisia; Kingston and Montego Bay, Jamaica; Barbados; Grenada; Antigua; Ife, Nigeria; Trujillo, Peru, and El Paso, Texas. A description of elements of the Peru, Tunisia, and Jamaica projects follow as good examples of the kind of programs HOPE is involved in today.

##### *Jamaica*

■ For many years, Project HOPE has been aware of the problems of the increasing emigration of physicians from less developed countries to the developed nations — physicians often educated at the expense of a government already facing financial difficulties. In most instances, foreign medical graduates who undertake training in the United States, Canada, or other developed countries do not receive training to meet the needs of their own country. Rather, they are trained to meet the needs of the country in which they are trained. Consequently, many do not return to their country of origin.

To counteract this tendency, Project HOPE is aiding several governments and medical schools in less developed areas by evolving medical education programs locally to meet the needs of the area.

One HOPE effort in this area began in 1971, when Project HOPE was requested by the Government of Jamaica and the University of the West Indies to aid in the

development of a residency program in an effort to reduce the number of young graduates of the medical school emigrating to the developed countries.

Shortly after the start of its program in the West Indies, Project HOPE began its affiliation with the University in the establishment of a postgraduate medical education program. HOPE's initial efforts with the University were to help identify objectives, then establish goals and consult on curriculum for the postgraduate program. Since then, HOPE has been sending faculty members and senior residents from North American universities and teaching centers in such specialties as internal medicine, gastroenterology, neurology, pathology, and community medicine to aid the faculty at the University of the West Indies.

The Project HOPE participants are integral members of the faculty and work in partnership with their West Indian counterparts in the teaching of residents and medical students utilizing a curriculum which has been developed to meet the needs of the West Indies.

##### *Tunisia*

■ Finding solutions to community health problems is an integral part of HOPE's work. It is a result of these programs that personnel such as health assistants, family nurse practitioners, and sanitarians are prepared to curb health problems at their inception and more important, to prevent such problems from arising.

When Project HOPE began working in Tunisia in 1969, it became evident that health protection was dependent upon the creation of a healthful environment. As a result, a full-scale environmental health program was initiated in the North African country.

A Project HOPE environmental engineer, together with hospital officials, began planning a new water distribution system, a new sewage network, and a waste disposal system for the hospital.

Hospital sanitation courses were initiated for members of the hospital staff, and solid waste falls were provided for each building in the hospital complex.

The pilot program covered about 60 percent of the hospital services. Shortly after the beginning of the program, however, its success led to a second Tunisian sanitarian being assigned as counterpart to the HOPE environmental engineer, and the program was expanded to encompass the entire complex. An infection control program was designed and put into operation.

A bacteriological laboratory opened at the Tunis Hygiene Service. A large part of that laboratory's time was devoted to city-wide infection control by quality evaluation of consumable items and inspection of food service establishments.

In the field of public health, a three-phase plan was developed. HOPE personnel and their counterparts revised the existing curriculum to include the training of public



health nurses, sanitarians, and sanitary aides. This program was established at the Public Health School in Nabeul. This initial phase also called for the expansion of the program, providing more personnel to conduct the program and staff the expanding facilities.

The second phase called for the establishment of a model public health program in a chosen region of Tunisia. The program will provide health care for people of the selected region as well as a training site for allied health and public health students.

The third phase will be a continuation of phase two, extending and implementing education and services as necessary for the establishment of a public health policy for Tunisia.

The environmental health program in Tunisia encompasses a great deal of counterpart teaching as well as formal classroom instruction. Numerous seminars have been presented covering disaster relief; rural water problems; sewage treatment; infection control, both in and out of the hospital; and nearly every other aspect of environmental health.

#### *Peru*

■ When Project HOPE first went to Peru, personnel shortages existed in every field of medicine and allied health, but the shortage of nursing personnel was the most acute.

In 1964, two years after HOPE began working in Peru, University of Trujillo officials requested HOPE's assistance in the establishment of a university-level program in nursing.

HOPE's initial survey indicated that the area had a need for clinical nurses, nursing leadership, and improved public health nursing.

An agreement outlining the proposed development of the nursing school was reached between the University and Project HOPE. HOPE personnel would assume responsibility for all nursing courses during the first four years of the program. Upon appointment of Peruvian instructors, HOPE consultants would work with them as counterparts, assisting the new nursing instructors with teaching and other faculty responsibilities. The instructors also received graduate education at Latin American institutions which had graduate nursing programs. When the faculty of the nursing school showed evidence of being prepared to assume full leadership of the school, HOPE consultants would be phased out.

In 1965, the first class of nursing students was admitted and began their training. At the same time, Peruvian nurses began their training as educators so they would be able to serve on the faculty. By the end of the first two years of the program, more than 100 students were enrolled and Peruvian personnel were joining the faculty.

The third year of the program saw the beginning of

clinical work in the school. The following year brought the graduation of the first class of Peruvian nursing students and the appointment of eight Peruvian nurses to the faculty of the nursing school.

By 1970, more than 50 new nurses had been added to the medical community as a result of the new nursing school. It was also during 1970 that the last HOPE consultant to the program concluded her work in Peru.

Today, the Nursing School at the University of Trujillo continues to train nurses to help upgrade the health conditions of Northern Peru. Through HOPE, the University was able to produce its own faculty — the graduates became teachers.

#### *The Future*

HOPE is presently involved in the expansion of its programming activities both at home and abroad. We believe our eventual operating optimum is a maximum of 20 major programs consisting of 25 to 50 educators at each site with an annual budget of at least \$500,000 for each program. The financing of these projects will in large part continue to be from private contributions of the American people.

We are also in the process of developing new capabilities in research, publications, and continuing education. These new dimensions will enable HOPE to expand its role as a conduit for the exchange of medical knowledge between developed and developing areas. We believe our programs offer real life situations which provide ideal settings for determining the applicability of various theories concerning the resolution of world health issues.

We will be diversifying our activities more, placing emphasis on environmental health, nutrition, population planning, and ambulatory care service delivery. This will complement our concentration in medical and allied health education. We are presently investigating the feasibility of HOPE involvement in educational programs for the purpose of improving food production and nutrition education.

It remains the firm conviction of Project HOPE that the health of the citizens of a nation or community is vital, not only to the individual but to the socio-economic development of the nation or community itself. People are a country's greatest resource. Protecting and improving their health will help them realize their potential and ultimately raise their standard of living. No country or community can be stronger than the health and vigor of its people. We live in an interdependent world — improved conditions in developing areas is a prerequisite to peace and the continuation of this nation's good future. ■

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## "A Sometimes Memory" by Stephen Minot

Malvina Hodgson Boone sat alone at the end of the couch, watching. The room was full of relatives. They were drinking cider and eating potato salad. They were talking to each other in subdued tones the way Hodgsons often did. She watched, hands in her lap. No one was talking to her.

No one is talking to Malvina Hodgson, she said to herself. Malvina is sitting at the end of the couch, watching, and no one is speaking to her — none of her brothers or her sisters or her father . . . aren't her sons here? No one is talking to Malvina Hodgson, but she isn't sorry for herself or bitter. She merely watches, putting faces and names together.

Malvina was forty-five and slightly overweight. At college she had been a champion swimmer and had played tennis with men. But over the years there was less and less chance to exercise. When she and her husband lived in Venezuela there had been servants to do everything. That was the beginning of trouble. And of course the children. The boys. Where were the boys?

"Hello." A girl was looking down.

"Yes?"

"It's good having you here." The girl paused. There was a wild look in her eyes like a child on stage who is unsure of her lines.

She's not a Hodgson. Young enough to be a second cousin or a niece, but she hasn't the build. Too slight. Narrow shoulders. Narrow hips. Poor girl will have a terrible time in childbirth. Strange that she should welcome me here, her not even a Hodgson. Probably has me confused. No wonder with all these people.

"Why shouldn't I be here?" This without bitterness. "I'm one of the family."

The girl sat down. She was very serious. She put her hand on Malvina's shoulder. "Mom, are you . . .?" Her pretty little mouth remained open, groping for words. "You have no cider. I'll get you some."

"No, no cider, thank you."

"I'll get you some."

She's a foolish little girl, Malvina thought, watching her skinny back turn this way and that, weaving her way through the crowd, dodging clumps of adults and little knots of children. And very awkward. Strange how awkward these young ones are. No social ease. Not sure of who I am. Not sure of what to say.

But she didn't mind being left alone. It was a strain to be taken for someone else.

Malvina Hodgson sits alone sipping cider. She has been mistakenly taken for someone else by a young girl. The young girl does not introduce herself because that is the way they are these days. It is not rudeness. They simply don't take names as seriously as we did. Particularly last names. It's just the times, Dad. You've got to get used to it. Why, young Byron came to visit with his girl and never did mention her last name. To this day I don't know what it is; and there's nothing really wrong with that, actually. Is there?

Malvina's father was Dr. Bertrand Hodgson. Everyone knew him. He had returned to this, the town of his birth, right after medical school and had served as its only obstetrician for thirty-two years. He had watched the town grow from a coastal farming town into a popular tourist area and didn't like what he saw. He disliked change — tended to be conservative on most matters. He was loved by everyone. And why not? He had brought most of them into the world. At his testimonial there were fifty-two men and women there who owed their arrival to him. And he remembered them all by name. Every one. Them and the 560 who had moved away. That was more than 600 people. Most of them sent Christmas cards every year.

It's because you've lived all your life in this one town. Except for that time in Boston. I know. But except for that. All those years here in this miserable little town. You never got to know how other people think. You never got to know how *we* think. Spending all those hours at work. Evenings and weekends. Jumping up from meals to deliver more children. Leaving everything to Courtney. Making him boss his own brothers and sisters. No wonder he hated it. Hated us. No wonder he was mean. As soon as you brought children into the world you forgot them. I mean, you never really talked with anyone under twenty in your entire life, have you?

No, that's not fair, Malvina. There isn't a soul in this town that doesn't love the man.

She nodded to herself, closing the conversation. There were some topics which were best left alone. Besides she was not to talk to herself that way. It wasn't healthy.

She concentrated on the room. She was sitting at the end of a hard horsehair couch which made her back ache. That she could remember from her childhood — both the couch and the ache. They were not allowed to lean against the back. And, to the left, that dark old bookcase with glass doors. The large family Bible and the smaller one for evening use, and the hymnal and a copy of *Pilgrim's Progress*. The geography of that book was painfully vivid for her. The Slough of Despond — the Valley of Humiliation. She had been there. But enough of that. She was not to indulge in self-pity.

So many people! They can't all be Hodgsons. So many strange faces. Didn't there used to be a kerosene heater there? And the old pump organ between the windows? No loss, really, but somehow disturbing to see it gone. Perhaps they've removed it just to make room. Could that be Jay? No, he'll be older than that. Strange, but it *has* been twenty years. Perhaps more. All of us scattered so, flying apart just as soon as we could. And now drawn together again. So many here at the same time. All gathered for . . .? Malvina sits alone at the end of the



horsehair couch wondering what the reunion is for. No one will tell her. No one quite trusts her. Even this morning. Malvina rises with the others and eats with the others like every day and then Sally the pretty little nurse says, "Malvina, you'll be visiting with your family today. How are you feeling?" Why is Sally so solemn? Malvina feels elation. She hasn't been allowed home in years. Why shouldn't she feel elated?

She looked up at a group talking close by and saw her oldest brother, Courtney. It was hard to link this distinguished older man with the Courtney of her memory — the boy with the scabby elbows and the nasty laugh, the boy who bossed them all because he was older and stronger. It was Courtney who assigned the chores around the place and punished them when they forgot, whipping them on the backs of their legs with an old length of clothesline he kept in the barn. No, this man here looked much more like her father in his prime. Strong and handsome. And distant. Malvina frowned.

"Malva! Hallelujah!"

"Yes?"

"Oh, come on, now! I haven't changed a bit, right? Thin as ever and glossy-haired." He patted his paunch and then ran both hands across the hairless globe of his head. "I'm a remarkable specimen." He laughed, and the laugh was the giveaway. It was Ned. Wonderful Ned. The funniest of her brothers.

"Neddy-Teddy-Bear," she said, smiling. He had hold of both her hands and was pulling her up. "Neddy-Teddy," she said. "Neddy-Teddy."

"Oh ho!" he said, looking at her standing there, still holding her hands. "You've got fat, Malva. And now, for the first time in a lifetime, is my chance to beat the hell out of you in tennis."

They both laughed, still holding hands. Out of the corner of her eye she caught sight of her mother. Deep wrinkles — almost furrows — hid her expression. She was looking at Malvina, one hand raised to her breast, mouth slightly open in protest. She had never liked Ned.

Never you mind Ned, she said to her mother without speaking; never you mind Neddy-Teddy. You only see the fat boy; you only see him joking. You only see the silly boy who gets into trouble and then laughs.

Meanwhile Ned was talking to her in little bursts, each starting with "Remember when . . .?" and "Hey, remember when . . .?" She was answering him, nodding, smiling, nodding. Not for thirteen years had a human being held her hand.

You only see the chubby boy who steals table wine, she said to her mother. You never forgave him for that. But now — for God's sake, Mother, I'm forty-five. Going on fifty. Can't you forgive him a bottle of wine?

"When was that, Malva? When was that?"

"Oh years and years ago. Hey Neddy . . ."

"No one calls me that any more."

"Why not? Same old Neddy."

"You too, Malva. Same as ever. Oh Jesus!" He was laughing, his red face bunched up with delight. But there were tears in the corner of each eye. She could also smell whiskey on his breath. It reminded her:

"Neddy, remember the day you stole the bottle of wine from Dad's closet and . . .?"

"Which time? Which bottle?" He shook with mirth even when not uttering a sound.

"The time we went down to the lower meadow. Just the two of us. And we . . ." How was she going to put it? Here, with all these stuffy relatives around?

He was looking at her, waiting, not filling in words for her, not helping. Smiling and waiting. Didn't he remember? Then his head bobbed, nodding, taking her offstage.

"And rolled down the far hill?"

She nodded, grinning. Neither of them had to mention that they had done so in the nude. The memory was there, clear as an August sky. "Come on, come on," he said, still laughing. "We've got a little party going. Just us kids."

He started leading her out of the room, holding her hand. She caught a glimpse of her mother, half-standing, mouth open as if saying something, but beyond earshot. Friends calmed the old woman, settling her back in her seat.

Ned wove through the crowd in the dining room and then up the stairs. The house was over two hundred years old and the steps were steep. Malvina was panting at the top.

"Good for the wind," Ned said. His face glowed with sweat, red like a ripe tomato. "Get much exercise these days?"

She paused, catching her breath. For a moment she couldn't remember whether she did or didn't get much exercise. How long had it been since she had played tennis?

But he whisked her into the bedroom — the one she used to share with Carrie, her sister. But there was nothing of hers left. They had stripped it of everything personal, made it a guestroom.

"Look who's here!"

Everyone was talking and shaking her hands and someone kissed her. It was Jay. The youngest. He hadn't aged half as much as she had expected. Thin and sporty in his open shirt and blazer. And the kind of fancy mustache which she used to associate with the RAF. Not surprising, really, since he was a pilot at last report.

"Oh Carrie!" She hugged her sister. Carrie had married young and had a brood of children. Malvina had never seen any of them. Perhaps it was all that childbearing, but Carrie was now heavier than Malvina. A blessing there! And who was the exotic woman in black sitting in the corner? With tinted glasses. Malvina was careful not to stare for fear it was someone she should know. The others crowded about her and she concentrated on them.

"How long has it been?" they kept asking each other, astounded at the force which had blown that family apart. Jay to England after one year of college; Carrie married and settled in British Columbia; Ned in sales, traveling endlessly around the globe. Malvina herself to South



America the year she had been graduated, marrying Byron in a rush as if he were the last flight out of town. And the process never stopped. Like a little universe they had been flying further and further apart, driven by some undetermined force. And now, here, for some reason, together again. Malvina kept holding first one hand and then another, clinging.

"First," Ned said, "a drink for Malvina. We're all ahead of you, love. Way ahead. And you deserve one. What'll it be, bourbon or bourbon?" He was pouring already. "And are you still writing?" he asked her. She must have shaken her head or perhaps he could read her mind because he went right on. "Never you mind, Malva; we'll just have to wait for your epic."

"Have you seen anything at all of Byron?" Carrie asked.

"Young Byron is downstairs."

"No, I meant Big Byron."

"They've divorced, you know," Jay said in a rough whisper.

"Oh, sure. I guess I heard. I was just wondering."

"I've been wondering too," Malvina said. Everyone seemed relieved. The bourbon tasted strange and hot after so many years of abstinence.

Malvina sips, knowing that she will be punished for it. But somehow that seems less important right now. Right now it is important for her to make them feel at ease. Perhaps they can all melt into their former selves, faces blurring for a moment and re-forming, younger, as in the movies. Malvina is deeply troubled by the passage of time.

"Young Byron is married now," she said. "Can you imagine? Married already and with a child. She's a sweet little thing. Thin as a reed . . ." She broke off, remembering who it was who came over and spoke to her downstairs. How incredibly silly of her to forget. She tried laughing it off, but it didn't sound quite right.

Malvina tries to be merry but it doesn't seem natural. Everyone looks at her queerly.

"A grandchild already," Jay said, his curved mustache poised over his drink. "Boy or girl?"

"Boy. I mean girl. Girl. They named her Trish . . ."

She stopped, bewildered again. Trish was her other sister's name. The one sitting over there in black? Was it possible that little Trisha had turned into something like this? Skinny Trish with no breasts at all. Short hair and bony elbows. And now this. Yes, Trish had raised her hand in greeting — just like her not to shake hands or crowd in. Cool Trish. But was it possible that Malvina forgot her own sister? Was she that badly off? Malvina's head dove for her glass, retreating. Warm bourbon washed through her.

Diving gracefully like a dolphin, Malvina descends into the amber sea just in time to let the rollers break harmlessly over her head. Opening her eyes while still under the surface, she sees a torrent of spray bubbles course downward and she knows that it was a killer wave. She feels triumphant.

"And what is your Byron doing now?" Jay said.

"Same as ever. Export-import he calls it. Actually it's getting cars into Venezuela from the States. They're

brought in as used cars, you see, and he sells them as new. I mean, they're *barely* used. It's not entirely legal, but it's more-or-less accepted there. Of course, he has to give a lot of Christmas gifts, if you know what I mean."

She smiled, feeling very competent. She handed her glass to Ned who took it with a courtly flourish. "Byron loves it there. He's enormously successful right now. But it hasn't always been easy. He was wiped out three times, you know. Once he had a partner, a Chilean German, who turned him in. And once he had a girlfriend who . . ."

Her voice trailed off. Something was very wrong. She could tell. It was all going so well and then something in the way they were looking at her and not saying anything showed that it was not going well at all.

"You must mean *Big* Byron," Carrie said gently. "Back in the old days."

"Natch," Ned said. "What's the matter, Carrie, weren't you listening?"

Big Byron? She hadn't seen him in thirteen years.

"How're we doing on booze?" Jay asked.

"A bit low," Ned said, turning the bottle upside down. "But I know where there's some more. The old cabinet." He winked at Malvina. "Just where it always was."

"Look," Carrie said, "I don't think . . ."

"If you're hot for cider, you just help yourself. Join the old folks downstairs and talk over the good old days." And then to the others, "I'll raid the cabinet. Jay, you get some ice. Carrie, if you're game, get what you can to eat — cold cuts, pretzels, dog food, I don't care. I'd get it all myself, but it wouldn't look right, would it? I mean on this occasion."

Malvina felt a tremor pass through her; there was something dark and ominous about "on this occasion." But when Ned was organizing things, there was no stopping him to ask questions. "And Trisha, you stay here to keep Malva company."

They were gone, descending into the chaos of sounds below. Malvina shut the door and leaned against it, holding the confusion at bay. "That's quite a gathering," she said, trying to smile naturally.

"Watch out for Ned," Trisha said.

"Ned?"

"He's a drunk, you know."

"He's just very social."

"He's a drunk. And he'll get you soused if he can. It's his way of hiding his own illness." She inhaled deeply and then let some of the smoke out of her nose. Malvina wished she wouldn't hide behind the tinted glasses.

"He's just very social." Malvina was hanging on to the old-fashioned latch behind her with one hand, but she wasn't sure now whether it was to keep those below from breaking in or to allow for a quick flight. "That's not a kind thing to say about Neddy even if he does have a few too many."

"Don't excuse him," Trisha said, coolly, professionally — like a nurse who has seen it all. "That's the worst thing for people like that. It's no kindness, believe me. He's a drunk. And it takes one to know one." She turned on a smile, quick and wry.

"You? Don't be silly. You don't even have a drink in your hand."

"Know what would happen if I took one drink?"

"What?"

"I'd throw up. They have me on these pills. For life."

"Oh, I'm sorry."



"Sorry? Why be sorry? I'm doing all right. We're doing all right when we're doing the best we can." She seemed to be quoting someone. "And how about you, Malva?"

"I'm doing all right," Malvina said and managed a little smile which Trisha didn't return, so she drank more bourbon and to hell with what Trisha said. When Ned came back they would have a lovely little party and to hell with Trisha. She always was a loner. None of them had changed. Trisha used to swim alone and walked the beach alone and later went abroad by herself. And then she married some rich Belgian and that was the last Malvina had heard.

They sat in silence for a while. Trisha smoked steadily.

"What's this about you writing a book?" she asked at last.

"That was years ago."

"In South America?"

"In South America. And before that, in college. And later. Whenever I can."

"Fiction?"

"Oh heavens no. Just another autobiography. Except that this one is complete. All the pieces. All the pieces in the right places."

"You wouldn't want that. None of us do."

"I do. It's so *unfair* to keep forgetting."

"Forgetting? It's the kindest thing your mind ever did for you, Malvina."

Malvina fell silent, puzzled. She had always thought of her mind as something cold and uncooperative. Distant. Easily lost. She had not thought it capable of kindness. What was it that Trisha had said? The sound from downstairs massaged her like the hiss of waves on a beach.

Malvina listens to the sea and recalls summer, vacations, climbing sand dunes, running along open stretches of beaches back in the days before summer tourists began coming there. And the brook which they used to dam. Ned devised the plans and she and Jay and Carrie would carry them out. And Trisha — even then she would wander off, alone, a solitary girl even then. Sometimes they would go home at the end of the day and report her lost, but she would always return. No explanation. Accepted her whipping from Courtney without a whimper. Malvina is struck with how unchanged they all are. Malvina compares past with present, writing about herself and how she writes about how she will write about . . .

"Stop!"

"Stop what?"

"I'm not to think of myself thinking."

"Don't then."

"Talk to me, Trisha." Malvina came over to the bed and sat down opposite her sister. "Please don't just sit there. Tell me something about the past — anything. Tell me about Jay. Is he still a pilot? Still living in England and traveling all over? He seems less dented, somehow, than the rest of us."

"England, yes. Pilot, no."

"What then?"

"He sells shoes. Lousy cut-rate shoes."

"Oh — but why?"

"Sure you want to know?"

"I guess. Yes, I want to know everything. All the pieces."

"He had a wife and a lovely place in Windermere — the Lake Country. A beautiful spot. But dull. And his wife was lonely with him gone for weeks at a time. So she started importing friends from London. Men friends. And eventually it all blew up — Jay and his wife and three of her friends. There was quite a bash and one of the three got his head knocked in. Dead. Another broke Jay's rib with an oar. The whole thing was in all the papers for days. All the details."

"Jay did that?"

"Well eventually they ruled it self-defense, but by that time no airline would touch him. So no more pilot's job. No more wife."

"I don't want to hear any more."

"I didn't think so."

Malvina stood up and smoothed the bed as she had been taught. She went to the window and stood there, looking at the yard and the mulberry trees. There was supposed to be one for each of the five children, but she couldn't remember which was hers.

"You're still married?" she said, suddenly turning to Trisha. "You live in Belgium and are still married?"

Trisha smiled briefly. "Still married. Same man. No scandals. We have a fine place in Brussels — a town house with a garden. And we summer at Lake Como — or at least I do. He has to work very hard. A government position. And he also manages a family estate. Mining, mostly."

"But . . .?"

"Well, he has a mistress. It's common there, you know."

"Oh Trisha!" This with compassion. Byron had his women too. Mr. Worldly Wiseman, she used to call him.

"Don't 'Oh Trisha' me. I knew perfectly well that's the way it would be. I wasn't dumb. I don't like to be crowded. I have my summers in Italy and as many trips back to the States as I want."

"Then what happened?"

"Happened? Nothing. I'm still married. I'm always there for the social season which is all he asks; and my French is perfect — for Belgians. We make do."

"But the drinking . . .?"

"Oh, that. Well, it was pretty bad for a while. I mean, there was a time there when I almost died."

"The Valley of the Shadow of Death," Malvina murmured, but Trisha went right on.

"So I had to learn how to handle it. I learned my limits. That's all it takes."

"That's all there is?"

"I said, 'That's all it takes.'"

Malvina felt inexplicably on the edge of tears. The door flew open and Ned came in with two bottles. Carrie was right behind him with ice in a serving dish and half a ham which she held in the crook of her arm like a baby; and then Jay with boxes of crackers and bottles of soda and a black bearskin car robe left over from their childhood. They had once snuggled under it in the days before cars had heaters.



"A feast," Jay said. "A bloody family feast."

"Where did you find that robe?" Malvina said, delighted.

"A little memorabilia from antiquity," Jay said. "A piece of the past."

Then they were all talking at the same time, arranging the car robe in the middle of the room, sitting down on it, setting up the bottles, the ham. Jay pulled a loaf of home-baked bread from under his blazer and tore it into hunks. And cheese. Malvina spilled her drink, but it was all right because everyone laughed and let it soak into the rug. Ned just poured her another. Jay started reciting:

The Owl and the Pussy-Cat went to sea

In a beautiful pea-green boat:

They took some honey, and plenty of money

Wrapped up in a five-pound note . . . .

He had a resonant voice and a rounded half-British accent. She had forgotten how marvelous he was as a performer. As soon as he had finished she clapped, crying out, "'The Jumbles,' Jay. Oh please do 'The Jumbles'!"

"Right-o," he said, more British than ever. And he began again:

They went to sea in a sieve, they did;

In a sieve they went to sea:

In spite of all their friends could say,

On a winter's morn, on a stormy day.

In a sieve they went to sea . . . .

On and on through all six verses. And each time he came to the chorus, they would all join in:

Their heads are green, and their hands are blue;

And they went to sea in a sieve.

By the end of the last verse they were in a tight circle, arms around each other, rocking back and forth with the gentle swell of the sea.

And in twenty years they all came back, —

In twenty years or more;

And everyone said, "How tall they've grown!

For they've been to the Lakes, and the Terrible Zone,

And the hills of the Chanky Bore";

And they drank their health, and gave them a feast

Of dumplings made of beautiful yeast . . . .

The sun was hot on her cheeks, the gulls laughed and circled overhead in the absolutely blue sky.

"For God's sake!"

Who had said that? Malvina looked up. Dead, dead silence. They were looking toward the door. Malvina turned. It was her brother Courtney standing there, looking down on them.

"What are you doing with Malvina? Are you crazy?"

Trisha, glass in hand, let out a music-hall guffaw, a marvelous throaty, cascading laugh. "You'd better believe it," she said. And then she doubled up tight, spilling her drink, retching on the bearskin rug.

Malvina felt herself bundled up like a child. She clung to the stair railing while Courtney, arm around her waist, herded her down the stairs, she stumbling and he cursing all the way. She was in for a whipping this time. No doubt about it.

At the foot of the stairs she saw that everyone was looking at her. No one said a thing. Just staring.

Malvina dreams that everyone is staring at her. Malvina imagines that she has created a great scandal. But she is mistaken, of course. She has imagined this scene merely to dramatize and illustrate her basic sense of . . . Of what? You tell me, Doctor. Of what?

"How could they?" Her mother was working her way through the group, a path opening for her. She moved with a sureness of former years, majestic. She was in front of Malvina now.

"Malvina. Listen to me. Do you know what has happened today? Do you remember the service?"

"Never mind, Mother," Courtney said. "I'll take her back."

"Don't tell me 'Never mind.' Malvina, I have to know. Do you understand what happened today? Are you responsible?"

Malvina looks at her mother and sees that she is dressed entirely in black. She remembers with sudden clarity the funeral service. She recalls watching a brown moth on the carpet by her feet flutter, rest, and flutter again, trying to fly. She remembers how the minister kept clearing his throat. She remembers standing at the graveside, studying the fake grass carpet which was designed to cover the bare newly-dug earth.

"Well?"

"Yes, I remember. We buried Dad. He's dead. Is that what you mean?"

Later, in the car, driving back to the home, she looked over and was enormously relieved to see that it was Trisha at the wheel. It was night, and her face looked ghost white in the light of oncoming cars. Her eyes were still hidden behind those tinted glasses.

"Oh," Malvina said. "I'm glad it's you."

"I had the feeling you didn't want Courtney driving you. Do you remember hitting him?" Malvina shook her head. She would never under any circumstances hit her own brother. Trisha had things mixed up. "You've got quite a punch there," Trisha said. "I thought from that that maybe you didn't want to go back."

"I'm quite ready. I know my limits."

I know my limits, Malvina says, recalling a remark she heard years before on a summer picnic. How kind, she thinks, of memory to withhold some things and to give others according to one's needs. She feels a rare sense of gratitude toward her own mind.

"You're very kind," she said, speaking to her mind as a friend.

"Sometimes," Trisha said softly.

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"A Sometimes Memory" by Stephen Minot was first published in the *Sewanee Review* 82 (Fall 1974). Copyright 1974 by the University of the South. Reprinted by permission of the editor.

Short stories by Stephen Minot, associate professor of English, have appeared in such publications as *Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, *Playboy*, *Kenyon Review*, *Virginia Quarterly Review* and *North American Review*. He is also the author of several books.



# BOOKS



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## THE CASE AGAINST COLLEGE

By Caroline Bird

(New York: McKay, 1975)

Reviewed by Thomas A. Smith

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Caroline Bird's simple thesis is that "college is good for some people, but not good for everybody;" the students who are forced into college or who simply drift there are "superfluous people who are no immediate use to the economy and are a potential embarrassment to the middle-aged white males who operate the outside . . . world for their own convenience."

Even this thrust at omnipotent and aging tribal heads cannot obscure the fact that Ms. Bird's thesis is scarcely new. Rather, it is a restatement of one which can be traced back to the post-World War II period when universal higher education, which seemed an obtainable objective to many in an affluent and optimistic society, appeared a complicated and dangerous prospect to a few. More recently, that minority has begun to dominate the old debate, as the economy has cooled and serious doubts have been cast upon the vocational relevance of much post-secondary education, both resulting in a slackening public willingness and capacity to allocate the required funding.

Ms. Bird's book does not seem to contribute much to her side's cause. It is, however, enlivened by one character — a mythical student who chose to go to Princeton rather than to spend in some other fashion the \$34,181 his four years would cost — and by continuous sniping at college professors and administrators. At its publication the book gained considerable attention because of Ms. Bird's demonstration that the Princeton-bound \$34,181, if it had been invested in 1972 at 7.5 per cent interest, compounded daily, would have grown, when the depositor was sixty-four, to \$1,129,200, some \$528,000 above the earnings of a typical college graduate.

*The Case Against College* is, in part, a vigorous attack upon liberal education, and Ms. Bird employs an effective, if unoriginal, analogy: "Liberal arts are a religion in every sense of that term;" whatismore, it is "the established

religion of the ruling class." The professors are priests. "Not accountable to the laity they serve, they themselves define the boundaries of their authority and choose their own successors. Their authority is unassailable, because by definition they know best."

In addition, as Ms. Bird is quick to assert: "Professors are sometimes painfully ignorant of many facts of life. A lot of them know very little about the economic structure of the United States . . . . They may also be partially responsible for some of the 'alienation' of the young because they have encouraged the belief that transactions of power and money are to be avoided as a dirty business."

Perhaps Ms. Bird would agree today, if not at the time of writing, that, whatever their degree of ignorance of the facts of life, professors are not much worse off in respect to their knowledge of the economy than the larger multitude of people who are more directly involved in our economic system and who, in spite of their experience, are deeply puzzled by its twists and turns. Presumably she would include among those professors responsible for the "alienation" of the young the academicians of many disciplines who for some years had pointed out that our economy was highly dependent for its productivity and profit upon a finite quantity of resources over which we had somewhat less than total control, resources of which we were wasteful and for which competition with other nations was keen.

One also suspects that, however much she is a student of higher education, Ms. Bird has spent little time studying the vocational choices of graduates. Had she, she might have decided to chastise the professoriat for its historic *failure* to persuade the young to abstain from "transactions of power and money." Certainly the Trinity faculty have failed in this regard, for a quick count down several pages of the recent *Alumni Directory* yields this information: of some fifty-six alumni who supplied vocational information, thirty were in business and industry and five were in public service — areas where, presumably, transactions of power and money are the sources of daily bread.

Ms. Bird has spent sufficient time in academe to recognize that most faculty like what they do and, therefore, encourage some undergraduates to follow similar paths. She must, I assume, also recognize that most successful physicians, managers, executives, entrepreneurs, dentists, morticians, cooks, plumbers, lawyers, farmers, policemen, engineers, journalists and even older newspaperboys not only encourage the likely young to follow their particular vocations, but often do so by expressing disdain for other vocations and the limits they impose upon their practitioners. That is a fact of life, and it ought not to be viewed with quite so much alarm by Ms. Bird and by others who claim academics are subversive.

Not all the ground over which the author's flights carry her is arid, but most of her travel is along well-established flyways. She is firmly against the arbitrary use of academic credentials as requirements for employment, unless there is a clear relation between credential and performance. She questions whether the residential colleges, isolated from the adult mainstream and often unregulated, crowded and distracting, are good places to learn and grow. She advocates "stopping out," combining intervals of study with intervals of productive work or with time spent gaining experience in other than an academic environment. Again she finds fault with administrators and professors because they regard the dropout or the stopout as "a nuisance and a worry," or as



"a reproach." Here, as elsewhere in the book, she tends to generalize in extravagant fashion, for she ignores the fact that most reputable and responsible academics have struggled hard in the last fifteen or so years to avoid the conditions she describes, to develop in each student generation a sense of social as well as of academic responsibility, and to give informed direction to those students who seemed unready for or unsuited to college life.

Ms. Bird is quite correct in her observation that society does not offer good alternatives to secondary school graduates who must or who choose, on leaving school, to live adult lives. It is simplistic, however, to place so much blame for this condition upon the self-interest of the professoriat and the empire-building instincts of administrators. She clearly recognizes, and says so, that it is cheaper for the society to develop an extensive post-secondary educational scheme than it would be to create a system which offered a wider range of opportunities for growth, experience and vocational preparation.

She very briefly treats the kind of changes she would recommend in order "to rescue reluctant students from the academic youth ghettos": the provision of real work opportunities, widely available apprenticeship training and national service programs; use of financial aid to support only the bright; the creation of a far more extensive network of adult educational programs; a guaranteed two years of post-secondary study for all high school graduates, to be taken whenever needed; lowering of the school-leaving age to fourteen; residential educational opportunities for older adults; even revival of the medieval practice of sending youngsters into service in the households of private families.

Only this last recommendation is novel. The others, many of which are commonplace in the academic community, are, however controversial, attributable to the growing conviction in that community and elsewhere that our national myths, values, attitudes and practices in respect to education and the young do not provide the range of opportunity society needs and that they place too great a burden upon the colleges. Thus *The Case Against College* is not what it seems to be. If it has value, that value lies in its capacity to direct public attention to national shortcomings and indifference. Consequently, I would not discourage the non-academic reader from taking it up. To academic friends I would recommend it — at least to those who are fast readers — for it may well enable them, in about two hours, to learn how many in the general public probably do perceive them.

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Thomas A. Smith, *Class of 1944*, is vice president of the College.

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## LOSING PEOPLE

By Thomas P. Baird

(New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974)

Reviewed by Jordan L. Pecile

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*Losing People* is Hartford novelist Thomas Baird's seventh novel, and after reading it I wondered why this writer who knows so much and says it so well isn't better

known. Baird, after seven urbane novels, still doesn't have the reputation he deserves. In part the reason may be that he continues to write novels of manners — novels about social intercourse among polite people — long after the novel of manners has been pronounced dead in the *Times*, replaced by what critic Wilfrid Sheed calls, rudely, the novel of bad manners. But Mr. Sheed is one of those who doesn't know Baird's books, or he'd know that in Hartford at least there's a young Jacobean in whose hands the novel of our manners is the best tradition of James and Wharton is still alive and very well indeed.

*Losing People* is about the way the family of a distinguished Princeton professor lives now, and it is an effective argument against that impatient dictum of Tolstoi's that happy families are all alike. There are no good reasons for the tensions which weaken the human relationships in the professor's household. His wife Miriam, handsome and intelligent, has always been an asset to him, always well-liked even in the charmed circle of the Princeton faculty. Their daughter Ann is married to a successful young financier from Chicago — who could ask for anything more — and their son Franz (named after the last king of Professor Kerenyi's native Hungary) is married to a pretty girl from Cornell and is rapidly emerging in academe as a respectable social historian, a worthy appendage to his father's large and enviable reputation.

Hugo Kerenyi himself is a warm, expansive man to whom people, family and tradition mean a lot, and it is at his insistence that the family unites on this Christmas eve for the usual celebrations. But while the tree, the goose and the trimmings are the real things, the feasting and the fun are only a sham. The curious pleasure this book offers is in observing how, in the course of Christmas day (for Baird's novel abides by the rules of the *Poetics*) this reunion of some of our most civilized types becomes a shambles, shored up, mercifully, by careful observance of the amenities, by Post.

What in the novel nearly threatens to unmask polite behaviour and to expose the family relationships for what they really are is the curious conduct of the aging, ailing Miriam. She simply chooses to absent herself from the infelicities of another family Christmas. Having lived most of a life in the service and the shadows of Hugo, having lived so long with the risk of losing herself while ministering to his ego, his needs, she decides at last to withdraw from the task and to drift alone toward death.

It is through Miriam's intense, intelligent conversations with the others that we come to realize the cost of living in a seemingly happy family in which the wife and children must sacrifice their individualities in the service of father. In the commitment to family. It is again as Willa Cather once put it in an essay not meant to be read by anyone under forty: that in most happy households the mere struggle to be oneself at all creates an element of strain which keeps everybody almost at the breaking point. This fine novel is about that breaking point, when the members of what ought to be a happy family seek to break at last the web which good manners and love have woven about them. It is about how we go about losing the people who mean the most to us.

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Novelist Thomas P. Baird is associate professor of fine arts. Reviewer Jordan L. Pecile was visiting associate professor of English at Trinity last year.







Mrs. Patricia Seibel  
Serials Assistant

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中國

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(China)