



The
South
Carolina
REVIEW

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The South Carolina Review is published by Furman University. It appears twice a year, in May and November, as part of the quarterly series, *The Furman University Bulletin*. One issue will replace a regular number of *Furman Studies*; the other will be a special issue of the *Studies-Bulletin* series.

The Review is edited by a cooperative editorial staff from three South Carolina universities.

The editors solicit literary manuscripts of all kinds: essay, fiction, poetry, criticism, opinion, social comment, scholarship, and reviews. South Carolinians, native and adopted, are especially encouraged to contribute.

Manuscripts should be addressed to the Editors, *The South Carolina Review*, Department of English, Box 28661, Furman University, Greenville, S. C. 29613, and should be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Subscriptions are \$1.00 a copy; \$2.00 a year; \$3.50 for two years. Libraries now on Furman exchange will continue to receive free copies of the *Studies* and the *Review*.

Originally printed as *Furman Studies* (*The Furman University Bulletin*, N.S. Vol. XVII, No. 2, November, 1969)

NOVEMBER, NINETEEN HUNDRED SIXTY-NINE

THE FURMAN UNIVERSITY BULLETIN
Greenville, S. C.

(Inaugurated January 1912)

N.S. Vol. XVII, No. 2, Entered as Second Class Matter
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The South Carolina Review

Volume 2, Number 1

November, 1969

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White Wind

for Mark

All day I lay with a fever.
That night the breeze from the south began blowing.
It parted the curtains
And did nothing more.

It was a dark night.
Only the breeze
 moved,
Parting the curtains.

Toward morning
A fleet of clouds
 drifted in,
 dropping anchor outside the window.
I watched them and thought
Of the winds of chance
That blew you
passing through
And on again.

Nothing moved.

ALOUISE D. COPE

Editorial Note

With this issue, *The South Carolina Review* initiates two new features. In the essays on Charleston writers, Paul Hamilton Hayne and William Gilmore Simms, it begins a series of re-evaluations of past South Carolina authors in recognition of the state Tricentennial. Other re-evaluations are planned for subsequent issues. Also new in this issue is the first of a series of omnibus review-essays, called "Reports," on contemporary literary developments. Additional reports, such as "Report from Charleston" and "Report from the University of South Carolina Press," are in the planning stages. With these two new features, *The Review* hopes to realize more fully the critical-review aim of its purpose, just as its stories, poems, and personal essays in each issue so far have helped it realize its creative aim.

Hayne the Poet: A New Look

RAYBURN S. MOORE

Paul Hamilton Hayne belonged to a prominent South Carolina family, several members of which had made important contributions to the history of the state. One of these, Robert Y. Hayne, Daniel Webster's redoubtable opponent in the famous Senate debate on Nullification in 1830, was Paul Hayne's uncle and guardian. Born in the year of the great debate and reared in Charleston, educated in a well-known private school and at the College of Charleston, Hayne read law with James Louis Petigru, another notable South Carolinian. Early in his twenties, however, he began contributing to the *Southern Literary Messenger*, *Graham's Magazine*, and other periodicals and published in the 1850s three slim volumes of poetry while editing the *Southern Literary Gazette* and *Russell's Magazine*. When war came in 1861, he fervently supported States' rights and the Confederacy, though poor health limited him to a four-month tour of active duty as aide-de-camp to Governor Francis Pickens. After 1862 he contributed to the cause with his pen. Ruined financially by the war and depressed by its outcome, Hayne bought a small tract of land near Augusta, Georgia, which he later called Cope Hill, moved there in 1866, and spent the last twenty years of his life contributing verse and prose to magazines and newspapers and bringing out three more volumes of poetry: *Legends and Lyrics* (1872); *The Mountain of the Lovers: With Poems of Nature and Tradition* (1875); and *Poems*, Complete Edition (1882).

After the death of William Gilmore Simms in 1870 and the publication of *Legends and Lyrics* in 1872, Hayne was considered by many throughout the country as the poet laureate of the South, the "representative" Southern poet and man of letters, and the chief Southern literary spokesman to both regional and national audiences. He took himself seriously in this role and few political or cultural occasions passed without some sort of poetic comment or tribute from his pen. His contemporaries — Longfellow, Holmes, Bryant, Whipple, and Lanier, among them, to say nothing of Britishers like Jean Ingelow, Philip Bourke Marston, R. D. Blackmore, and Wilkie Collins — thought well of him and his poetry, and Whittier wrote on Hayne's death in 1886 that he was assured a place in the "Valhalla of the country" along with Longfellow, Bryant, and Taylor.

The years, however, have not been kind to Hayne's reputation, and he is now usually dealt with in a page or two in literary histories and frequently omitted in anthologies of American poetry.¹ There are a few noteworthy exceptions. Daniel M. McKeithan has edited a *Collection of Hayne Letters* (1944) and published several informative articles, Charles Duffy has edited Hayne's correspondence with Bayard Taylor (1945) and with Mrs. Julia C. R. Dorr (1951-52), Jay B. Hubbell has discerningly discussed Hayne as poet and man of letters in *The South in American Literature* (1954), and the late Edd W. Parks contributed several enlightening discussions climaxed by a perceptive essay on Hayne as critic in *Ante-Bellum Southern Literary Critics* (1962). Still, by and large, Hayne's poetry as a whole has been generally neglected and on occasion ignored in the twentieth century.²

Let it be granted immediately that his poetry's weaknesses — its derivative nature, frequent lack of intellectual force and vigor, and its occasional failure to express the substance of life adequately, to mention only certain general ones — are significant and perhaps even damning. Let it also be admitted that the absence of a critical or selective edition of the poems enlarges the task of criticism and makes the achievement of focus more difficult. But Hayne's work is not unique either in these faults or in the want of a scholarly edition. The former are characteristic of much nineteenth-century poetry and certainly of much poetry written by Hayne's contemporaries, Southern or otherwise. The latter is a common need among American writers which until recently has failed to receive proper attention. Despite these strictures and difficulties, however, a case for Hayne should be made.

¹Hayne is discussed briefly by John D. Wade in Robert E. Spiller and others, eds., *Literary History of the United States* (3d ed., rev., 1963), I, 318-320 (he is also included in the *Bibliography*, II, 554-556 and its *Supplement*, 136) and by Clarence Gohdes in Arthur H. Quinn, ed., *The Literature of the American People* (1951), 632. His verse is not represented in two recent anthologies of American poetry: Gay Wilson Allen and others, eds., *American Poetry* (1965) and Edwin H. Cady, ed., *The American Poets: 1800-1900* (1966). His poems, on the other hand, do appear in several recent anthologies of American literature: Jay B. Hubbell, ed., *American Life in Literature* (rev. ed., 1949); Lyon N. Richardson and others, eds., *The Heritage of American Literature* (1951); Leon Howard and others, eds., *American Heritage* (1955); and Walter Blair and others, eds., *The Literature of the United States* (3d ed., 1966). This list is not meant to be exhaustive, but it is representative of collections prepared with college audiences in mind.

²I have tried to meet the need for a modern treatment of Hayne's poetry in a forthcoming book for the Twayne series, some of the conclusions of which are the basis for the present essay.

In the first place some of the strengths of Hayne's poetry are closely related to its weaknesses. His work derives nourishment from its sources. Chaucer, Spenser, Wordsworth, Keats, and Tennyson, to name only a few, are worthy models and offer the lesser artist much in the way of precept and technique, as is clear in "The Wife of Brittany" (1870), a redaction of the Franklin's Tale which is Hayne's best sustained piece of narrative verse, or "Unveiled" (1878), an irregular Wordsworth-like ode whose tone and view of nature suggest a philosophical kinship with "Tintern Abbey" and whose diction at times has a Tennysonian cast.

I pass with reverent thought,
 Attuned to every tiniest trill of sound,
 Whether by brook or bird
 The perfumed air be stirred.
 But most, because the unwearied strains are fraught
 With Nature's freedom in her happiest moods,
 I love the mock-bird's, and brown thrush's lay,
 The melted soul of May.
 Beneath those matchless notes,
 From jocund hearts upwelled to fervid throats,
 In gushes of clear harmony,
 I seem, oft-times I seem
 To find remoter meanings; the far tone
 Of ante-natal music faintly blown
 From out the misted realms of memory;
 The pathos and the passion of a dream;
 Or, broken fugues of a diviner tongue
 That e'er hath chanted, since our earth was young,
 And o'er her peace-enamored solitudes
 The stars of morning sung!

There are times assuredly when Hayne's poems smack too much of the lamp rather than of life, but on occasion he treats his locality and situation with an authenticity of detail and observation, as in the Copsie Hill nature lyrics, and an intense emotion charged with bitter experience, as in "South Carolina to the States of the North," a *cri de coeur* which was written in late 1876 when political strife over Reconstruction in South Carolina had reached a climax and which reflects Hayne's passionate concern for his state in an address to others of the "original thirteen":

I lift these hands with iron fetters banded:
 Beneath the scornful sunlight and cold stars
 I rear my once imperial forehead branded
 By alien shame's immedicable scars;
 Like some pale captive, shunned by all the nations,
 I crouch unpitied, quivering and apart --
 Laden with countless woes and desolations,
 The life-blood freezing round a broken heart!

About my feet, splashed red with blood of slaughters,
 My children gathering in wild, mournful throngs;
 Despairing sons, frail infants, stricken daughters,
 Rehearse the awful burden of their wrongs;
 Vain is their cry, and worse than vain their pleading:
 I turn from stormy breasts, from yearning eyes,
 To mark where Freedom's outraged form receding,
 Wanes in chill shadow down the midnight skies!

The Copse Hill poems, on the other hand, while not so urgent with passion, are no less instinct with feeling for the life immediately around him and his home in Georgia. These pieces -- "Aspects of the Pines," "The Voice in the Pines," "The Pine's Mystery," "Forest Pictures," "Midsummer in the South," "The Mocking-Bird," among others -- were written mostly in the seventies and contributed chiefly to the *Atlantic Monthly*. "Midsummer in the South," though it did not appear in the *Atlantic* and has since been less frequently reprinted than the pine lyrics, is nevertheless typical.

I love midsummer uplands, free
 To the bold raids of breeze and bee,
 Where, nested warm in yellowing grass,
 I hear the swift-winged partridge pass,
 With whirr and boom of gusty flight,
 Across the broad heath's treeless height:
 Or, just where, elbow-poised, I lift
 Above the wild flower's careless drift
 My half-closed eyes, I see and hear
 The blithe field-sparrow twittering near

Quick ditties to his tiny love;
 While, from afar, the timid dove,
 With faint, voluptuous murmur, wakes
 The silence of the pastoral brakes.

In addition to his appropriation of the British poetic tradition and treatment of the life surrounding him, Hayne is a versatile versifier. He employs competently a wide range of forms, metrical schemes, and techniques. He is at his best in short poems, in sonnets (both Hubbell and Parks accord him high rank as a sonneteer) and in lyrics like those on the Copse Hill country and in later ones like "In Harbor" (1882) and "Face to Face" (1886). A sonnet addressed to Swinburne, for example, brought forth the English poet's "cordial thanks" in a letter of May 2, 1880.

Not since proud Marlowe poured his potent song
 Through fadeless meadows to a marvellous main,
 Has England hearkened to so sweet a strain —
 So sweet as thine, and ah! so subtly strong!
 Whether sad love it mourns, or wreaks on wrong
 The rhythmic rage of measureless disdain,
 Dallies with joy, or swells in fiery pain,
 What ravished souls the entrancing notes prolong!
 At thy charmed breath pale histories blush once more;
 See! Rosamond's smile! drink love from Mary's eyes;
 Quail at the foul Medici's midnight frown.
 Or hark to black Bartholomew's anguished cries!
 Blent with far horns of Calydon widely blown
 O'er the grim death-growl of the ensanguined boar!

And the valedictories pronounced in the two later poems advance and demonstrate Hayne's simple faith and his serene acceptance of the coming of death, the latest expression of which, "Face to Face," appeared in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* only six weeks before his death.

But beyond the stars and the sun
 I can follow him still on his way,
 Till the pearl-white gates are won
 In the calm of the central day.
 Far voices of fond acclaim
 Thrill down from the place of souls,
 As Death, with a touch like flame,
 Uncloses the goal of goals;
 And from heaven of heavens above
 God speaketh with bateless breath —
 My angel of perfect love
 Is the angel men call Death!

Hayne can also write longer poems, odes and narratives of the quality of the already-mentioned “Unveiled” and “The Wife of Brittany” and dramatic and meditative verse like “Vicksburg” (1862), his best known ballad on the Civil War; “Fire Pictures” (1867; rev., 1871), a *tour de force* in the style and meter of Poe; “Cambyses and the Macrobian Bow” (1872), a stark and grim retelling of an incident from Herodotus and Hayne’s own favorite among his shorter narratives; “By the Grave of Henry Timrod” (1874), a moving elegy in memory of his late friend and fellow poet; and “Muscadines” (1876), a sensuous ode whose verbal melody derives from the “liquid magic” of the Southern grape, if not from bursting Keats’s grape against his palette fine.

Ah! how the ripened wild fruit of the South
 Melted upon my mouth!
 Its magic juices through each captured vein
 Rose to the yielding brain,
 Till, like the hero of an old romance,
 Caught by the fays, my spirit lapsed away,
 Lost to the sights and sounds of mortal day.

And even late in his career Hayne continued to write long pieces, frequently in response to requests from organizations and institutions for occasional poems to celebrate or commemorate events such as the centennials of the battles of King’s Mountain and Yorktown in 1881; the inauguration of the International Cotton Exposition in Atlanta in 1882, or the sesquicentennial of the founding of Georgia in 1883, among others.

Representative of the quality of these longer poems is "The Return of Peace," a prophetic tribute to Atlanta rising from the ashes of "war-wasted lands" and shaking off the "lotus-languishment of grief" to establish the "fresh foundations of a nobler sway" based on art and commerce, industry and agriculture.

Now, throned above the half-forgotten pain
 Of dreadful war, and war's remorseless blight,
 Thy heart-throbs glad and great,
 Sending through all thy Titan-statured state,
 Fresh life and gathering tides of grander power
 From glorious hour to hour,
 Thousands thy deeds shall bless
 With strenuous pride, toned down to tenderness:
 Shall bless thy deeds, exalt thy name;
 Till every breeze that sweeps from hill to lea,
 And every wind that furrows the deep sea,
 Shall waft the fragrance of thy soul abroad
 The sweetness and the splendor of thy fame: —
 For thou, midmost a large and opulent store,
 Of all things wrought to meet a nation's need,
 Thou, nobly pure,
 Of any darkening taint of selfish greed, —
 Wert pre-ordained to be
 Purveyor of divinest charity, —
 The love-commissioned almoner of God.³

In the scope, versatility, and bulk of his production, indeed, Hayne is the most substantial Southern poet of the nineteenth century, a judgment no less true despite the fact that a sizable proportion of his

³Hayne's tribute to Atlanta and his prophecy concerning the city's future have led some to conclude that he had embraced the principles of the "New South." (See, for example, Claude R. Flory's article in the *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, LXVI, 388-394, December, 1962.) Hayne, however, had been opposed to "Trade" in its various manifestations before Lanier had denounced it in his poems, and the Exposition committee's criticism of "The Return to Peace" for its concentration on the city rather than on the country as a whole and for its references to the late war he considered unwarranted in the light of the *carte blanche* offered in the original commission. This led him to take a rather jaundiced view of the whole affair and especially of the committee's New Southward leanings. For the correspondence concerning this episode, see the Hayne Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. I am grateful to Dr. Mattie Russell, Curator of Manuscripts, for permission to use and to quote from this collection and for many other gracious courtesies.

output is mere magazine verse and by its very nature ephemeral. Admittedly, he did not write any one poem which comes near the perfection of Poe's "To Helen" or Timrod's "Ode," but he wrote more passably good verse than Poe or Timrod, or Lanier either, though it should be remembered that his career lasted half a generation longer than theirs. He lacked Poe's sense of art and critical acumen, Timrod's theme and control, and Lanier's inventiveness and fertility, but he could, on occasion, be as musical as Poe, as eloquent as Timrod, and as lush as Lanier. Poe and Timrod are better poets than Hayne, if only their best work is selected to compare with his. This is not necessarily the case with Lanier, for his best is in many ways very much like Hayne's in fulfillment and finish. Still, Hayne's canon is rounded in ways that Poe's or Timrod's or Lanier's is not. Its dimensions reflect the full scope of a striving for expression in a spectrum of poetic types and structures and suggest therefore a range and completeness which is missing in the output of the three other nineteenth-century Southern poets of consequence.⁴ In the final analysis, however, Hayne's best poems have not stood the test of time as well as those of his chief rivals, nor are they likely to supplant them in anthologies or in the minds of scholars or general readers.⁵

Aside from that of his Southern contemporaries, Hayne's poetry should be considered with that of Thomas Bailey Aldrich, George Henry Boker, Edmund Clarence Stedman, Richard Henry Stoddard, and Bayard Taylor. Time has not been generous to any of these minor bards. To present taste their verse often exhibits the weakest features of nineteenth-century convention — ornate and artificial language, empty abstractions, unalloyed bookishness, and monotonous metrical regularity. This is not strange, for few of these poets dreamed that the fundamental changes

⁴For a comparison of Hayne and Timrod as poets, see Parks, *Southern Poets* (1936), civ-cvii; on Hayne and Lanier, see Hubbell, *The South in American Literature* (1954), pp. 773-777; and on all three writers, see my forthcoming study of Hayne.

⁵One reason for this state of affairs is that Hayne's poems have never been published in a selected edition nor have they been reprinted in book form in the twentieth century. If such an edition had been published in 1886 when Charles Scribner proposed it and kept in print thereafter, I suspect that Hayne's reputation might have suffered less than it has under the prevailing circumstances. At any rate, it surely is true of Hayne, as Arnold remarked of Byron, that he would "gain considerably" from a one-volume selection of his "best poetry." In Hayne's case readers would not have to use the so-called Complete Edition of his *Poems* (1882), a collection which is *not* complete and yet is too inclusive to the date of publication, and would therefore be able to concentrate on what he produced in his "happier moments," to borrow from Arnold again.

being wrought by Whitman and Emily Dickinson would modify or even one day supplant the poetic traditions they cherished and honored. Hayne, for example, expressed a widely held general view when he wrote of Whitman in 1876: "One thing is certain: If Mr. Walt Whitman really is in any sense or to any degree, a genuine Poet; then, all the canons of poetic art must be reversed; and their most illustrious expounders be consigned to oblivion, from Job to Homer; from Homer to Horace; from Horace to Shakspeare; from Shakspeare to Tennyson." And as late as 1892 Aldrich sounded almost the same note on Emily Dickinson: "If Miss Dickinson's *disjecta membra* are poems, then Shakespeare's prolonged imposition should be exposed without further loss of time, and Lord Tennyson ought to be advised of the error of his ways before it is too late. But I do not hold the situation to be so desperate. Miss Dickinson's versicles have a queerness and a quaintness that have stirred a momentary curiosity in emotional bosoms. Oblivion lingers in the immediate neighborhood."⁶

But these limitations should in no way detract from the valiant effort Hayne made from the Georgia pine barrens to reach a national audience nor from the long and dedicated devotion he paid his muse amidst discouraging and distressing conditions of poverty and ill health. It is obvious that he failed to write great poetry, but it is worth pondering that he managed to write poetry of any distinction at all.

Hayne himself recognized his limitations and accepted them. He knew early in his career that his song would not reach the heights where the "great Poets" sing, but he maintained

Yet would I rather in the outward state
Of Song's immortal temple lay me down,
A beggar basking by that radiant gate
Than bend beneath the haughtiest empire's crown!

For sometimes, through the bars, my ravished eyes
Have caught brief glimpses of a life divine,
And scen a far, mysterious rapture rise
Beyond the veil that guards the inmost shrine.

⁶Hayne's opinion of Whitman is expressed in a letter of March 8, 1876, to A. H. Dooley, an Indiana book seller and frequent correspondent. See the Hayne Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. Aldrich's remarks on Emily Dickinson were published anonymously in the Contributors' Club, *Atlantic Monthly*, LXIX, 143-144 (January, 1892).

Years later, echoing Coleridge, he wrote Mrs. Margaret J. Preston, the Virginia poet and an old friend: "Poetry has been to me its own exceeding *great reward*." Given these humble views, to say nothing of his modest contribution, it is regrettable that Hayne the poet has seldom received the attention he deserves. His reach surely exceeded his grasp, but his achievement should be neither ignored nor neglected by the student of nineteenth-century American poetry.

Spring Song

There is a coil in the loins
Of man
A spring that winds into the waters
Of himself
And makes him give the love-juice up
In joy

There are coils in the brain
Of man
A labyrinth that leads into
The winter
Of himself and gives him glimpses of
The void

There is birth within man's spring
And death behind his eyes
But once the void is viewed he knows
What grows rotten in the ground
Which coils ripen in repose

LARRY RUBIN

carolina sands

i return to carolina sands
only in december now
when winter's days
are windy and short
each, like me, a refugee
 seemingly seeking refuge
 from the sea
but hardly receiving warm welcome
 from the sullen sand
 where only pelicans walk
 unconcernedly talking pelican talk
as briny tides ebb and flow
 washing away the heart prints
we left there
 summers ago.
do you recall?
or perhaps you'd prefer not, after all
we're cosmopolitan now
i've moved to the capital
you're making the broadway scene
somehow, however
i think you'd remember
—if you allowed yourself—
why you flew out of the past
last november to surrender
 yourself
 —if even for an instant night—
your coming had some quality
that removed it from the realm of drama
and allowed it to become
the belated climax
our love should have had, but didn't
 on carolina sands
 summers ago

eugene robert platt

winter tree

remembering the beauty
that was yours in other seasons,
i returned to lonely park today
hoping to find the solace of your summer shade
but now i find your spring children
 have
 all
 fallen
 away

leaving your gnarled body and twisted

limbs

too barren to comfort

you have no solace to offer, winter tree,
and you can take none from lonely me

eugene robert platt

Simon and the Sea Sarpent

CHALMERS S. MURRAY

Simon McClair liked to sit on a flour barrel, making drumming sounds with his heels, and talk about the time when he had sailed the seven seas.

Simon had retired from what he called "drudging work" to become night watchman at my general merchandise store. There was little for him to guard. I don't suppose my stock was worth more than a couple of hundred dollars at best, but I couldn't afford to lose any of it. I paid Simon five dollars a month, and every Saturday he drew rations consisting of one peck of hominy grits, three pounds of salt pork, locally known as "butts meat," two pounds of salt, and a quart of molasses.

He and his wife, Vinnie, lived in the guard's cabin, a few yards from the store building. It had two small rooms, a fireplace, and an attic of sorts. The place was all over cracks and holes, but Simon never complained. Vinnie plastered newspapers over the cracks, and when the roof started to leak badly, Simon would go into the woods and cut shingles for the necessary patching.

Daytime for Simon was time for rest and recreation. At night he scarcely slept a wink, he said. He felt his responsibilities too keenly. Twice he fired his shot gun into the air, once around midnight and again at "first fowl crow." This was to remind prowlers that he was on duty.

Vinnie had her good rest at night, Simon said, and she had no business raising objections during the day while he rested. Yet she made loud clatter with her tongue as long as he was in hearing distance, calling him a lazy, good-for-nothing boar possum who never worked anything but his mouth.

Usually Simon escaped from the cabin as soon as breakfast was over and took his favorite seat on the flour barrel. Here he would spend the greater part of the morning. In the afternoon he might take a nap or go fishing or hunting.

"That wife of mine wear my patience to the marrow," he would say. "I swear I never see such a woman. Her talk and her ways put me to shame before my church brothers and sisters. I give her a house to stay in and bittle [food], and she quarrel 'cause she got to wash and cook and 'tend the goat and pig, and hoe the garden.

“Long as I know Vinnie she never set foot in church. And what’s more I can’t make that woman wear shoes. Last Easter I pay three whole dollar for shoes. Finest lady-shoc in the store. She take ’em and throw ’em in the crik, and cuss me all kind of nasty cuss beside. Now what can you call with that?”

Really he couldn’t say why he had taken up with a woman of that kind. Most of the time she went around in a dirty old Mother Hubbard and a flour sack thrown over her shoulders for a shawl. He had tried the Lord-only-knows, he said, to set her a good example by wearing clean clothes and washing his feet every night, and talking on religious subjects, but it was no use. Vinnie kept right on with her slovenly habits and dirty talk.

When he talked about Vinnie he did not drum his heels or smile his sweet benevolent smile, or chuckle gently the way he did when he told of the good old days aboard a windjammer. It seemed that he simply had to recite his troubles first before he could become Simon McClair, able bodied seaman again.

“Did you ever see a sea sarpent, Mr. Murray?” he asked one day after we had finished a glass of cherry-bounce together.

I shook my head, and said I never had the pleasure.

He looked at me accusingly. “I ain’t tell you no lie,” he said. “I see a sea sarpent one time as plain as I see you.”

It fell about this way, Simon told me:

The adventure had come to him when returning from China aboard a four-masted schooner commanded by Captain Thomas W. Eubanks, now deceased.

Simon’s neighbors said he was a big liar. He had worked for a few years on a river sloop, plying between Savannah and Charleston, but he had never seen blue water, and this they declared was the gospel truth. Simon himself was the windjammer.

Those neighbors of his are just plain envious, I said to myself. Anyhow I wouldn’t let them ruin any of Simon’s stories for me.

But to return to the adventure with the sea sarpent.

Simon had reached China after an uneventful voyage. He said he hadn’t cared too much for China. It was a strange kind of country.

The people there talked like monkeys, and the hogs were as big as cows and had wattles all over them. The hogs impressed him more than anything he had seen on that land. He wouldn't dare to come close to one of those hogs. They had been known to tear the entrails out of a man.

Loading the ship had been a long tedious job. The ship was so large that four months were spent at that task. The crew were very tired of China and the yellow people and the hogs with wattles on them. Now everybody was happy because they were headed home to Charleston, South Carolina.

Sail was set and the breeze blew fresh. Soon China was gone, and they were on the deep lonesome ocean. For sixty days they sailed along with just enough wind to fill the sails — over a sea as smooth as an island creek.

The captain was a good man and never worked his men too hard. If the sails needed mending the boys sat in the shade beneath the mainmast and did the sewing, and if the decks were to be scrubbed one watch did the scrubbing and the other played music, and all hands were given a cup of Jamaica rum when the job was done.

Things were going too good, Simon said. “The Lord ain't mean you to have easy sailing all the way. Mankind get so careless-like when luck stay good like that.”

Unfortunately some of the boys grew careless. They cast praying aside and took to gambling. Night after night under the smoky lantern in the forecastle they played Casino and Seven Up, and cursed and quarreled and fought.

Simon knew that God's anger was kindled, and he feared for the consequences. He, Simon McClair, did not follow those bad boys. He prayed twice a day, giving thanks to the Lord for His mercies, and asking Him to keep the captain's head level.

Came the day when they reached the place in the ocean where it slants down to Charleston.

The ocean, Simon explained, is flat as a pancake most of the way, but once you near the South Carolina coast it starts going downhill. Any old sailor will tell you this.

Simon figured that the ship was a hundred miles from land on

that particular day. Lord, the ocean was calm! The sails fluttered and died, and the ship stopped dead in its tracks. Look out when the sea is glassy and the sky blazing blue; look out for trouble.

As the day wore on, the sun got hotter and hotter, and the pitch in the ship's seams began to melt. Simon wiped the sweat from his face and waited in resignation.

All of a sudden he heard a stir in the water off the port side. For a minute he thought it was a porpoise playing around or maybe a shark. But he was wrong – dead wrong. A big head stuck up, breaking the surface with a loud noise. It was a terrible looking head. It resembled a snake's, and had ugly red eyes and scales all over. No mistake – the thing was a sea serpent sure as God made the world. It was big around as a hogshead and covered with grease.

Simon yelled to the captain. "Oh, boss man, a sea serpent off the port side, and I think he coming on board."

The captain made answer, "Let it be, son. If he comes aboard he comes aboard. God's will be done."

All hands gathered around then. They ran to the port side and the ship listed over with their weight. The men stood there with their mouths wide open and their eyes almost popping out. The thing took a grab on a hatch hinge and hoisted itself up over the side. The sailors gave way and let it pass. The serpent crawled slowly across the deck and left a greasy trail where it had been just as though lard had been laid down on its path.

Simon said that he was a church-going man, but he trembled that day. The captain put his hand on the Bible, and then the card playing men began to pray. It was too late now. God had sent trouble on their ship.

The thing kept right on crawling. He reached the mainmast, rested a little, then up the mast he went like a snake climbing a tree. He didn't stop until he got to the tip top. All of the time he breathed and grunted so hard that the whole ship shook, and with every wiggle of his body he spattered lard down upon the men's heads.

"Then he cast his eye down and look directly into my eye," Simon said. "I never look into a sea serpent eye before, and I pray to God I never going to do such a thing again. It seem like he say to me,

'Who do you think you is, anyhow? What do I care for mankind? I ain't got you to study.' "

By and by the serpent started to crawl down. He came slowly, feeling his way, his red eyes glaring. One of the men threw a tackle block at the creature, but he didn't seem to feel it. He just blinked his eyes and kept wriggling down.

"We're done for now!" the captain shouted. "I thought anybody would have sense enough to leave the serpent be. God knows what will happen to us."

The serpent gained the deck. Everybody back-backed and let him pass. He took his good time crossing over to the rail, and his trail was as greasy as it had been before. Waving his tail as if to say good-bye, he slipped over the rail, and the ship's company heard a great splash.

Two hours passed and a brisk wind came up from the east. The sails bellied and the ship flew along so fast that it barely touched the water. As night came on, the wind turned into a howling gale, and the thunder cracked the sky open and the lightning played around the rigging, setting the topsail on fire. Simon said it was the worst storm he had experienced in his thirty years at sea. It blew so hard that it carried the life boat away, and ripped off the forward housing.

And that was not all it did either. It tore the hair off Captain Eubank's head as clean as a whistle, and moved the cook's stove from the galley and put it in the hog pan. Every man who ventured on deck had his clothes torn off his back.

By some miracle every soul on board was spared, and when the wind calmed down Captain Eubanks ordered an hour of prayer. The men fell on their knees and thanked the Lord for carrying them safely through. The bad boys promised never to touch a card again, and they especially promised never to chunk at a sea serpent.

The next morning they saw Charleston's St. Michael's steeple shining in the sun, and they raised a loud shout of joy.

Simon prayed: *Home once more, thanky Jesus. You bring us through, all the way from China to Charleston, sea serpent and storm notwithstanding — yes, you bring us through. What a fine Jesus, what a fine Lord!*

When he set foot on Edisto Island and saw his wife and his five children, he was so glad that his heart almost jumped out of his mouth. At that time his first wife, Lillie Pearl, was living, and she was a pleasure to behold.

Yet thoughts of that terrible voyage kept returning and almost every night the sea serpent appeared to him in his dreams. It was not until he renounced all intentions of going back to sea that peace entered his soul.

“Yes, suh, I make up my mind to stay home, and keep my feet on the dirt,” Simon said. “Ain’t a man living or dead either who can make me get back on ship deck again. No, suh, not after I look in sea serpent eye.”

He drummed his heels on the barrel, and gave a faint grin.

“But I tell you the truth, Mr. Murray, if my limb been strong and supple like they been ten year ago, I might break my word and sign sailorman paper. Sea serpent hardly worser than Vinnie.”

Harbor

The white horse comes just at sleep,
his stomach of hot pistons.
The skull is a keyhole glowing.

Bones drift away.

Hot plungings of black air,
still as a mirror.

ROBERT MORGAN

The Poet-Speaker and His Wife

He soft and she brittle
They were a pair
To disturb the brain
With thought of what
Contortions marriage makes.

His voice was like
A wad of dusty velvet.
Blurred southern vowels
Rolled along the lines
Of poems whose force
The poet shyly cloaked.

She was more nervous
Edging under his elbow,
Twisting and turning
As his meaning emerged.
“What Paul meant there—”
Taking hold of questions.
And once even
“What *we* were trying to do—”

He didn't seem to mind.
His audience, though, grew
Uneasy. Versed in Freud
It came to its conclusions.

I passed a cup of tea
And looked into her eyes.
Alerted for the knife
I found instead
The satin clarity of love.

I do not know the answer
To that day.
I only know I cannot tell
How endless are the ways,
How faulty, and how fine,
We move toward union.

ESTA SEATON

The Wishing Bone

ELIZABETH BOATWRIGHT COKER

I found him wrapped in one of Mrs. Suggs' old wore out blankets lying in a manger down to the livery stable on Christmas morning. Of course I knowed right off who he was, seeing as how Beadie's daughter from off with her belly big as a oat barrel, had been in our kitchen whining at her mother ever day the week before.

Anybody could of told he was kin to Beadie anyhow. He had the same big black velvet eyes and the softest, shiningest straight hair of any coon I ever seen. Mrs. Suggs thought as how I found him on Christmas and our boy was off in the Marines we ought to keep him for awhile. Say until he was three or four and big enough to put in a orphanage. Beadie didn't say nothing but her face lit up when I give him to her and said he could sleep in her room back of the kitchen. She wouldn't have looked at him twice if he hadn't been her own grandson; not even if he hada been the poor little Jesus boy himself. Beadie ain't charitable like me and Mrs. Suggs.

He was a cute little fellow from the first. Playful and laughing like crazy all the time. He learnt to sing before he learnt to talk and he could dance up a storm when he couldn't hardly walk two straight steps across the floor.

When he was three he began follering me down to the livery stable and he loved them horses like they was people. Folks used to come jest to set and look at him opening the stall doors and bossing them big old skinny nags. He'd say, "Come on — you!" And them horses would put their heads down and sorta wriggle into the halter like they knowed it pleased Jim, and out he'd come — proud as Lucifer — leading them to get water or sometimes jest to eat a bite o' grass.

By the time he was five there weren't a horse in the barn he couldn't ride anywhere in the town. Nights he'd come and set in my lap while Beadie done the dishes.

"Daddy Suggs, when you gonna get me a pony?"

"Next summer, Jim. A white pony. A high stepping winning white pony."

"Kin I ride it in the horse show up to Windy Rock?"

I take the horses up to the mountains ever summer, me being from them mountains to start with. That was where I made my real living at. Riding in Pine View, North Carolina, in the winter weren't near so profitable as them summer people to the Rock.

"Sure. You can ride in the Six Year Old and Under class."

"What his name go be, Daddy Suggs?"

"His name? Why, Jim's pony's name gonna be Prince Suggs. Yessir; Prince Suggs."

And that fool little fellow would chuckle and curl up in a soft ball in my lap and go off to sleep like a puppy. One night him and me was talking about his pony when Beadie come into the room to put up the dishes. Mrs. Suggs was to the pitcher show and I was laying it on thick about the stylish pony Jim was gonna have up to the Rock.

"Mr. Suggs," Beadie said, "you gonna ruin that boy. Pony! White pony name Prince! You know Jim ain't never gonna have no white pony. Why you tease him so?"

"Shut up," Jim screamed, running and kicking Beadie on her shin. Beadie reached back and knocked him clear across the room.

"Git on to bed," she yelled. They looked like two chickens fighting. I most died laughing. Then Jim run through the kitchen crying and Beadie stuck out her lip. I went to the sideboard and poured her a drink of corn.

"Why you mind my teasing the boy? He got to learn to take teasing."

She drank the oily raw liquor without so much as a drop of water. It woulda frizzled my tonsils but she didn't even squinch her nose.

"It just ain't fair him thinking he can ride in a white folks horse show and have a pony all his own. He's a soft skinned young one. He ain't tough in his heart like them bad Mercer boys what lives next door."

"Aw," I said, "pour you another drink, Beadie. You ought to get on your knees and be grateful how good I been to Jim. He weren't nothing but a bastard thrown out to die and I taken him in from the night. Him and me enjoys our little fooling. And here you come

with a dern chip on your shoulder telling me what to say to Jim. I'm a good mind to fire you. Yes, I am." I was getting madder ever minute and Beadie seen I was mad.

"Oh, I didn't mean nothing, Mr. Suggs." She begun to sniffle and edge away. I knowed I had her so I acted hurt.

"We even decided, I and Mrs. Suggs, not to never send the boy to no orphanage but jest let him stay on here. Why, I planned to take him on at the livery stable later and pay him a salary. I had all sorts of plans for Jim. But if you don't like the way I treat him — you just go on and pack your rags and get out. I'll shore miss the little fellow though."

"No, no, Mr. Suggs. Excuse me. Excuse me. Please forgive old Beadie. It's good for Jim to be teased. Anyway he likes it. Please don't pay no attention to old Beadie, Mr. Suggs."

So Jim and me went on talking about his white pony and when Christmas got near Jim said,

"Daddy Suggs, will you write me a letter to Santa Claus?"

Mrs. Suggs was hooking a rug and she put down her big wooden hooker needle and said, "Go over and get me a pencil off the telephone table and I'll write the letter. Daddy Suggs can't write good enough for Santa Claus to read."

He run and brought back the pencil and paper and Mrs. Suggs wrote the letter just like he told her. He looked cute as all get out against the pile of red and blue wool, his great big eyes shining like an animal's in the firelight, and his straight black hair combed up high in the front like I comb mine.

"Dear Santa Claus:

Please bring me a white pony. A winning white pony named Prince Suggs. That's all. Not nothing else. And bring Daddy Suggs a hundred dollars and Mama Suggs a hundred dollars and Beadie a dollar.

Your friend,
Jim."

While he was standing there looking like a little dark angel I got a idea from a old joke what had hung around the horse business since I was a boy.

“What you grinning at?” Mrs. Suggs asked. “You must be thinking up some mischief. Let’s don’t pay him no attention, Jim. Herc, touch the end of the paper to the fire and then send it up the chimney. Turn it aloose quick ’cause if it falls back in the fire Santa won’t bring you nothing.”

Jim squatted down, touched the paper to the fire and it went flaming up the chimney.

“Beadie! Beadie! I’m gonna get my pony. I’m gonna get my pony!” He run out in the kitchen happy as a bee in a apple tree at blossom time.

I and Mrs. Suggs laughed and pretty soon we went to bed. It was turning cold and looked like snow outside. At first I couldn’t sleep good; then after a while I heard Beadie down in her room singing Sweet Little Jesus Boy to Jim. She had a low husky voice that sounded like it was full of cane syrup and it sent me right off to sleep.

Two days later it was Christmas Eve. Pine View was all covered in snow. Them Yankee people up to the hotel had found some sleighs from somewhere and I done a fine business. Jim spent the time fixing up a stall for his pony. He had the manger full of oats and the hay rack stuffed with the best alfalfa that I keep for the board horses.

“That’s the same dern manger I found you in,” I said when I went to tell him it was time to go home for supper.

“You reckon Santa Claus go bring Prince here or home?”

“Home. Santa Claus never come to no stable.”

“He brung me in a stable.”

“Santa Claus never brung you. Why, you come from —”

“Beadie says Santa Claus come to this very stable with me when I was just borned.”

I seen Jim’s lip trembling. He’d been down here in the cold all day and I knowed he was wore out.

“O.K., O.K., Santa Claus brung you, now let’s go home. Ain’t it time for you to hang up your stocking?”

I picked up the sack I’d fixed and we walked up the frozen street in the falling snow. There was Christmas trees lighted with red and yellow balls in the windows of the houses and wreaths of holly and pine on all the doors.

“Ain’t tonight pretty, Daddy Suggs?” Jim said, stretching out his hands and letting the snowflakes whiten them.

We made a great to-do about hanging up Jim’s stocking. It was a old one of Mrs. Suggs’ and after he’d went to bed Mrs. Suggs filled it full of nuts and candy and fruit and laid a red fire truck she’d bought at the dime store on the floor under it.

“Wonder what Beadie’s got for him?” she said.

“Oh, she ain’t got nothing for him. You go on upstairs. I’ll be to bed when I finish this pipe.”

I smoked a long pipe just setting by myself in the dying firelight. Then I took and emptied the fruit and candy from out the stocking and filled it with the stuff I’d brought from the stable in the sack. It sure did look funny and I didn’t have no trouble going to sleep that night at all.

It must have been nearly six o’clock when I heard Jim come tiptoeing in my room. His round little face wasn’t no higher than my pillow and he said real easy like,

“Daddy Suggs, there ain’t no pony downstairs.”

“Aw, you joking! Shore there’s a pony downstairs. I woke up about a hour ago and heard him neighing and pawing to beat the band. Hand me my wrapper. I’ll go down with you.”

We crope down and I could hardly keep from busting out laughing. Beadie was standing by the chimney with her lips stuck out a mile.

“What you done now, Mr. Suggs?” she asked, and I knew she’d seen the stocking.

I made out I hadn’t seen her. “There’s shore a pony been here,” I said, wrinkling up my nose. “I can smell there’s been a pony here.”

“Where? Where, Daddy Suggs? You sure? I don’t smell nothing.”

“Come here, I’ll show you,” I said. Jim run over and I took down the stocking and dumped the manure onto the floor. “There,” I said, “Santa brung you a pony but you was asleep. The pony has been here. See. You can see for yourself there was a pony here! He musta got away. That’s what. He’s done runned away. If you’d been up in time you coulda caught him.”

The next summer we was lucky. A little rich girl from South Car-

olina brought her white pony up to the Rock and, what do you know, his name was Prince!

"You see," I told Jim, "Daddy Suggs promised you a white pony named Prince to ride this summer. Too bad you let the one Santa brung get away but this one is prettier."

"Is he a winning pony, Daddy Suggs?" Jim was so excited when we unloaded the pony he jigged and turnt a cartwheel.

"This here is a winner."

"Is he mine, Daddy Suggs?"

"Well —" I didn't dare go too far this time. Not after the way Mrs. Suggs sided with Beadie against me last Christmas and made me go down town and buy a dern second hand bicycle for Jim. But his face was so believing and serious I just had to tease him a little. "Sorta yours. It's thisaway. He rightly belongs to a little girl what won't ride him much and you can ride him whenever you please."

"In the horse show, Daddy Suggs?"

"'Course."

"You sure he is a winner, Daddy Suggs?"

"You bet. Wanta try him?"

Jim could really ride that pony. I charged the Randolph's a extra ten dollars a month for Jim exercising him so good. The little girl was named Daisy and all she wanted to do was ride Prince in the ring about fifteen minutes a day to keep herself in practice for the horse show. She didn't love riding the pony the way Jim loved riding him. Jim could put Prince in a fast trot and he would pick up his front feet so high he most knocked his chin off ever time. They was something: that little black boy and that snappy white pony, both holding up their heads as proud as governors. I never seen a kid of five ride like Jim. Daisy was ten and she couldn't do nothing with Prince but Jim rode him like a professional.

Mrs. Suggs fixed up some old jodhpurs of Billy's and Beadie took and went over to Boone and bought Jim a couple of nice white shirts and a pair of little cowboy boots and with his pretty hair combed so high and nice he coulda rode Prince in the Garden against the top kids from off.

Mr. Randolph would watch Jim school the pony ever day. After, he'd give Jim a dime and pat him on the back. Once he took Jim on a picnic with him and Daisy and come back telling me what a smart boy Jim was and how he hoped I was planning to send him to school next year.

"School!" I laughed. "What good will school do Jim? Crazy about the horses as he is I'd better learn him the horse business so he'll have a trade."

"It won't hurt him to have some education too."

I don't never argue with my paying customers, so I made as if a fly was in my ear and changed the subject. Things went on like that till the day before the horse show when Mr. Randolph came up to me and said, worried like,

"Mr. Suggs, I believe Jim thinks you are going to let him ride Prince in the show. It's all right with me for him to show the pony in the Six Year Old and Under class since Daisy rides him in the Eleven and Under."

"Jim ride? You know these summer folks wouldn't stand for Jim to ride in their horse show, Mr. Randolph. I wisht he could. But you know how it is. I'll fix up something to make up to him. Don't you worry. Your pony is in fine shape. Jim's got him going perfect. Daisy is sure to win."

I meant to tell Jim that night he couldn't ride, him being a colored boy, but him and Beadie was fussing over which tie to wear and was his shirt ironed right, and Mrs. Suggs kept asking me what was I going to do about Jim and it begun to aggravate me, so many people worrying about Jim and me doing all the work. I answered sharp.

"He's going to ride in the horse show. I promised him, didn't I?"

I put on my hat and went out and cranked up the pickup and drove to farmer Lydey's up on Peak Gap and borrowed his little stud donkey. I told Pete, the boy who helped give the kids lessons, what I had in mind and we had everthing ready when the show started.

Jim come to the grounds with Beadie and Mrs. Suggs dressed to kill.

"I'll get Prince," he said.

“Go ahead,” I told him, “your class is next. We done moved Prince into the third stall.”

Jim run off and come back in a minute looking like he was going to cry. “Prince ain’t in that stall. A old no good donkey is in that stall.”

“Well – ” I could hear the announcer calling Six Year Old and Under, “Mr. Randolph says he don’t want you to ride Prince. You’ll have to ride the donkey or nothing.”

“I won’t ride nothing,” Jim said.

“Oh, yes, I done drove half the night finding you something to ride. It’ll give the stands a big laugh and help our business. Go on in there and show your stuff, boy.”

“I ain’t.”

Mrs. Suggs said, “It’s better than not riding.”

And Beadie said, “It’s riding in a white folks’ show, honey.”

“I ain’t,” Jim said.

“By golly, you are!” I’d had enough of this nigger kid thinking he was somebody. “Bring out the donkey, Pete!”

Pete brought the donkey and I histed Jim up and before the class begun I’d done led Jim to the ring and shoved him and that donkey in.

“Walk your horses,” the judge called and the donkey begun to buck and hee haw. The crowd took a look at Jim on that little jackass and from then on he stole the show. If he’d a been on Prince they woulda resented him but being on the donkey they knew he was there to make them laugh. Yet instead of being just a clown for the audience, like I planned, he made the donkey walk, trot, and canter. He musta been mad ’cause fer as I knew nobody had ever set on the stud before. And what do you know? The judge give him the blue ribbon! I was so proud I coulda bust. Little old Jim riding on a ass and winning a blue ribbon in a society horse show with the crowd waving and clapping like a multitude. When he come out of the ring Mr. Randolph was waiting by the end gate.

“Good show, Jim,” he said, “but why didn’t you ride Prince?”

Jim looked over at me and I guess my face turned red. Then a old sort of expression almost like he pitied me come in Jim's eyes.

"Daddy Suggs thought this donkey would make people laugh," Jim said.

I give Jim a big hug and a whole quarter when he got off. He's one good kid.

"This Christmas I'll write Santa Claus to turn you white and you can really ride Prince in the show next year."

Even Mr. Randolph laughed at this.

We all thought Jim had took it as a joke too but evidently he hadn't 'cause soon after Thanksgiving he started pestering me about had I really writ Santa Claus to turn him white for Christmas. When Mrs. Suggs or Beadie was in the room I wouldn't say nothing much but down to the stable I'd tease Jim a sight and he'd laugh and sing around the place like a bird. He knowed I was joking. Leastways he shoulda knowed. Him being almost six year old and well growed for his age. All kids get excited when Christmas is in the air. I didn't see nothing strange about that.

But Mrs. Suggs kept nagging at me, "Now, Mr. Suggs," she'd say, "don't you play no tricks on that boy this Christmas. I got him a second hand suit of clothes from a sale and Beadie has bought him some new shoes and I'm going to send him to school in January. Him and that white pony! All he can think about is getting turned white himself so's he can ride Prince in the horse show. You better leave that boy alone. Maybe school will bring him down to earth."

I agreed. I wasn't actually planning to do nothing this year, leastways not until the package come for Jim on Christmas Eve and the letter to Beadie. Beadie let Jim open the package right away. It was from Mr. Randolph. The prettiest Roy Rogers cowboy outfit you ever see. Big white hat and fine black pants and shirt all covered with white fringe and silver buttons. Jim like to had a fit. He put them fancy clothes on and went strutting down the street like he owned the world. When them Mercer boys next door come out to look at him he hollered, big as all get out — "I'm going to be turned white tonight and tomorrow I'm coming in your yard and beat you up."

Course they went for him right off but Beadie heard Jim mocking them and got to him first and drug him inside the house before the

dirt balls they was making hit him. He didn't seem to care at all. That suit just witched him proper.

"He needs to be learnt a lesson," I told Mrs. Suggs. "He's heading for trouble."

"You're just sour because Mr. Randolph sent him such a grand present. You'd be sourer if you knowed what he wrote to Beadie."

"What did he write to Beadie?"

"Oh, something."

Women is all mean. I never seen one, mare nor person, aught but ornery and full of kicks. So I used guile. "I give up. Tell me."

"He ast Beadie to let Jim come to his plantation and stay along of his cook. Said the pony warn't no good at all without Jim to exercise him. Said his cook was a fine woman with three little boys of her own and wanted Jim to make a even number. Don't look so crabbed. Jim ain't planning to go. He wouldn't leave you for nothing. Though why he loves you so much I can't fathom."

That there was a long speech from Mrs. Suggs, so I poured her a drink and she decided to go to prayer meeting at the Holiness Church. Beadie had went to a party in Hop Town. Jim and me was alone together.

The fire was nice and warm. A big wind was up and the radio said the morning would be freezing with maybe snow or sleet. Jim still had on his pretty suit and he set down on the floor rubbing his soft shiny head against my leg. I put out my hand to pat his hair, him looking so cute, and the rocker of my chair hit the table leg.

"What that?" Jim set up, his big eyes like to pop out he was so excited. "Is them reindeer hoofs I hear?"

I nodded and reached in my pocket and jingled some coppers together what was lying loose. Jim cocked his head on one side like as if he was hearing bells ringing.

"You hear that jingling, Daddy Suggs?"

"Shore do. Are you ready to be turnt white, Jim, or do you think you better stay colored? Say quick because I still got time to tell Santa Claus to let you alone."

Jim stood up straight and stiff, grabbing my hands in his. "Please

let him turn me white, Daddy Suggs, so I can ride that winning pony. Please don't send him away, Daddy Suggs."

"Then you better put on your nightdrawers and go to bed."

"Un-unh," he shook his head solemnly, "I'm going to keep on my good clothes so I'll look good all over when I'm turnt."

"Well, seeing as how Beadie ain't here, go in the spare room and sleep on the cot." He did that often when Beadie would decide she needed a night out. Beadie wouldn't miss him. Not tonight nohow. Hop Town was lit up like a circus with celebrating colored people.

Long about five o'clock I woke up hearing them Mercer boys next door shooting off firecrackers and torpedoes. I slipped out of bed so Mrs. Suggs wouldn't wake and went down and got the ham grease I'd hid in the pantry and a sifter full of flour. Jim was still asleep and didn't even feel me when I rubbed the grease over his face and sifted the flour on it. In the half light he sure enough did look white! I was just finished sifting when he woke up.

"Hey, who in here?"

"Me. Daddy Suggs. Jim, you know what?"

"Am I white, Daddy Suggs? Am I white?"

"You shore are white, Jim. Get up and go look in the glass."

Jim hightailed it off that cot and over to the mirror. As I said, in the half light he did look white and being so excited he didn't notice the flour what had fell on his black shirt. He was like a wild colt. Jumping and singing and hollering. Mrs. Suggs called from her room.

"You wake, Jim?"

"Tell her 'yes'," I whispered.

"Yes, Mama Suggs. Can I shoot firecrackers with them Mercer boys?"

"Go on. There's a whole pack of crackers in the top of your stocking and here's some matches," I said.

He run out and I went to the window to see what would happen when he met up with them toughs.

It was a ugly daycome as I ever seen through the window glass.

The big bare old sycamore trees with their naked trunks was clutching at each other like they were trying to ram each other's branches down their throats. Everything looked so angry there in the dead greyness that it put a chill all down my back.

I raised the window, quiet as I could. Jim was going down the steps when Beadie come running — still in her party dress.

"Where you going?" Beadie said.

"Get away from me, Beadie. I'm a white boy now. I'm going to throw rocks at them Mercer boys."

"Throw rocks nothing. You fixing to get throwned in jail. What make you think you white? Putting ham grease and flour on your face! White!" She looked up and musta seen me in the window 'cause she said real mean and loud: "Daddy Suggs done played another trick on you."

"He ain't. Not Daddy Suggs. It ain't no trick, Beadie. I seen my face in the mirror and it was white. I seen it white as —"

"White as Jesus," Beadie answered and she took one of Jim's hands and raked it down his face.

When he seen it come off smeared in ham grease and flour he looked up at me a minute, then he sorta give way and let Beadie pick him up, big as he is, and tote him back in the house.

It shoulda been funny but somehow with the wind blowing them trees so ugly and the sleet starting to fall I didn't feel like laughing. I closd the window and snuck back in bed with Mrs. Suggs. It was nice and warm, her being so fat and flabby, and I got to sleep easy, having decided to give Jim a whole silver dollar for his Christmas present.

When eight o'clock struck we went down to breakfast, only there weren't no breakfast. The kitchen was dark and no fire lit in the stove nor nothing.

"Well," said Mrs. Suggs, "of all the ungrateful people. I bet Beadie got drunk and didn't come in at all last night. And it Christmas! Where's Jim? He ain't touched his stocking, nor seen his suit I bought. But the shoes are gone. The shoes Beadie bought are gone." She give me such a fierce look I had to unloose and tell her what I done.

All day she ain't spoke to me. When the telegram come from Mr. Randolph in the afternoon saying Jim had got there safe on the bus, Mrs. Suggs brung her hooker needle and set with me. And later when I heard Beadie singing Poor Little Jesus Boy in the kitchen, fixing to cook the turkey for supper, I felt less lonesome. But the house shore is empty. I miss Jim. Him and me always pulled the wishingbone together.

Hors D'Oeuvres

The first time I attended
the Annual Arts Awards Dinner,
it was the poets who ate
up everything in sight.
You had your critics there,
understand,
and musicians, painters,
novelists, the whole works
—and it was the poets who
devoured everything they could lay
hands on.

Half sandwiches were there
and muffins, biscuits,
now and then cracker dip,
a few women,
couple of steamrollers—
and those damn poets
all they did, was,
they ate everything there.

Peter D. Zivkovic .

Movement

for H.J.K.

Sitting. The cat is asleep on my shoulder.
She likes the softness of my hair.
I have not moved for half an hour.
I am her prisoner.

Everything
Moves
Slowly
Here, in this room.

One is allowed the luxury
Of being a cat's prisoner
Suspended
Here where
Everything
Moves
Slowly.

Walking. There is something appealing,
I think,
About people walking.
Not the way the poor walk,
For they have to,
But in walking just to be
Walking.

Of course those who walk
Probably don't like it.
They had rather ride like me,
Saying from the distance of the car,
"There is something appealing,
I think,
About people walking."

MOVEMENT

37

Running. "It is not good for me to relate to you."

Keep a distance, then,
And let us speak politely in passing.
Keep a calm heart.
Guard it from confusions. This I would wish for you.

But in my room,
Alone,
I meet the other you,
The one who has not been born yet,
And we talk
And make love
And there is no confusion.

Meanwhile, earthbound,
You run for the security of your wife.

ALOUISE D. COPE

Winter Wrappings

JACK RAPER

Hard.

At three it was snowing again — hard. When Lawrence Eversole, already bundled into his coat, paused at the mirror to comb his few remaining wisps of sandy hair in place, the phone rang. It was one of his squirrels, Zazie, a graduate student who graded papers for him and occasionally did him other favors. She was in a hurry: “Daddy needs me. Cabana party at Edge. Beach. Out of state publishers. No go tonight. Bye.” His hand still on the phone, Eversole thought of Zazie dressed in cocktail black, her beautiful red hair lacquered into mushroom-like puffs, being guided among admiring smalltown ink-slingers by Mr. Gerber, her father, owner of “the liberal chain” (as she put it) of Northside papers. Well, that’s the end of that one, he thought out loud. Abruptly he took his keys from the chest of drawers and stuffed them into the pocket of his coat. The coat, knee-length and a beauty, had been for Eversole the first visible, and violent, proof of his conversion from Tennessee rebel to Chicago yankee. Back home for the first Christmas, almost four years ago now, he had worn the foreign coat, made out of what he thought must have been two army blankets, like a war uniform. Now, he noted with sadness, the linings of the pocketflaps were beginning to fray. Quickly he slipped on his rubbers, crammed his briefcase with freshman themes, and went outside.

The snow stuck to his glasses. He could feel it in his hair. The snow gave him trouble: the winter before, the snow had melted in his hair and caused drafts in the classroom to give him head colds. My hair curls up, and that makes the holes visible. A shiver passed through his limbs as the first melting flakes made their way down to his scalp. Bald at 32 — pathetic! He cursed the cold — all of it: snow, ice underfoot, burning skin — then tacked on a few choice words for the Scotch-Irish beauty whose freckled pink legs and fickle waxed lips had driven him five years before out of Tennessee into the Illinois cold, where his burnt-out insides had gradually cooled down. Not into the shape they had had before he fell for her freckled thighs—but cooled enough for a young, and bitter, student to get on with his career: Vanderbilt, U. of C., then, as the capstone, appointment

as assistant professor at the highest priced art-and-party-minded private college in the Middle West, where, between machine-made articles, he found a little time to rework his poems. Eversole cursed the cold again. He cursed his own vain stupidity for not buying a hat. Instead, he drove to his work.

Miss Steige was waiting in the empty hall when Eversole entered the English building. Miss Steige, as he was aware, had red hair. She was probably vain about it — even though it was *orangeish* red and dribbled down in stubby curls. She also had, he noted, short stubby legs supporting a thick stubby body. He nevertheless unlocked his office and showed her in.

The teacher and his student talked longer than the appointed twenty minutes — about her themes, her grades, her tuition. Really her lack of intuition, he thought as he noted that thirty-five minutes had passed. One subject they did not directly mention, but Eversole was aware that Miss Steige knew examinations were a week away. She was not anxious to leave. As she talked, Eversole wondered uneasily what the word on him might be among the coeds: Just how far were all their so unconscious, but smiling struggles, to wrap round knees with too-short skirts supposed to go in his conferences? A better grade? Better? What did they really assume about male vanity? Just because you wore pants and toted a briefcase, were you supposed to leap, tongue wagging, at every pair of plump bare thighs you saw? It was ludicrous. Certainly even a teacher, especially a young one, had to show *some* discrimination. The building was practically empty; the office chilly; the radiator cold. Miss Steige's talk seemed relaxed, almost intimate:

“You know, sir, how it is for the coeds . . . These boys are so young . . . Just boys . . .”

Eversole impatiently looked beyond his student to the door. Miss Steige, he said to himself, you are wasting your time . . . No matter what the word is.

They talked. Eversole no longer bothered to follow. He didn't have to. After two years, he knew the drift of these “required” Freshman English conferences too well: the grade on the latest paper, then his estimate of the student's overall average, the student's pretense of shocked disappointment followed by his or her warm recollection of an inspiring high school teacher who had sent the young writer out into the

world to create great themes. Eversole found answers for whatever Miss Steige asked.

The door opened. Miss Nostrom looked in on them. He noticed that she did not let go of the knob.

“Just wanted you to know I’m here!” Miss Nostrom said. Her words were an announcement. “That’s all.”

He sensed the ice in her voice. “I’ll be out here.” The door closed. Posturing, he thought.

After the interruption, Miss Steige began the conversation where she had stopped. Now the tone of intimacy was missing. She sees there is no hope. At last! He showed Miss Steige into the hall and wished her good luck on her exams. She thanked him.

Then Miss Steige was gone and Miss Nostrom (Virginia, as Eversole thought of her) was collecting her coat, her scarf, hat and books from the hall chairs. She hurried impatiently where Eversole calmly motioned her. As she hooked the hat, scarf and coat on the tree, then moved away toward the office chairs, he studied the outfit she was wearing. He was disappointed by its casualness: very shaggy sweater with a shirt collar sticking out the V-neck, and Levis. But then he changed his mind. Under the coat, itself green, all was white – even her Levis, which he watched pull smooth about her long slender limbs and across her wide and healthy hips, were an off-white. Perfect, he thought. Then second-thought: White, for irony?

“How’s it going for you, Miss Nostrom?” he asked her as he did all his students.

She took one of the swivel chairs and turned in it immediately to answer. “I can breathe again. That’s something, don’t you think?” Her voice sounded to him as it did the day she cried: her head was stuffed up with cold. He recalled the way her nose had looked yesterday – the tissues distended and inflamed. Now her nostrils were chapped, but their coloring had returned. Eversole, for a second, felt fevered for his student.

He took the other moving chair. “Maybe you’d better keep your coat on; there’s no heat in here.”

She retrieved the coat and wrapped its warmth and greenness about her long limbs. She didn’t fasten it. When she sat again and

turned to face him, he watched the coat slide open across the smooth surface of her white Levis. He hurried to look her in the face.

“So, Miss Nostrom, what’s up now?”

“I haven’t been in to talk about my grades, and themes . . . and things . . . in some while. So —” she was grinning — almost laughing — in her eyes, where the dazzle was not dimmed by a running nose, “how *am* I doing?”

“We haven’t had one of our afternoons, have we?”

“All my time’s been . . . going to Leo and *your* themes, of course. But I’m sure, now — we are not the same kind.” She spoke in earnest, with her teeth set, but with remorse softening her eyes. “The same like with Lotz.” She bit off the name of Peter Lotz, another of Eversole’s students, who had been the subject of many conversations with Miss Nostrom: the boy had not known how to cope with the desperate if naively enthusiastic advances that, as Eversole was discovering, characterized her behavior with students who asked her out — or whom she asked to take her out. And now, Eversole added to himself, there’s this Leo Somebody. Her eyes dropped to her hands, and both the softness of her eyes and the hardness of her mouth gave way to something neutral — passive perhaps. Waiting.

Eversole hesitated, watching her in profile as she gazed into the slender chapped hands open in her lap. A curtain of her long dark hair had fallen forward to hide the end of her eyebrow. He thought for a moment of the charm the thinness of her top lip held now that it had relinquished the sneer which had made it so much a mismatch for a turned-up nose since the afternoon Virginia (as he remembered, she became Virginia again) brought her mother to his office, for a friendly talk. Then he caught up again: “Like with Lotz?”

“Yes, just the same, really. But different. Old Peter, of course, wouldn’t lay his hand on a girl — not even to pull her out of quicksand if she were drowning. Straight arrow. I had to halfway stick my arm in his face if I wanted him to help me across the street.” She frowned — dramatically, posturing to create the pain of her memory. “Oh, if Lotz wasn’t such an ice man! I think his trouble is he’s conceited — he’s really stuck-up . . .”

“And this new guy? This . . . this—”

“Leo’s the opposite – makes no bones what he’s after. And says he’s going to get it too.”

“He’s joking, of course. Those guys brag, you know, about—”

“No, *he’s* not! Already got one girl in trouble, he says. And was living with another, six months, till he got his scholarship.” Eversole saw she was completely earnest again.

“He *tells* you that?”

“Sure – And my mouth just dropped.”

“Why . . . why doesn’t he have to . . . get married to one of them?”

“Claims the court couldn’t make him. He’d just go in and plead he’s unfit to be a father—”

“– and he is!”

They both said it at the same time, and laughed aloud together. Then there was a silence while Virginia looked at the curve of the Levis over her knecs. Eversole watched her.

He picked it up. “What about the scholarship? How can a fellow like that keep a scholarship?”

“He won’t – he’s flunking everything. So far nobody knows about the other. When he won the money, his family took him back in. He didn’t live with the girl any more.”

Eversole was puzzled. “Back in?”

“They’d made him get out: he was so radical – Fair Play for Cuba, and the rest.”

“Where’d this young Byron come from?”

“Southside—”

No wonder. Images of underwear and oily flesh and rumors of promiscuity jarred one another in Eversole’s memory. Where common-law is the dominant situation, he began. He asked instead, “What was his name, you say?”

“Leo . . . Leo Moretti.”

“Oh.” There was silence. Eversole studied his student. She looked to her hand for a moment, then faced him. Her eyes told her teacher

she was still waiting. He wondered, Waiting for what? Advice? . . . Protection? . . . More? He stretched his legs out. He didn't look down, but he knew his feet were inches from where his student's slender limbs waited. He wanted to let his foot touch hers — accidentally. He was paid to be Jenny's instructor, not her chaperon. And certainly not anything more. But Jenny was special. With her it had to be more than simple masculine vanity — to shelter, to embrace. He wanted to tell her things about the Southside, about the way he imagined people lived down there. He didn't do either.

"So you've decided you're not the same type of people?"

"He was supposed to take me to a play last night."

"You called it off?"

Her top lip stretched back again over her set teeth: "He didn't show up."

Eversole began to see now. "So, that should settle it?"

"He's smooth. He'll come up with something . . . some crazy story—"

"You're not going to let him get away with a line?"

"I hope he calls and tries something." She looked past Eversole out the window. Into the snow, he thought. She continued, "It's too hard without a fuss." She stopped and looked down. She knew he was watching her study her hands. "But he won't give up, ever, he says."

"If you make it plain, he'll have to."

"No." She was looking into his eyes now, Eversole knew — for an answer. "He says I've got to face up to the facts . . . grow up . . . quit living in make-believe. I'm the only nice girl on this campus, you know?" Her questioning eyes were joking again — bitterly. "That's what he says. I've got to come round to reality — to him. He says if he doesn't get me this quarter, he will, for sure, next. How's that for conceit?"

"I think I'd take some of the starch out of him if I were you."

"I'm going to be begging *him* to sleep *with me* next quarter, he tells me. He thinks he knows coeds."

"Knows coeds?"

“Knows how much they like to get laid.”

“So—” Eversole hesitated, to guard against any tone of mocking lechery, “—*are* there any nice coeds?”

“That’s another thing that scares me—” She spoke freely now. “I hear them talk . . . brag. Most’ve been going to bed with fellows since they’re freshmen in high school.”

“They make it up . . . like the guys in the dorms.”

“I don’t think so.” She was quite solemn, looking into her cupped hands, unaware now of him.

“Virginia, I swear, you’ve had a rough go — for the first time away from home.” He was thinking about what Virginia’s mother had come all the way to Chicago from Connecticut to tell her daughter the same day the two came to his office. He was remembering the way Virginia, in her naivete, had reacted after he had forced her class into a discussion of what his colleagues called “the theme of disillusionment in 20th century literature”: “Tell me everybody doesn’t have to go through such doubts and unhappiness!” she had begged in her funny and pathetic way. “Tell me it can always be like it is -- I can always be with Mother like my sister, and kid with Daddy like his beautiful girlfriend! Please tell me!” Eversole could not tell her No: “Okay. You can.” And he had hoped maybe *she* could. “So . . . so, you come back in two, three years and tell me — tell me I’m right.” She had seemed to him to believe that his saying it made it so. It hadn’t. It wasn’t two years — it was less than two months before Virginia’s mother flew in from Connecticut to tell her that the family’s great happiness had, for several years, been covering up her father’s growing dissatisfaction. He had filed for a divorce; he wished to go outside his family to find that delicate “blue flower” he had always wanted but “never found.” Those were her father’s words (which Eversole could not mock though he would never have used them) in a letter Virginia found in her box the day after her mother flew away again, this time to tell Virginia’s brother at Berkeley. The afternoon Virginia had read her father’s letter aloud to Eversole was the day she cried.

And she looked to her teacher now as though she might cry again. But she didn’t. “I’m big enough to take it now. I think I’m through with Lotz — and with Leo.” She made a gentle smile. “What I need is somebody like my brother . . . somebody who likes to read, and

knows how to write . . . and when to laugh.” Eversole wanted to wrap her with his arms. He didn’t know where. Then his eyes dropped. Around the smooth wide hips and the triangle where her curve fell away, all of a sudden, like a polished stone.

He raised his eyes. She was grinning: “But, I don’t know. Leo claims he’s going to quit school, and go to Paris to write. I hope he does.”

Eversole had tried hard not to show her his dislike for Leo, but this new subject trespassed on what he considered his own territory. He jumped into it. “You think he could halfway write? You think he’s got the humanity in him to write? Any guy who knocks up a handful of young ladies – and then shoves them down the drain – couldn’t be very strong on humanity—”

Virginia brought him back to the issue. She was alive now. “I asked him the other night . . . I said, ‘What about if you got me knocked up? What’s going to happen then?’ You want to know what he said? He said, ‘Nothing!’ He said, ‘Besides, you’d enjoy it!’” Virginia had risen in her seat, her arms pressing stiffly against the arms of the chair, her face electric. She looked wild. Then, for no reason – except perhaps that her emotion, and her sickness, had exhausted her – she slumped again. Her teacher said nothing.

Then: “Virginia, I don’t see why you *possibly* should have to worry so much about the boys here . . .” She was listening intently. “About whether they ask you out, to parties, or not. You *chased* after Lotz—”

“I learned my lesson there. No more.” She was weary.

“What I mean is – just relax . . . relax.”

“I know, I know. I try *too* hard.”

“Yes, you do. Don’t take it so seriously . . . Some things it’s better not to be so conscientious about.” He knew he was giving a sermon. “Let them come to you.”

“If they would --” She seemed worried.

“They will. Wait! Why shouldn’t they? You’ve got everything a girl could have—” He drew a long breath, as though he had been trying too long to swim beneath a frozen surface of reticence. “Everything a guy could want. You’ve got a good mind. Your father’s a bank president back there in Connecticut. You know how to have a good time.

You're a beautiful girl. What more could any fellow want who just wanted a good-looking girl to take to parties—" He knew he was mocking the way students looked at things "— or to make love to?" That made the tone right. It wasn't just flattery.

She looked him earnestly in the eyes, and her lips broke into a brief smile. Eversole was uncertain what it meant: Perhaps she thought he was trying to flatter her; perhaps she knew he meant it. She dropped her eyes and answered him, "If Leo doesn't get me first."

Eversole felt relieved — she was at least joking a little. He hesitated before replying, "It *would* be a pity," he was looking at her, thinking of her, not as Miss Nostrom, but as a woman many years older, "if a bum like that was the one."

"He might be." Eversole no longer knew whether she was in earnest or not.

"Is he really as gross as you make him out to be? Aren't you exaggerating?"

"No."

Eversole was bewildered. "Don't — don't the girls in the dorm kid you about him?"

"They don't know how he is." She paused. "He dresses okay. He's not bad looking. In fact they think he's kind of . . . sexy looking. That's the trouble. He might really get me, like he says. Like the other night, I had this cold, so we stayed in the dorm and he kept looking me up and down, and he says, 'You know, Virginia, you have got real possibilities! *Real* possibilities!" Virginia was grinning about this.

"Flattery!" Eversole broke in. "Tell him flattery will get him no—" They were both writhing in their chairs, watching one another, ready to break into laughter, "— will get him . . . tell him you haven't decided yet just how far flattery *will* get him—" Then they laughed together freely — for a moment.

"No. It won't!" She was serious.

"Promise?" He tried to turn his question into another laugh.

"Promisc." She was still serious.

He quit smiling too.

"Good."

That was it. The open laughter and then the promise were like "The End" written on a film. They were exhausted; there was nothing

to do but to leave. Miss Nostrom excused herself. Eversole watched her stand and walk wearily toward her things still on the tree. He wondered how good that promise might prove. He remembered other students whom he had taken to be special and what had become of them: A momentary glance in the eyes of an old friend as she looked back across a snow-covered quad to say "Hi!" before catching up to her companion, a dyed blonde known even to teachers as a campus punchboard and grass connection. The other, the memory of a former student dressed in a black bikini running through summer surf behind Old College Hall and smiling at Eversole before turning back to her date, a dark Argentine graduate student stretched out, in a black jock-strap with his belly turned to the sun, an unbearable ego-in-residence whom Eversole had once overheard bragging of international sexual successes. Suddenly, as he knew they would, the faces on both students merged into one: Jenny's. He rose in his seat.

"Wait just a minute. I'll walk with you." He turned and took his rubbers from the bottom drawer. He wondered what Jenny thought of old men who had to wear rubbers.

Outside on the steps the overshoes sank quietly in the damp snow. Around lamplights lining the campus walks, the slow thick flakes made bright irregular patterns. Like — Eversole's memory spread itself out, moving backwards beyond the lights and his winter coat and the freckled thighs to — an old woman in a dark room and a homemade quilt hanging from the oil lamp's smoky glow into the darkness between two quilting horses. She wanted a blanket to wrap all her chicks and chillen before she died, Eversole recalled. And by his side Miss Nostrom zipped her coat high, pulled her scarf tighter. Again he felt fever with her — just for a moment.

Then: "It's great!" he shouted. It surprised her and she jerked her head about suddenly. "It's always beautiful the first time. The flakes are so heavy!" With a second turn, she indicated that she was not so certain.

They went down the steps. "This way," Eversole pointed down the sloping walk and they continued, testing with each step for traction. He felt a strangeness in walking so close to his student.

"Where are you going?" Miss Nostrom asked.

"Straight ahead."

"Where do you live?"

“Four blocks up Grant.”

“That’s a long walk – in the snow . . .”

“My car’s parked on Grant.”

“Oh.”

In quiet they moved between the hedgerows lining the walk, his right arm moving with hers within inches – to steady her should she slip. It would be difficult, Eversole thought, if we bumped into Miss Steige like this.

“Where are you going, Jenny?” They were at the corner.

“Constance Hall.”

“I guess this is as far as we go . . . So, I’ll see you Friday – and good luck with your boyfriends.”

“Goodbye.” She was quiet. He looked at her once more. They turned and moved apart.

“Mr. Eversole . . .”

He faced her again, waiting. She was coming back. They met beneath the corner light. For a moment they leaned toward each other wrapped together under a weirdly-patterned quilt of snow and light, their arms almost touching.

“Mr. Eversole . . . Sir . . . There’s one thing more I wanted to ask . . .”

“Yes, Jenny . . . What is it?”

“Is there *any* chance I might get an A?”

Her teacher was silent for a moment. In his mind a fierce wet wind blew through the dark room scattering quilts, overturning wooden horses, toppling the kerosene lamp. A flame – a fire. “Nairy a blanket to wrap my chicks and chillen,” was what grandmamma said. “Nairy one,” Eversole thought. Then he answered his student’s question. “You have a high B-plus, don’t you? So it depends on your last paper . . . and your exam.” His sentence trailed away. “Don’t shoot yourself, you hear, if you don’t.”

His student scemed satisfied.

They turned apart. Eversole walked in the quiet snow toward Grant. As he went, he shook his head from time to time to keep swollen flakes from melting in his hair and chilling his head.

The Literary Criticism of William Gilmore Simms

JOHN C. GUILDS

I

Despite a recent gentle awakening of interest in William Gilmore Simms, he remains the least studied, least written about, least understood major man of letters in American literature. Despite his numerous shortcomings, there can be no serious questioning that Simms "rather than Poe is the central figure in the literature of the Old South," as Professor Hubbell so aptly put it in 1954.¹ Nor do many scholars contest the idea that Simms's place in American literary history is, or ought to be, every bit as secure as, say, that of Cooper, Lowell, Whittier, Holmes, or Irving, to name a few other writers with deficiencies as glaring as Simms's and with strengths no more notable. Perhaps because Simms at his best remains largely unknown except to specialists, the stereotype of Simms drawn by William Peterfield Trent in 1892² is the Simms found in most of the literary histories and anthologies to which he has been admitted ever since. Trent's image of Simms as prolific Southern romancer in the tradition of Scott and Byron has not yet been appreciably altered despite piecemeal recognition that his forte lay in fields other than conventional romance and verse. Yet, it is my belief that when the final roll of American literary history to 1870 is taken, Simms will rank higher as a letter-writer, as a short-storyist, and as a critic than he will as poet and novelist, partly because of more limited competition but mainly because Simms was at his natural best in these less pretentious fields. In them Simms has few peers among pre-Civil War American writers; yet his achievement in these genres, recognized by a few specialists, remains unnoted in our general histories, and, it is to be feared, even in all but a few of our graduate seminars.

The second volume of *The Centennial Edition of the Writings of William Gilmore Simms* will reveal some of Simms's now unknown talents as a writer of short stories (the genre in which I believe he most excelled), and elsewhere I hope to deal with Simms as a letter-writer (could one, it might be fairly asked, possibly get a more vivid picture of

¹Jay B. Hubbell, *The South In American Literature, 1607-1900* (Durham, N. C., 1954), p. 572.

²*William Gilmore Simms, American Man of Letters Series* (Boston and New York [1892]).

the contemporary American scene than by reading the five published volumes of Simms's *Letters*?). But here it is my purpose to deal briefly with Simms's literary criticism, which I find remarkably judicious and far-sighted — much more so, perhaps, than did the late Edd Winfield Parks in his excellent pioneering study, *William Gilmore Simms As Literary Critic*,³ a monograph of lasting value to students of Southern letters.

II

Early in his career William Gilmore Simms defined "true criticism as a liberal and humane art, the offspring of good sense and refined taste; an art aiming to acquire a just discernment of the real merits of authors, which preserves us from that blind and implicit veneration which would confound their blemishes and beauties in our esteem. In short it teaches us to admire and to blame with judgment, and not to follow the crowd blindly." Although he later wrote frequently and copiously about the functions of criticism, this definition taken from his essay "Modern Criticism" in the *Southern Literary Gazette* of September, 1829, clearly reveals that as a youth of twenty-three Simms already recognized the "high and distinguished" office of the critic. Throughout his career he revered criticism "fair and impartial" and as a practicing critic attempted to follow its principles. He looked upon himself as one of the "guardians of . . . Fame's temple, not exactly forbidding unfledged genius to enter, but turning it back with all reasonable hopes for future success . . ."⁴ And in his position as editor of Southern literary periodicals, Simms was able to exert an influence as a critic unequalled by that of any other writer or editor of the Old South. He became "Dean of Letters" in the ante-bellum South in much the same manner that Howells became "Dean of American Letters" during the latter decades of the nineteenth century.

In the "Editorial Bureau" of the *Magnolia: or Southern Monthly* for April, 1842, Simms outlined what he felt were the duties of the editor-critic:

. . . he should study with care; elaborate with patience, and pronounce impartial judgment. He must keep pace with the progress of letters and science around him; he must conciliate the awards and favor, of the wise, the virtuous and tasteful. He must encourage the attempts of timid merit, and repel the intrusion of

³University of Georgia Monographs, No. 7 (Athens, Ga., 1961).

⁴*Southern Literary Gazette*, n.s., I (September 1, 1829), 173-174.

insolent pretence. His object must be to elevate the standards of criticism to a proper level, and to strengthen the cause of letters against the indiscriminate and dishonest trade in eulogy, forcibly styled "puffery," which is one of the besetting evils attending our national criticism.⁵

Simms, then, believed that to fulfill his high responsibility, a critic must be a man of accomplishment and great natural endowment. He must have knowledge, integrity, courage, common sense; he must be wise, fearless, impartial. At times, Simms seriously questioned his own qualifications as a critic, but there is ample evidence that he attempted to practice the ideals he set forth. Seldom do his estimates of his contemporaries differ greatly from the estimates held today of the same writers, and there is little doubt that as editor of the *Magnolia*, the *Southern and Western Monthly Magazine and Review*, and the *Southern Quarterly Review* Gilmore Simms did much toward fulfilling his 1842 pledge "to elevate the standards of criticism to a proper level."

Though a staunch Democrat and a firm believer in the cause for which the small literary clique Young America fought — that is, a thoroughly democratic and distinctively American literature — Simms did not agree with the Young Americans' concept that "American literature" was necessarily "Democratic literature."⁶ In his own criticism Simms conscientiously attempted not to confuse literature with politics; for example, in reviewing *Ahasuerus—A Poem*, by Robert Tyler, son of the president, Simms condemned alike those critics who denounced the book "with the same sort of hungry virulence which distinguishes the partisan hostility to his father" and those who — "the supporters of the President, — run, with an equal tendency into the other extreme."⁷

According to Simms, not only must the fair-minded critic prevent his political or social beliefs from entering into his estimate of a literary work, he must also take into consideration the standards and the plans of the writer before he passes judgment; as Simms wrote in the preface to *The Yemassee*, "It is only when an author departs from his own standard (speaking of his labours as a work of art), that he offends against propriety and merits censure."⁸ In this same view the critic must

⁵IV (April, 1842), 248.

⁶See John Stafford. *The Literary Criticism of "Young America": A Study in the Relationship of Politics and Literature, 1837-1850*, No. 3 in University of California English Studies (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1952), p. 83.

⁷*Magnolia*, n.s., I (November, 1842), 315.

⁸*The Yemassee*, new and revised ed. (New York, 1854), p. v.

also bear in mind the author's purpose because "a correct knowledge of the circumstances under which he [the writer] has toiled, and what have been his aims in the scheme of his performance" are prerequisites for just and penetrating criticism.⁹ It was partly for this reason that Simms put no faith in, and protested vigorously against, unsympathetic British treatment of American literature and equally unsympathetic Northern treatment of Southern literature. A critic who does not understand the characteristic temper of an author's environment cannot possibly evaluate that author's work adequately or accurately.

Yet American critics, Simms thought, perhaps even more than American poets and novelists, were slaves to British literary standards, never daring to praise an American book until it had already met favor in English eyes. Simms regarded this lack of critical independence as one of the chief detriments to the growth of a distinctively American literature: a nation cannot create its own literature unless it is also capable of judging it.¹⁰ "It would be a day of independence, truly," Simms wrote, "when we should throw off our servile faith in the justice of British judgment, and the superiority of British opinion."¹¹ The American critic must help the American author in "moulding national opinion and in forming correct standards of national taste." The critic, then, must possess a thorough knowledge of "our history, and our sources of national character as of national wealth."¹²

Simms called to task those editors who published in their magazines "that bastard sort of criticism which is called comparative." To compare one book with another accomplishes little; the critic should not only formulate his dicta independently, but he should also judge each book independently. American editors, Simms contended, often refused to review a new work if there seemed to be no basis for comparison with another work; instead they simply announced its publication and waited for someone else to point out its merits and defects. Analytical criticism — "an intrinsic examination of a work" — seldom found a place in American periodicals.¹³

⁹"Dedication," *Count Julian* (Baltimore and New York, 1845), p. v.; see also "American Criticism and Critics," *Southern Literary Journal*, II (July, 1836), 396n.

¹⁰"International Copyright Law," *Southern Literary Messenger*, X (January, 1844), 8.

¹¹*Magnolia*, n.s., I (September, 1842), 135.

¹²"American Criticism and Critics," pp. 398-399.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 397.

This inability or refusal to analyze the virtues and the shortcomings of a book was one of the cardinal sins of the critic. Unless the critic singled out errors for correction, how was the young and inexperienced writer to learn to avoid these same mistakes in the future? It was the sincere critic's duty to the writer, then, to underline the defects in a work: "He [the critic] is bound to point out faults — if his discrimination is adequate to such a duty; and, if not, he had better go through a course of Pope's Essay on his own art."¹⁴ The severity with which the critic pounces upon the flaws in a book should depend upon the age and experience of the author; the critic should deal particularly harshly with older writers who are confirmed in their bad habits. And, above all, the critic must not allow friendship with an author to temper criticism any more than he would allow dislike to prejudice it. On April 5, 1852, for instance, Simms wrote his friend Chivers with reference to a forthcoming review of his poetry: "You have too much real ability to be suffered to trifle with yourself and reader; and I shall be severe, simply because I desire to be kind."¹⁵ On the other hand, neither must the critic become so centered upon minor faults that he overlooks the real worth of a book. Simms objected to "that petty and puerile sort of criticism, which, incapable of taking in at one survey, the whole magnificent proportions of the colossus, buries itself in the discovery of the flaw in its sandals, marks an excrescence upon the great toe, and with a 'but' or an 'if,' qualifies eulogium into such damnation as might follow, if mere pretension and littleness were alone suffered to sit in judgment."¹⁶

At times Simms feared that cheap newspaper and magazine criticism would corrupt the literary taste of the American people. He was disturbed equally by lavish praise of inferior work and by malicious slander of important writers who held unconventional or unpopular ideas. For example, in writing a harsh review of Samuel Lover's *Handy Andy*, Simms curtly stated: "But that this volume has been enormously puffed in the newspapers, we should not have wasted a paragraph upon it."¹⁷ And he remarked of the editors and critics who cast public disfavor upon a great American in their condemnation of Cooper:

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 396n.

¹⁵*The Letters of William Gilmore Simms*, ed. Mary C. Simms Oliphant, Alfred Taylor Odell, and T. C. Duncan Eaves, 5 vols. (Columbia, S. C., 1952-1956), III, 169.

¹⁶"The Moral Character of Hamlet." *Orion*, IV (March, 1844), 43.

¹⁷*Magnolia*, n.s., II (May, 1843), 334.

The pretender-critics are so numerous and so noisy, that it is no wonder they succeed so frequently, and for so long a time, in imposing false standards upon several circles which look to the current press for all the supplies of literary aliment which they crave. It is a question with many on which side to look for their authorities. With a poor people, now for the first time beginning to have a hankering after letters, nothing can be more natural than that they should turn to those who, while selling their wares at the most moderate prices, are, at the same time the most clamorous on the subject of their merits . . . They making [*sic*] up in mouthing what they lack in merits; in insolence what they lack in strength; and are hostile to the really honest and intellectual, in due degree with the consciousness of their own lamentable deficiencies.¹⁸

Though Simms recognized the possible evil influence of petty criticism upon popular thought, he concluded that periodical criticism does not greatly affect public opinion because nearly always the work being criticized has a larger circulation than the magazine or the newspaper in which the review appears.¹⁹ This conviction helps to explain Simms's belief that a book's popularity was the best criterion of its success. "The best evidence of the success of a novel," he wrote in 1829, "and that is all the author and the publisher have to care about, is the interest which it maintains in the mind of the reader . . ." ²⁰ The judgment of the reading public, Simms thought, bears up better in the long run than does the judgment of the professional reviewers; he cited the cases of Cooper, Bryant, and Coleridge to illustrate how public opinion sometimes forces a revision of professional critical opinion;²¹ and time and again he answered his own critics by pointing to the popularity of his works as evidence of their merit. But one would be wrong to conclude that Simms believed that public opinion is infallible. He once remarked that "the world is quite too much given to decide upon its favorites according to its caprices, and is just as likely to determine according to its own capacities for judgment, as from any particular knowledge of the subject."²² Perhaps what Simms intended to imply in speaking of the popularity of his novels is that he had attained what he sought; he admitted

¹⁸*Magnolia*, n.s., I (September, 1842), 137.

¹⁹"American Criticism and Critics." p. 393.

²⁰*Southern Literary Gazette*, n.s., I (August 1, 1829), 126.

²¹See "A New Spirit of the Age," *Southern Quarterly Review*, VII (April, 1845), 324-325; "American Criticism and Critics." p. 394.

²²"Later Poems of Henry Taylor," *Southern Quarterly Review*, XV (July, 1849), 484.

that he was not willing to polish and revise for a public that did not demand it, and he also admitted his own shortcomings: "I am a very rash writer, — too rapid, regarding much too little, the niceties of the art."²³

But if Simms concluded that the uninstructed or misinstructed public usually came to a fairly accurate evaluation of a literary work even without the guidance or the hindrance of professional critics, he nevertheless believed that the superior critic served the public in at least two important ways: by saving it from worthless or indecent books and by directing it to works of genius. Incompetent or immoral writers should be censured so vigorously that they would be forced to stop writing;²⁴ thus the literary taste as well as the morality of the public would be safeguarded.²⁵ Writers of genius (who cannot be judged by conventional standards because true genius defies convention) should be recognized and encouraged early because misunderstood or abused genius is often dangerous to society, whereas genius that is appreciated in its natural bent is always a blessing.²⁶ Thus it is to the best interests of society that the critic learn to distinguish between the unworthy and the worthy and pass these judgments on to the public.

As has been stated, Simms was not at all certain that he met all the requirements of a superior critic. Once, for instance, he asked his friend Evert A. Duyckinck for his opinion. "It would please me to hear how much you concur with my course of *criticism* in the Magazine [the *Southern and Western*]," he wrote Duyckinck on June 25, 1845; "You refer to it without offering a judgment."²⁷ Simms sought Duyckinck's opinion because he considered the New Yorker one of America's best qualified critics; upon learning of Duyckinck's appointment as editor of Wiley and Putnam's "Library of American Books," Simms remarked:

You are now in a situation to do a real service to American Literature, by opening fountains to public taste which will equally please & purify. I believe of you, what I am sorry to say, I can believe of few American Critics that you have a hearty love for

²³Simms to E. A. Duyckinck, January 19, 1845, *Letters*, II, 19.

²⁴As early as 1829 Simms remarked in the *Southern Literary Gazette*: "Our Criticism may be severe—we intend it should be so. Where there is true merit, severity will do no harm. Where there is not, it is only just that the idle pretensions of the undeserving should be settled down at their proper level" (n.s., I [July 1, 1829], 80).

²⁵"Modern Prose Fiction." *Southern Quarterly Review*, XV (April, 1849), 59-65; "A New Spirit of the Age," p. 333.

²⁶"Modern Prose Fiction," p. 60.

²⁷*Letters*, II, 78. Earlier (on January 19, 1845) Simms had written Duyckinck—"I look considerably to your judgment in such matters" (*Letters*, II, 19).

the art, unimpressed & uninfluenced by petty prejudices of your own, and a still more petty subserviency to cliquism. That you are free from cant is also so much gained to your catholicity.²⁸

But if Simms admired the critical faculties of Duyckinck and questioned his own ability as a critic, he was, at the same time, highly regarded by such important contemporary critics as Poe and Duyckinck himself. And the words of his old friend, Alexander B. Meek, must have been particularly cherished by a man who recognized the value of discriminating criticism and strove to be a writer of it:

I have always thought that you possessed superior capacities as a Critic. Your mind, to use one of your own phrases, is marked by imaginative judgment. That is the very quality for a critic, and if it were sternly adhered to, — if praise were only given when praise is due, a praise would be worth having²⁹

In conclusion, then, when a definitive biography of William Gilmore Simms is written — and there is a need for completely new evaluation of the man and his work — it will almost certainly establish him as a literary critic of exceptionally high quality, second only to Poe in the first period of American literature.

²⁸*Letters*, II, 77.

²⁹Meek to Simms, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, October 20, 1843. Photostat, Mrs. A. D. Oliphant; original, Pennsylvania Historical Society.

Visiting Stratford, Ontario

The priests perform for worshippers'
Applause in this reality where
Shakespeare lives. His scutcheon
Grows in grasses daily cut
For strollers breathing Stratford
(All's in a name).

From our maturity we pray
Not all things die.
We rejoice with Duncan,
Caesar, Hermione, restore
An imagined theater, research
Our props, gild authentic
The modern trumpets' fanfare, crush
A cup of punch, float
Swans on this short Avon,
With new wood construct
An ancient tavern.

Each winter Stratford returns
To townsmen, news is
Neighbors, money made
Renting a room in summer,
While sure as spring old plots
Assemble for the new season,
Eternity runs backward to
Rewind an ageless year.

We're told the bard's plays breathe
In double time, like life,
Sensuous with a fragment caught
In the small fist of years.
To taste an earlier minute
Loosens the touch of doom;
And at story's end we know
Fortinbras, Albany, Malcolm
Will carry on the kingdom.

And we who are not
Kings (nor commoners)
Continue his realm beyond
The brevity of our wit
In these names, this habitation
Unrounding William from
A sleep.

NORMAN NATHAN

Report from Greenville

Since the last Greenville roundup five years ago, the community's leading author, Max Steele, has brought out his long-awaited collection of short stories, *Where She Brushed Her Hair and Other Stories* (1968). It is a distinguished book, the best ever by a Greenvillian and one of the very few important works by a South Carolinian. Steele's return to the Carolinas about the time of its publication is an unexpected bonus. At least two other developments also make this reporting period notable. Robert Adger Bowen has made his large output of poems available in a library deposit, and John Dickson Carr has moved to town, bringing with him his much-traveled crime detectives, those famous super-sleuths, Dr. Gideon Fell and Sir Henry Merrivale. Like Steele, both writers have brought out new books. In addition, several new voices have emerged. One has a national reputation in the civil rights movement. Two others have had stories printed in a new state-wide literary magazine that began publishing last year, namely, this *Review*, with one of its editorial offices in Greenville.

The announcement late in 1967 that Steele's stories were published set many a local reader astir. Suddenly Greenvillians could read fourteen of these remarkable Steele stories, written over the last quarter of a century, without having to scour the library shelves for back issues of magazines. Steele's persistent theme of each person's need of love and understanding and each person's need to love and understand gives the book its triumphant solidity. The title story, "Where She Brushed Her Hair," not only extends this theme but contains Steele's only statement, as far as I know, of fictional theory. The story-telling imagination has its sources in the mingling of dream-images with recollected memories and a current reality. The dream of the woman rhythmically combing her hair and wearing a look of expectancy comes to symbolize, when interpreted through fiction, the silence, the sense of form and structure, and the brooding air of expectancy that are the preconditions for the creative act.

Steele writes with a leisurely pace and a gentle effect. He is almost in a class by himself in being Southern without having been pulled into the orbit of William Faulkner. Instead of that genius' grand rhetorical manner that carries themes of a blighted homeland strewn with the carnage of violence and perversion, Steele brings to his stories

of personal relationships a quiet compassion and a tongue-in-cheek humor. Sometimes the fantastic and the facetious go rather far, as in the story of the sexually precocious six-year-old who elopes with the bosomy woman next door, of the husband who thinks he is a monkey, and of the mountaineer woman who gives birth to an eight-pound sky-blue egg. Steele, of course, is having his fun with themes of exaggerated fantasies and types of abnormalities, symbolically presented as parables. Often slight, these sly humoresques put him in the tradition of Southern tall-tale humor. As good as his novel *Debbie* (1950) is, recently reissued as *The Goblins Must Go Barefoot*, the stories are better. The product of many years of careful thought and writing experience, they are rich in artistry and feeling.

Reviews have been uniformly good. The reviewer for *Harper's* says that Steele's "arrant nonsense" carries "complete conviction." A "lunatic logic . . . illuminates everything." The reviewer for *The New York Times Book Review*, James R. Frakes, calls Steele "a 'Southern' writer, with all of the force and almost none of the limitations implied by that epithet." Except for some "unfortunate sports" like "Hear the Wind Blow," the story about the woman's giving birth to an egg (which he thinks Steele should have been discouraged from printing), Steele ranks, says Frakes, among the finest short story writers of our time.

After traveling widely for more than two decades, Steele has come to roost only 250 miles away in Chapel Hill, where he heads the creative writing program at the University of North Carolina. Already the Greenville community has benefited from this proximity. In the fall of 1967 he gave a reading of his stories at Clemson University and met informally with students in writing classes from Clemson and Furman. Some of his exciting talk previewed the contents of an essay on contemporary student writing that appeared in *The New York Times Book Review*, June 9, 1968. He made a more reluctant second visit to promote his book of stories in the spring of 1968. In addition to an autograph party at the Book Shop, he spoke informally to students at Furman. Besides his personal appearances, Steele has advised the co-editors of this *Review* and contributed one of his stories to its first issue. His presence in nearby Chapel Hill not only supplements the congregation of talent in the tri-university area of North Carolina, but his influence as writer and person will, we hope, continue to spill over into his native state and hometown.

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Whereas Steele is the prince of Greenville letters, Robert Adger Bowen is the undisputed patriarch. He is now moving toward his 101st birthday. First published in 1888 when he was twenty, he has written more than a thousand poems. In 1965 he deposited most of this work in the Special Collections library of Furman University. Counting all the duplicates and adding an earlier deposit of about fifty poems, the collection totals about 1500 sheets. Bowen's forms are traditional — sonnets, rondeaus, stanzaic varieties, and limericks. His subjects are nature, religion, war, recollections of the past, and old age. The nature poems rarely succeed, the religious poems never. The war poems, composed during two world wars, come off a little better. They include vigorous tirades on tyranny, satires on Hitler and company, and studies of the public agonies of beleaguered countries fighting for freedom. For the most part, however, they are generalized, stridently didactic, and narrowly topical, the work of a man responding to the day's news with verse editorials instead of with genuine feeling. More pervasive and more successful in his work is the Wordsworthian theme of recollection. Many poems lavish wistful sentiment on the places of his youth: the Charleston gardens, a bell-buoy in a storm, the sea, the Battery, the houses and narrow streets, the Sword Gate, and his shack at Rockaway Beach. Some of his best poems recall *Rivoli*, the upcountry family plantation home. In 1964 the Foundation for the Historical Restoration in the Pendleton Area brought out a volume of forty-one of his poems, *Footfalls and Echoes*, which he dedicated to the memory of this house. Three of these poems, "Deserted House," "Dream and Reality," and "Graveyard Hill," are among the best that he ever wrote. Their sharp details evoke the atmosphere of reverent age and stillness that contrast with human pride and urban bustle.

As Bowen has long since passed the normal time span allotted to man, the wistful tendency in his work has increased. His distinctive contribution to the enlargement of human experience is thus the theme of an old man "trailing his [life] span some decades behind." The central image of this group of poems is that of an old bachelor, solitary and friendless, confined to an ever-narrowing circle of life, crouched at the radio dial, worrying over the freakishness of his approaching the century mark, stoically waiting for a senseless close, a bent-over antique among the other antiques of his apartment. The best of this lot are "Living," on his turning ninety-three; "Drugs and Scythe," at age ninety-four; "Status Quo," in which he describes himself as "Half bowed, half deaf,

half blind and half witted/ Perhaps to ninety and seven committed
 . . ." "Optimism" adds more than a tincture of pathos to the theme:

. . . I'm long since out of date,
 A crumbling frame where penetrate
 Nothing but echoes from outside,
 And some of them have almost died:
 And so I wait to hear the bell
 "That summons (me) to Heaven or to Hell."

Bowen rarely gets through a whole poem without marring it with gaucheries of diction, rhythm, or sentence structure. Most poems suffer from a lack of vivid details, others from wordiness and bombast. He has remained totally unaffected by modern revolutions in idiom. If he had been able to free himself from the unintentional doggerel of many of his wry, dissonant old-age pieces, tinged with bitterness and self-mockery, he would deserve ranking with the best poets in the state's history. He is probably still one of the best to be born in South Carolina between Paul Hamilton Hayne (1830) and Beatrice Ravenel (1870). At his most successful he is far more interesting and original than Hayne, but he never acquired Hayne's polish and therefore fails to set up those verbal harmonies that give life to his imagery. He is an unfortunate example of a local verse-monger who only seldom trafficks in poetry.

Scarcely had John Dickson Carr settled in Greenville in 1965 than he wrote a detective novel making use of South Carolina setting. *Dark of the Moon* (1967) tells about the murder of Henry Maynard on James Island. The detective in the case is none other than Dr. Gideon Fell, a huge hulk of a man who wears a shovel hat, black cloak, skewwiff eyeglasses, and a turned-down bandit's mustache; he carries a crutch-headed stick and smokes an obese meerschaum pipe. His pink face, amiable chuckles, and odd ejaculations contrast strangely with his wide knowledge and keen ratiocinative skills. His method is as anachronistic as his appearance, for he works closely with the local police captain to solve the mystery of the doomed Henry Maynard. The most interesting part of the story to South Carolinians is probably the setting. Carr has carefully researched his Charleston. He gives a vivid layout of the town, calls streets and places by their names, and gives thumbnail histories of the early settlement, the siege at Fort Sumter, and the

origin of the Dock Street Theater. He sums up, guidebook-style, the picturesque quality of the place as a "quiet city of pastel colors and graceful churchspires, of houses with double piazzas and gardens in tropical bloom." He romanticizes too. The air is laden with the scent of jessamine, magnolias, and wisteria; Maynard Hall has a columned portico. He does not, however, neglect the rank sea odors and oyster shells, the thick heat, and the mosquitoes. Although he treats Charleston factually, he gives Greenville a fictional disguise. It is the Piedmont town of Pearis, named after its first settler, the Tory Richard Pearis, who was run out of the town by local partisans. Furman University is disguised as Kings' College, also said to be founded by Pearis and celebrating its 200th anniversary in 1967. From Pearis, Dr. Fell and Professor Alan Grantham, whom Fell has been visiting, drive to Charleston on Highway 276 and Interstate 26. They shoot past Columbia, steer through the "gritty industrial area" north of Charleston, and pull up at the Francis Marion Hotel overlooking Calhoun Square in the heart of Charleston. They are just in time for the fireworks. The mystery is not one of Carr's most scintillating, but it has the competence of disciplined craftsmanship by a writer who has now produced more than forty books.

One of the most encouraging signs on the Greenville scene is the emergence of new names among the younger generation. Attracting the most attention at the moment is Jesse L. Jackson. His position as head of the Chicago-based Operation Breadbasket of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference has given him a platform from which to launch a fiery prophetic style. His *Ebony* essay "Resurrection City: The Dreams . . . The Accomplishments" (October, 1968) interprets this episode, in which he was one of the leaders, as the economic phase of "the struggle for human rights" just as Birmingham of 1963 was the social phase and Selma the political phase. For the most part, the essay is stiff and formal, full of drab statistics. When Jackson gives way to his natural style, which is passionately angry and defiant, he speaks with a rude eloquence.

All commentators who have interviewed or heard Jackson speak have remarked on his pungent quotableness, his flair for the succinct sharp prod. His apothegms have the earthy color and literary balance of the pulpit: "Rather than start looking through the yellow pages, you got to start looking through the black pages." A report in *Business Week* says: "Breadbasket's chief spells out the group's objectives in

typical — and often eloquent — Jacksonese” (April 26, 1969). His talent for terse, quotable sentences has led *Time* (March 1, 1968) to call him “a burly, apothegmatizing King lieutenant who praises the Lord and believes in the might of economics.” This mixture of religion and economics in a hard-hitting, gutsy style shows up best in Jackson’s sermon to a meeting of Southern Baptist ministers in Chicago this year, printed in *Home Missions* as “A Black Preacher’s Analysis: Chastising the Rich Young Ruler” (July, 1969). To reinforce his theme that the ministers are crass “hustlers” of the gospel, Jackson sprinkles his speech with personal allusions and with the mock-sarcasm of slang and dialectalisms: “Matthew was a cat selling out his own people” “When I was growing up in South Carolina I wish I could have joined some of your churches, but I couldn’t and that’s part of the problem.” “Jesus said, ‘I’ll draw all of you unto me, all of you.’ He didn’t have to check with his deacon board to see whether I could come to you all’s church.”

All of Jackson’s stylistic traits of pungent sarcasm, prophetic fervor, cool disdain, mordant humor, clever imagination, and earthy apothegms come together in his frequently repeated parable of Black Christmas. As quoted by R. Levine in *Harper’s* (March, 1969), it is a devastating demythologizing of White Christmas in order to rationalize Black Christmas. Jackson is a cool customer. He concedes that although non-violence is the most humane method of black reform, it is increasingly difficult for a prophet to preach it these days. His religious-economic orientation sounds essentially Greenvillian. He has a brash literary talent, which he uses as an instrument to achieve black power. Whether he develops as a writer will probably depend on his staying power as a spokesman for his race.

Besides Jackson, three other persons in their twenties have also come to the surface in recent years. Jeff Fields had his first story published in *McCall’s* in February, 1969. Entitled “We’ll Be in Touch, Okay?”, it gives a small boy’s narration of how his widowed and aging uncle swallows some bitter pills of disappointment before bouncing back cheerfully to accept changing conditions around him. The story has an appropriately racy style and keeps the action hopping along multiple lines of tension and conflict. Paulette Bates had her first story published in *The Young Writer at Chapel Hill* in 1968 and a second in this *Review* last May. The latter, “Sounds of Silence,” is a more sensitive exploration of a problem of old age. Her thorough concentra-

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tion on the deafness of an old man who gropes pathetically for awareness is a technical triumph. The same issue of the *Review* carried Bennie Lee Sinclair's first story, "Sisters." It is a sobering character contrast presented through the consciousness of a sister whose random memories of past events finally clear up several family mysteries. Sinclair's refusal to pass judgment is her strength. After a decade of scanning the horizon, I am pleased to report the emergence of these four younger writers. All have promise.

Several miscellaneous developments can be dealt with swiftly. The annual creative writing contest of the Greenville Arts Festival is beginning to have some effect. This year Paulette Bates was one of the runners-up in the fiction division. Hattie Finley Jones has expanded and reprinted her slender book *Petals* (1959) under a new title, *Poems of Preference*; the additions do not alter the daintiness of her style. Jay Shuler brought out his first book of poems in 1967, titled *A Confidence on Parting*. His intellectual approach to nature, his dominant subject, is highly commendable, but most of the poems remain stiff and rough-edged. Three other books of poems have almost no literary value: Monica Boyce's *Gurgling Fountains* (1962), B. M. Gibson's *Go Forth, My Bairns* (1964), and Tabitha Mauldin's *Tiara* (1967). Carolyn Coleman's *History of Fountain Inn* (1966), in collaboration with B. C. Givens, lacks the nostalgic charm of her *Five Petticoats on Sunday*. Laura Smith Ebaugh's *Bridging the Gap: A Guide to Early Greenville* (1966) is a more substantial work. Its five guided tours, its generous supply of maps and pictures, and Miss Ebaugh's enthusiasm make it an indispensable coffee-table item for residents and visitors.

Meanwhile, the newly founded Greenville County Historical Society has helped step up the pace of local antiquarian research. Its *Proceedings and Papers*, edited by Albert N. Sanders, preserves the findings. In 1965 it carried Alfred Reid's "Literary Culture in Mid Nineteenth Century Greenville," which supplements his earlier comprehensive literary history in *The Arts in Greenville* (1960) and two other reports in *Furman Studies*—"Poets of Greenville" and "Recent Literary Developments" (November, 1963, and November, 1964). Increased emphasis on literature in the 1960's in Furman's journal of interdisciplinary scholarship, as manifested in the appearance of personal essays, poems, and literary criticism, resulted in 1968 in the transformation of certain of its numbers into the newly founded *The South Carolina Review*, edited in cooperation with Clem-

son University and the University of South Carolina. The expanded editorial experience of the *Review* enables it to serve a wider region and to cultivate a serious literary professionalism. Besides the local stories already mentioned, the *Review* has carried Harry Ashmore's discerning autobiographical essay, "Reflections of an Expatriate," adapted from a speech given at the University of South Carolina. Meanwhile, *The Furman University Magazine*, traditionally an alumni newssheet, has improved its literary image under the tasteful editorship of Marguerite Hays, who is not content to feed alumni the usual bumptious chit-chat. She carefully researches her own feature articles and writes clearly and modestly. In the fall of 1966 she reprinted an article by Greenville Charles H. Townes, physicist and Nobel Prizewinner, "The Convergence of Science and Religion." In the summer of 1968 she reprinted Max Steele's "Student Voices," mentioned earlier; and in the summer of 1966 she printed a delightful personal essay by Steele. Called "English 23a: A Paper Long Overdue," it captures the scene and mood of a rainy day in the fall of 1942 when Steele first entered Mrs. Meta Gilpatrick's writing class at Furman. The characterization of his teacher is affectionate but honest. Mrs. Hays has also carried a few local poems. These new magazines and new alignments of old magazines should serve as literary barometers.

As in previous reports, we do not wish to elevate various degrees of proficiency to an unwarranted greatness or to claim that a disparate assortment of writings makes a renaissance. Max Steele is the only Greenville figure to break the barriers of form and region. He needs no promotion from us. Our purpose is simply to identify local writers, interpret their works, and evaluate their achievements. Keeping up with what's going on and disseminating this information are necessary steps in stimulating literary awareness in one's own backyard.

Alfred S. Reid

CONTRIBUTORS

ELIZABETH BOATWRIGHT COKER has written seven novels: *Daughter of Strangers*, *Day of the Peacock*, *India Allen*, *The Big Drum*, *La Belle*, *Lady Rich*, and *The Bees*. Her poems have appeared in various magazines. She was born in Darlington, attended Converse College, and has lived in Hartsville since the 1930s.

ALOUISE D. COPE lives in Spartanburg, where she works as a secretary. These are her first published poems.

JOHN C. GUILDS is head of the department of English at the University of South Carolina, where he is General Editor of the Centennial Edition of the works of William Gilmore Simms, published by the U. of S. C. Press. He is also co-editor of a volume of South Carolina literature to be published in connection with the Tricentennial. He is a native of Columbia.

RAYBURN S. MOORE is professor of English at the University of Georgia. He has contributed articles to many journals. His *Constance Fenimore Woolson* appeared in 1963, and his edition of Miss Woolson's fiction, *For the Major and Selected Short Stories*, appeared in 1967. His book on Paul Hamilton Hayne is in process of publication.

ROBERT MORGAN is spending the year "on a farm in the mountains of North Carolina at work on a novel." His poems have appeared in *The American Scholar*, *The Nation*, and *The Greensboro Review*. His first book, *Zirconia Poems*, was published this year by Lillabulero Press.

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