

## The McGill

*Fortnightly Review**An Independent Journal of Literature and Student Opinion*

Vol. II No. 3

PRICE 10 Cents

Wednesday, December 1, 1926

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EDITORIAL

WE regret to announce the resignation from our Editorial Board of Messrs. A. B. Latham and Leo Edel. Associated with us since the founding of this journal they have been of invaluable aid in establishing the Fortnightly at McGill. Although they have severed their editorial connections with us we hope to publish occasionally articles from their pens.

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THE delicate irony latent in the phrase "student activity" was long ago noted and commented upon. Activities were those phases of the life of undergraduates that had nothing to do with the studies which in theory were the purpose of their resort to the university. To these latter it would have occurred to nobody to apply the word "activity." Activities meant athletics, dramatics, journalism, and so on. Activities were the field where the student could express his personality, and find relief from restraints imposed by his elders.

It now appears that we have passed into a new stage where student activities not only have nothing to do with studies, but very little to do with students. Students are merely the pawns moved around by elders sitting in snug offices and drawing comfortable salaries. This has been well brought out in the recent Harvard-Princeton controversy. The papers have been filled with the statements of dignitaries such as presidents, managers, and coaches. We hear nothing about students with but one exception. The editors of a Harvard undergraduate publication, in violation of the rules of the game, expressed their opinion on the situation. This brought matters to a head.

A RECENT correspondent to the *McGill Daily* put forward the interesting suggestion that the control of this journal should be in the hands of the Students' Council operating through the medium of the Literary and Debating Society. The idea is one that we should expect to receive fairly widespread support.

It might be submitted, however, by any one who stopped to think, that the Students' Council would hardly care to become too closely associated with a concern whose financial future is not of the brightest. It would be a shame to reduce the well-earned profits of the Red and White Revue or the Daily by a deficit encountered in an heroic but unbusiness-like attempt to support literature. Indeed, the Fortnightly owes its origin to the unwillingness of a Students' Council to devote a part of the undergraduates' money to an immaterial cause. All sound students will realize that it is better to let any financial anxiety due to a too ardent wooing of the muses be confined to a small group of individuals.

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IT is amusing to note that our contemporary has inaugurated a popularity contest for professors. The halls of the Faculty Club are filled with an apprehensive buzz as the victims await the letters in which their students no doubt award the palm to this or that popular pundit, for, from the terms in which the article announcing the competition was written, it is clear that the sponsors of the contest intend it to be of an ironical nature. This is a good thing in that it will add to the gaiety of the campus, and that it will serve as an excellent flail for folly. We would be the last to declare that folly and learn-

ing, pomposity and the professoriat are not often found in conjunction, even at McGill. Nevertheless, we feel that, though the move is in the right direction, there is a danger of its usefulness being blown away by a gust of irreverent and irrelevant laughter. Criticism of professors by students has always existed *sub rosa*, and a more serious attempt to bring this criticism into the open might be helpful. It certainly would be no more humiliating to those who were censured than the present competition which holds its victims up to ridicule rather than rebuke.

\* \* \* \*

WE see by the *McGill Daily* that thirty-six Arts seniors have decided that their academic dignity is dependent on the wearing of the gown. Human vanity is clearly at the base of this sudden desire for gown-wearing. It is regrettable that a small group of students should seek to re-introduce a custom which quite naturally died out and which was officially abandoned. In the Middle Ages scholars and theologians were identical. Today we have a separation of functions. The theologian is still universally distinguished by his gown. The university student has, in most places, quite naturally cast aside the very clumsy trapping. And to revive a tradition is worse than instituting one. As it is, you hear a great deal of claptrap about instituting this and that one. The idea that full-blown "traditions" can be given birth to is of course absurd. It is even more absurd to receive them. Now, if the apostolic succession were once broken, no Christian would think that it could be taken up again after a lapse of years. The life of a tradition depends, similarly on its unbroken succession. This succession having once been broken, picking it up again years later is pure fatuity.

The Arts seniors who are anxious to distinguish themselves by means of their gowns (which must not fall below the knee) should, we think, be able to stand out from other students on account of less immediately perceptible but actually more real differences. In the same manner, students, as such, should stand out from those who have not the advantages of a liberal education.

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WE have always received a great deal of criticism to the effect that the *Fortnightly* is not "highbrow" enough. We have been much perturbed over this and have tried to obtain articles on abstruse subjects ranging from metaphysics and theology to political economy and college athletics. But it is generally felt that the readers of *The McGill Fortnightly Review* are too temperamental to appreciate writing other than poetry and flippant prose.

Hence the editors are very much pleased with the recent suggestion for a McGill Quarterly. Such a periodical would fulfill a highly important need. As we said on a previous occasion, there is room in the university for all types of journalism. The purpose of the *Fortnightly* has been described, while that of the *Daily* is, as it were, indescribable. There is still a place at McGill for a review which would limit itself to solid monographs of national and academic interest.

### The Players' Club and Moyses Hall

IT appears that the Players Club, which for the past two years has been carrying on excellent work under more than usual difficulties, has not yet seen the last of its troubles.

At the beginning of this term three one act plays were selected and casted, and preparations were begun for their production. When, however, the officers of the club made application for the use of the little theatre in Moyses Hall, they were somewhat surprised to receive a definitely unfavourable reply from Doctor MacMillan, and a virtual refusal from Dean Ira Mackay, embodied in the letter which, by permission of the president of the Club, we quote below. What makes Dr. MacMillan's refusal seem somewhat inconsistent is the fact that when approached in regard to the matter last spring he at that time received the suggestion with favour.

We are at a loss to account for the difficulties which are being put in the way of the undergraduate dramatic society. Judged by their record of the past two years the players cannot be condemned as incompetents. They have presented plays by Galsworthy, Shaw, Pinero, Sutro and others of lesser note, in a manner which, though not always above every criticism, has won the approbation of the press and of that small proportion of the university which is interested in modern drama. The college and public press have mentioned on more than one occasion that the limitations of a makeshift stage were the only real cause preventing our McGill players from ranking with the finest amateur groups in the city. It was thought that the gift of Moyses Hall to the University would remove the greatest obstacle in the way of undergraduate dramatics at McGill. The necessity of appreciating the point of view of the authorities in withholding permission from the Players' Club to use Moyses Hall makes inevitable the quotation in full of Dean Mackay's reply to the formal application made by Mr. A. M. Archdale, the president of the society. It reads as follows:

Mr. A. M. Archdale,  
President, McGill Players Club,  
McGill University, Montreal.  
My dear Archdale:

I have received your application made on behalf of the McGill Players Club and dated the 3rd instant, and now wish to reply as follows.

In my recent conversation with you on this subject I stated that I was unwilling at present to recommend that the Players Club should be permitted to rehearse and produce three plays mentioned by you and which you propose to produce early in December, and for the following reasons:-

1. Because I have no assurance that you would be able to manage the expensive stage machinery in a careful way.
2. Because I doubted that with your regular studies you would be able to produce these plays well in so short a period of preparation.
3. Because I was personally anxious that the opening performance on the Moyses stage should perhaps be more classical and possibly more pretentious and less modern and problematical than the three plays you suggest.

I also suggested to you that it was my hope that the Players Club might again begin its work anew by associating itself closely with the departments of English, French and Classics in the University with a view to getting together the very best possible talent, direction and criticism for the purpose of making the theatre a real University success.

I also asked you at the time to send me as soon as convenient to you, a list of the officers and members of the Club and a clear statement of its ends and aims in order that I might be able to appreciate what its ambitions really are. I think, too, that you can appreciate the force of this request as it would be obviously impossible for me to allow free use of the theatre to an organization which I really know nothing about.

I should also like to point out to you finally that similar ventures in other Universities, for example in Hart House, Toronto, have met with a good deal of criticism on the ground that expensive university theatres of this kind are apt to be used merely as places of student amusement and not for any serious educational purposes, and I can scarcely be blamed, therefore, if just at present I am anxious to avoid similar criticism at McGill.

Yours very truly,  
(signed) Ira A. Mackay  
Dean

We are sure that Dean Mackay would be the last to deny us the right of joining issue with him upon a matter which so nearly concerns the undergraduate body, and we are glad to feel that at McGill a student publication may, without being considered either impertinent or rebellious, express opinions which are in some measure a criticism of the authorities.

It will be convenient to deal with the objections raised in the Dean's letter, point by point.

1. *That the members of the Players Club would be unable to manage the expensive stage machinery in a careful way.*

This objection is only valid on the assumption that the members of the Club are men of no experience. Such is not the case. Among the members is a student who was associated in an important capacity with both the Literary and Dramatic Society of Birmingham University and with the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, and another who was for five years with the University of British Columbia Players, one of the best known undergraduate dramatic societies in Canada, while the president is connected also with the St. James Players. The past productions of the Players Club have amply demonstrated that its members are not children incapable of being entrusted with the staging of a modern play.

2. *That with their regular studies they would not be able to produce their plays well in so short a period of preparation.*

To this several answers might be made. In the first place, the Club was planning to spend as much time in the careful production of these plays as they have for any in the past. Again, had the use of the theatre been granted at once, the Club would have been able to devote more than a month to their preparation and rehearsal—surely time enough when it is considered that the plays are all of one act only. Finally, if the Dean is suggesting that regular study might be interfered with by such activities, we feel that the same criticism could more justly be levelled at activities such as senior football, or the Red and

White Revue, for which latter some four or five months of extensive preparation are felt to be necessary.

3. *That the opening performance on the Moyses stage should perhaps be more classical and possibly more pretentious and less modern and problematical than the three suggested plays.*

This objection has already been overcome. The performance by Pierre Magnier and his Porte St. Martin players was the first performance on the Moyses stage, and it perhaps is more classical and more pretentious, etc. than the plays suggested. The objection, however, has a further implication. There is in it a note of disapproval of the plays selected by the Club for production this term. These plays are *The Glittering Gate*, by common consent Lord Dunsany's masterpiece, and a favourite production of Little Theatres everywhere; *Shall We Join The Ladies*, Barrie's unfinished *tour de force*, a work which has never yet been seen in Canada; and a play in lighter vein by an internationally famous McGill professor. We cannot imagine how the performance of such plays could be anything but a benefit both to the actors and the spectators. The production of "more classical and possibly more pretentious and less modern and problematical" plays might very well be left to those who are engaged in a special study of the drama. Finally it would seem to be unfortunate to deprecate the choice of modern plays. The age of Shaw, Synge, Barrie, and Galsworthy has surely nothing to fear from comparison with any great epoch.

4. *That the Players Club might begin its work anew by associating itself closely with the Departments of English, French and Classics.*

As the Players Club is concerned with the production of plays in English, its associations would obviously not be with the French and Classics Departments. With the English Department the club was once very closely connected. At that time, however, the club did not produce the type of play in any way in keeping with the desirable qualities mentioned in Dean Mackay's letter. The most "pretentious" production was that of *The Little Princess*, a saccharose brew by the estimable authoress of *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, and this can, by no stretch of the imagination, be called "classical."

But the association of the club with the English Department not only resulted in the production of unsatisfactory effeminate plays, it led finally to the violent dissolution of the club.

There was a desire in some quarters that the membership of the club should be restricted to students taking honours in English. This desire was not shared by the majority of the members of the organization, for the simple reason that they were not taking honours in English; nor was there any reason to believe that histrionic ability was miraculously endowed by, and religiously limited to, students enrolled in honours English. The implacable temper displayed by those in favour of a policy of exclusion resulted in the temporary disbandment of the Club.

Shortly after, an extremely pointed letter from the pen of E. Wallace Willard, Arts '23, was published in the Daily. As it is very relevant to the present argument it may be permitted us to quote a paragraph from Mr. Willard's letter:

"It is difficult to see why such an organization i.e. A players Club need be under the direction of the English Department, particularly at McGill where said Department has not so far exhibited any ability in organization or in choice of play material.

"...If the Department of English wishes to put on plays of its own for purely critical purposes it is entirely at liberty to do so without conflicting in any way with any other dramatic society."

It would seem that these statements are as true today as when they were first published. For all these reasons, we think that the Players Club should have nothing to do with the English Department, but this fact should certainly not be allowed to prevent an undergraduate dramatic organization from putting on its own productions in Moyses Hall.

5. *That it would be impossible to allow free use of the theatre to an organization about which little is known.*

The Players Club, as it is at present constituted, has been in existence for two years, during which time it has produced three series of plays in the Biological Building, all of which have been open to the public, and have received a due share of publicity in the press. The Club is under the control of the Students' Council and its name figures on the letterhead of the Council Stationery. Its objects, aims, and constitution are as well-known, or as easily ascertainable, as are those of the Literary and Debating Society which was recently permitted to hold a debate in Moyses Hall.

6. *That university theatres are apt to be used merely as places of student amusement and not for any serious educational purpose.*

It would not seem that the authorities intend to restrict the use of Moyses Hall to serious educational purposes. An Arts "pep rally" was held in the new theatre; rehearsals for the Red and White Revue are to be held there. No one would maintain that these are of a serious and educational nature though none the less commendable for that. While the Players Club is, in fact, of a more educational and serious nature it is not this side of the organization that we think most important to stress. What is a sufficient justification of its existence is that a body of undergraduates are interested enough in serious drama to undertake on their own initiative the production of three such fine plays as the club now has in preparation. It would be a pity then, if it could be said that Moyses Hall were to be used for debates, pep rallies and for every student activity except that one which would appear to have a natural right to it.

Now it must not be thought from all this that we are blind to faults committed by the students' organization. We are not attempting to conceal that the executive of the Players' Club may have been guilty of certain errors in tact, both in their correspondence and in their personal dealings with the authorities, but this should not be allowed to keep the undergraduate players out of Moyses Hall.

Under the circumstances that now exist it would seem best to call a meeting of the interested parties at which the whole matter could be discussed freely

and frankly over the table, and a settlement of some sort be arrived at. We understand that on the initiative of Mr. Amaron, the president of the Students' Council, this has already been done and that one or two members of the Graduate School who are taking an active part in the Players' Club, the president of the club and the president of the Students' Council are seeking an opportunity of laying their case personally before the Principal, Dean Mackay and possibly the Heads of the English, Classics, and Modern Languages Departments. With what success this move will be attended we are unable to forecast; but surely, if the dictates of reason are followed and the boasted tenets of student democracy respected the Players' Club will be granted the use of Moyses Hall.

The most encouraging aspect of the whole situation is that although permission has so far been withheld the Dean's letter is not a final refusal; and, when the authorities have been fully satisfied as to the nature and capabilities of the Players Club, we are confident that the use of the hall will be granted. Even so, however, the long unexpected delay, has severely hampered this year's work of the club, and it will be impossible now to give any production during the first term.

## Fancies

### I

STAND by the window, Tytyl,  
Stand close by the old chintz curtains.

Tell the littlest diamond  
It has wonder in its eyes.

But leave me to blow smoke rings  
In a dusty corner.

### II

SHARPLY place a cube edgewise  
By a still, dark water.

Watch a drowning shadfly's last convulsion  
Set the inverted universe dancing.

Then if the intricate edges are intelligible  
You may be an Einstein  
Or a laundry-man.

### III

I AM all agog with winsomeness,  
Hey nonny, no.

For today I drank from a harebell  
As I was passing by,

And swallowed fifty fairies  
Before they had time to fly.

Tra la, la, tra la, la,  
Hey nonny, nonino.

Yea, verily, I am agog with a wanton winsomeness.

## On Having a Shoe Shine

Hugh C. G. Herkelots

(Cambridge Debating Team)

MANY impressions I will carry back from the American Continent when I return to England in December. The sight of New York from the sea, the colour of maple trees in Autumn, my first entry into a cafeteria and a hundred other things. Already my mind is burdened with the memory of innumerable novelties, and my pockets with well-filled notebooks. Yet no memory, I think, will be so vivid as that of having my shoes cleaned. In England we are prosaic folks: we never see our shoes cleaned: it is a miracle that happens while we slumber—one of the many accepted miracles of life. We dimly suspect that brushes and boot polishes are used; indeed it must be so, for boot polish is advertised on all our boardings, but that is all we know. It is not so in the States: it is not so in Canada. Here you have instituted the shoe-shine: you have raised a material necessity to the high level of an adventure.

It was not without a tremor of fear that I first took my seat in the shoe-shine parlour. I was to resign my feet entirely and absolutely to the care of a perfect stranger, of whose existence I had been completely unaware not three minutes before. He might punch them, he might pummel them, he might subject them to the grim torture of the bastinado. I felt helpless—yet not entirely helpless. I reserved to myself the right to kick.

But I had little cause to fear. The bootblack did not seem to speak my language, but that did not matter very much. We were not there for the purpose of conversation. He lovingly handled my feet. He looked at them sympathetically, albeit a little reproachfully. These were quite obviously the feet of Englishmen. They had never been properly treated. Still they were not beyond redemption. He laboured on. He used cloths and brushes and about four different polishes. It seemed rather like having one's hair cut. I expected all the while to be told: "It's getting a little thin on top, Sir," or "Rather bad dandruff on the left lace—try some of our special lace restorer, fifty cents a bottle. It's all our own make, Sir, and guaranteed." When it was all done I still waited timorously, fully expecting to be asked, "And what will you have on it, Sir?" But he remained silent. The deed was done. I paid my bill and departed. The bootblack had worked well. He had done his best with my shoes, and doubtless expected to make good friends of them, to learn their little whims, to explore their nooks and crannies. I stepped out with shining feet, avoiding the puddles left by the October rains. Yet I never returned.

"In silence we parted to sever for years."

Like Jurgen I was determined to try every drink once. Tomorrow to fresh woods and pastures new.

So on the morrow I went elsewhere for my shoe-shine. I had my shoes cleaned by a Negro. He did not shew the loving care that had thrilled my toes the day before. Rather he seemed to go through a series of motions well conned by rote. He seldom looked at the shoes. His eyes were elsewhere. He had no interest in the individual shoe. He was but the part of a machine. He began by rubbing some white liquid

over my brown shoes. It looked like the froth of beer. I did not like to interrupt him, for I supposed that he knew what he was about, but it seemed an odd way to clean shoes that were obviously intended by their maker to be brown. Still it was his job and not mine: it was best to wait and see. My eyes wandered elsewhere. On the wall near by I read the legend: *These shoe-shine boys have pledged themselves to give courteous and efficient service.* I visualized a great ceremony of initiation, at which shoe-shine boy after shoe-shine boy came forward to take the oath: "I, shoe-shine boy number 2537, hereby pledge myself to render courteous and efficient service, so far as in me lies, to all customers irrespective of race, creed, or nationality." But evidently the pledge of a shoe-shine boy is held in little esteem—for at the foot of the notice I read. "In cases of inefficiency, report number of boy." I discovered further that the place was protected by a detective agency, who held themselves personally responsible for courteous and efficient service.

In Canada they are he-men. They are not afraid of getting their hands dirty. So they clean your shoes with their fingers, rubbing the polish in with an evident delight, and with remarkable results. In Montreal my shoes were made so shiny that I felt they were almost ostentatious. I was inclined to ask the man to take off some of the polish. But I was in a hurry, and I felt certain that he would scrape it off with his finger nails, so I spared him the task. In Quebec my shoes were cleaned by a little Frenchman who danced as he worked and played upon my feet as upon a piano. Had fate been kinder he might have been a ballet dancer or a pianist. Perhaps he is, at night, when the labours of the day are over. But fate has not really been unkind to him. He might have been but an ordinary pianist it may be—but he was a very extraordinary bootblack. I have never known a man clean shoes with such aplomb. But whether I meet his like again or no, and however long I stay on this side of the Atlantic, a shoe-shine will always be an adventure.

## Romance

HIGH Arthur lived at Camelot  
When all the world was young:  
In courtesie and chivalrie,  
Rare deeds and all simplicity—  
Our sad philosophies were not  
When Camelot was young.

As Roland came to Charlemagne  
Beyond the woods of Fors,  
Wearing all honour in his eyes  
And faith; he bade the Emperor rise—  
We did not ride with Charlemagne  
And Roland to the wars.

So does a man drop heavy head  
On yellowed book and drowse:  
Dreaming of good, forgotten things,  
Beauty and truth, and Dragon's wings—  
There is not room for Wisdom's head  
In Knowledge's new house.

## Chesterton

Leo Kennedy

WHEN pessimists have thoroughly enjoyed their gloom and psychologists bored them to death with the sex-appeal of grasshoppers, a man can walk out into that splendid element the rain, and rock on his heels or head with a great laughter. A dry laugh is a dangerous thing, but if he laugh till he is in tears it is well. And if he laugh in the rain, there is a certain symbolic ceremony and gesture enacted that you will readily see if you do not try to work it out. Laughter at psychologists and pigs and all words with to lead them, for they are funny; laughter at himself for he is funnier to allow them freedom; then laughter at the earth that accepts all with the quietness of indifference. It is droll. A stodgy and somewhat corpulent portion of mud whirls in a wide space, populated by figures that prowl and do things . . . usually the right and wrong things for opposite reasons. Since Earth is circular, and in that the circle goes always on, symbolizing eternity, it is even a rarer joke to know that it will end. There is so little sanity in solemnity, only God can be solemn. And likely enough God laughs sometimes.

A man who laughs always is not necessarily a fool. And should he be, fools are quite interesting people. But there is so much in this round-about that laughter will transform—or make more obvious. And to see a thing after looking at it for a time may be a greater shock than seeing it change suddenly to something else—as Mr. Chesterton proclaims.

There, I have arrived at Mr. Chesterton, I have come home at last. That is the sensible reasoning of a Victorian novelist named Dickens, and earlier, Rabelais, and Mr. Chesterton, and all those startling gentlemen who in earlier times have found it good to kill an evil by laughing at it. Mr. Chesterton then, is of these humble yet mighty towers of joviality who see the world with the eyes of original innocence—the original innocence of babies or puppy-dogs to whom a tree is a giant on one leg with mighty arms combing the stars. Combined with this is a keen and terrible insight into the motives and ultimate meaning of living. To be thus innocent and all wise might drive a man to his madness, but the strange laughter comes in its freshness, and in Mr. Chesterton's own phrase, he sees the world 'small and very clear'. It is necessary to come quite close, to see that grass is very green indeed, and skies intensely blue, and trees intensely tall, and he does this, usually by turning his back and coming around on the other side. In the heart and the backyard are the good things sought for elsewhere, says this fat poet. It is Maeterlinck and his blue bird all over again. Gilbert Keith Chesterton is a laughing man who stands lonely in the grey morning and points out ecstatically that mists are pearly, and birds' songs simple; who shows with all the delights of a first discovery that umbrellas have a hidden grace; that pearls may be an insult to swine; and that it is good to be young, and love, and have babies. He is a strangely sane man because of this; he is sane in the angle at which he views life, an angle that bewilders since there has not been any sanity anywhere in the last five decades. We are fed on the perverted sadness of

twisted philosophies; on big business and crushing monopoly and the rattling bluster of machinery. Pooh, says Chesterton, Mouse, why tolerate the cat? Here is a way to cut its claws. And since for salvation, thoughts and ideals bigger than the thinker and idealist are needed, he proffers some that have served very large men with the maximum of satisfaction: the romance of truth, and the philosophy of laughter. Mr. Chesterton is the opposite of all Moronism. He would admire cubists and the futurists, were they a little more futuristic. He would admire and probably write free verse if it were only free. Another failing, he believes in a God, and this undoubted anachronism has lost him a large following among the ineffectuals. He is of the old romantics, a confessed Mediaevalist, a gargoyle in silver and purple. There is somewhere in his *Ballad of the White Horse*;

The giant laughter of Christian Men  
That roars through a thousand tales,  
Where greed is an ape and pride is an ass,  
And Jack's away with his master's lass,  
And the miser is banged with all his brass,  
The Farmer with all his flails;  
Tales that tumble and tales that trick,  
Yet end not all in scorning—  
Of kings and clowns in a merry plight  
And the clock gone wrong and the world gone right,  
That the mummers sing upon Christmas night  
And Christmas Day in the morning.

Fortunately, it is all quite true.

### Below Quebec

ON the wet sands edge  
Little murmuring waves  
Trouble the dulse and sedge  
That the tide leaves.

Along the north shore  
There are dark hills,  
And what their dreams are  
A cool wind tells.

But no other whispering  
Than waves and wind  
Makes for the heart a song  
At this day's end.

You do not know what pain  
The night would work  
If I were alone  
Under this old cloak.

F.R.S.

## The Cambridge-McGill Debate

### A Note

THOSE who heard the Cambridge-McGill debate could not but be impressed by the wit and attack of the English debaters, the ease and facility of their manner of speech, their seemingly endless capacity to meet at every turn the ponderous arguments of the McGill team, and their ability to sweep these aside with a single thrust, a brilliant epigram.

The McGill debaters were dull and although the judges declared the most cultured speech came from one of our men, the wittiest most certainly came from the Cambridge side. It was the polished wit, the irony employed by the visitors which stood like a sharp crystal against the clumsy fumbings of the Red team. The purpose of argumentation, as commonly defined, is to take a stand on any question and establish it to the satisfaction of the man holding the opposite belief. How is any argument to be digested if the evidence is presented in heavy, unpalatable lumps. Yet such was the McGill method of attack and such has been the method during the three previous imperial debates, all of which McGill lost. The Cambridge students did not take themselves seriously: nor did they take the argument seriously. "Here is an interesting question," they said. "Why must we look solemnly upon it. Rather let us see the humour of it." And so they went at the debate tooth and nail, quite prepared for plenty of fun, very much like the schoolboy on the playing field, Their attitude not only convinced; it showed us that we must emerge from the dullness which pervades our Mock Parliaments, our intercollegiate debates, and our college newspaper and which has settled itself upon every thought and being of the student body.

L.E.

### Cargo Liner

SPEAK but a name, and I shall surely see,  
With its shaped freedom lately from the mines,  
Black, hungry steel run swiftly in long lines  
To its new prison of the sky and sea;  
Shall, with the ship's every trembling, be  
Faithful to every prompting in the heart,  
Shall answer to her toil in every part,  
And earnestly her strength shall comfort me.  
As galleys slaved against the Afric wind,  
Until, spice-heavy, came they home to Crete;  
So fight these iron monsters low with wheat,  
And darkly slip into their ports assigned.  
For what has urged him on since time began,  
For all his iron ships, still urges man....

Leo Cox

## Three Poems

### Something Apart

I WENT into the cool  
Woods where the yellow sun falls  
Into a steel-grey pool,  
And heard at irregular intervals  
The bitter, complaining note  
That staggers and falls  
From the cat-bird's ragged throat.

All day by the pool side  
Stretched on the lush grass  
I heard what that solitary cried,  
Watching his shadow pass and repass,  
Dip and wheel and return,  
Over the pool and the grass,  
Over the grass and the fern.

The wind and the water stood still,  
And stiller than these—  
As though the whole world were crystal—  
Stood the attentive trees:  
Only the raucous bird was something apart,  
As alien from all these  
As the sorrow in my heart.

### For Ever and Ever, Amen

LONELY aloft in a turret  
Hewn of the bodiless night  
Sits one who out of chaos  
Has carved a cube of light.

Bent double over his book  
What does he ponder there  
As quiet and lonely as a planet  
Hung in the silent air ?

Looking out he sees only dark,  
There is no one to look in;  
When a gust twists the flame of his candle  
Shadows swim with no fin.

From the gulf below his window  
Comes no betraying noise,  
There is no frog in the marsh,  
Nor the sound of a human voice;

There is no step on the stairway,  
There is no hand on the door,  
The Is is the same as the Will Be  
And both the same as before.

### Epitaph

STRANGER, this stone standing here  
Signifies no more than this:  
That one who erstwhile loved his Dear  
Now takes a colder kiss,  
Yet sleeps as well, though in an alien bed  
On no sweet bosom doth he rest his head.

A. J. M. Smith

## BOOKS

## COUNT BRUGA

(By Ben Hecht: *Boni & Liveright*, New York, \$2.50)

**B**EN Hecht's creatures rampaging joyously: or seduction sans sorrow. This is easily the dirtiest book of the season, and the funniest. Count Bruga might be an amorous billy goat... the plot holds together and Hecht is a literary artist.

## NIGGER HEAVEN

(By Carl Van Vechten: *Alfred Knopf*, N.Y., \$2.50)

**W**HEN it became known that Carl Van Vechten was writing a serious novel it was the cause of much misgiving and more speculation. Could this deliberate ultra-cynic (whom indeed Joseph Wood Krutch has called "a fashionable sophisticate like Paul Morand in France") with his conscious disregard for quotation marks bring his irrepressible fondness for words of strange coinage, his breezy style and love for the curious and bizarre to a dignified study of negro life?

The book is not another *Peter Whiffle* nor even *The Blind Bow Boy*. But it is still Van Vechten. Like Campaspe Lorillard in *Firecrackers*, *Nigger Heaven* contains a character, Lasca Sartoris, a depraved woman of no virtue, but with a huge fortune "who a'ways gets what she goes after". The story is of Harlem but not of the Harlem the white man knows. The sophisticate, the intellectuals, the eccentric, are the persons in the scene. The hero, Byron Kasson, is a young University of Pennsylvania graduate with a desire to write. Besetting his path to literary fame, he finds innumerable prejudices of race and colour. Ofay (white) editors will not consider his manuscripts. Mary Love, a young cultured negro, falls in love with him and together they discuss their problems. But Byron finds himself too weak to withstand the opposition he meets, finally ending by committing suicide.

Van Vechten has written an interesting book which is a keen analytic study of the problems of the negro. He notes sympathetically the movement of the newer negro which is arising, the work of such men as Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, Paul Robeson and others.

This is his first serious novel, his fifth in all. One wishes, however, he would revert to the satire and playfulness of his other works.

## MOLL FLANDERS

(By Daniel Defoe: *The Modern Library*; MacMillan Co., Toronto. \$1.00)

**D**EFOE'S story of an adventuress who leads a criminal career for many years only to repent and become respectable has been reprinted, a fact which attests to its continued popularity. This is undoubtedly due to the realistic conception of Moll, who with all her vices and her wickedness is brighter and has more genuine emotional feeling than virtuous, sentimental Pamela. Moll never gets out of the author's hand. She is created with a restraint and care which reveals Defoe at best. As the work of a man with a gift for story-telling the book is extremely entertaining. Only when Defoe, dissenter, journalist, hack writer, begins to moralize and leads Moll to repentance and conversion does the book become dull.

## THE ORPHAN ANGEL

(By Elinore Wylie; *Alfred A. Knopf*, New York. \$1.50)

**I**F Mrs. Wylie's *Venetian Glass Nephew* was so much old wine on the palates of the aesthetes, her *Orphan Angel* will make these gentlemen indecently tipsy. Mrs. Wylie has the delicacy of touch and color that suggest *moth-soft*, her own phrase; her work has the ease and balance such fantasy demands; beautiful phrasing without insipidity, that is like a fount of clear water in a desert of Dreisers.

The *Orphan Angel* is Shelley—miraculously saved by a young Maine sailor, who replaces the poet in the sea with a fresh corpse. To America—land of Pioneers and whisky, Freedom and corn mash. Shelley, or Shiloh as he becomes, is furiously sought and pursued by ladies suddenly amorous, but behaves quite respectably. Mrs. Wylie keeps Shelley from being Byron, and merits much gratitude because of this.

## SELECTED POEMS OF CARL SANDBURG.

Edited by Rebecca West, (*Harcourt Brace & Co.*, New York. 1926. \$2.00)

**H**ERE is the continuation of Walt Whitman in a volume of poetry which breathes of the Middle West. Chicago looms dark and forbidding: ugly skyscrapers with souls in them shoot upward like gigantic needles; a Windy City..

Hog Butcher for the World,  
Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat  
Player with Railroads and the Nation's Freight Handler;  
Stormy, husky, brawling,  
City of the Big Shoulders.

The book contains selections from *Chicago Poems*, *Cornhuskers*, *Smoke and Steel*, and *Slabs of the Sunburnt*, and in it we find a ruggedness and startling vigor which at times grates harshly to the unaccustomed ear. The poetry of Sandburg is essentially American, as American as jazz, skyscrapers and dollars. But there is about this book a certain artistic grandeur which lifts it above the life it describes and makes it an important contribution to American poetry. The introduction by Rebecca West, who edits the volume, sums up pithily the paradox of Chicago and the Middle West, and the art of the poet, whose shortcomings as well as his qualities are acutely noted.

## THE FIDDLER IN BARLY

(By Robert Nathan: *Robert McBride*. \$2.00)

**M**R. Robert Nathan is a young man with a healthy philosophy of living. He is further, that elusive creature, a sound craftsman. Woven in an easy prose and atmosphere of James Stephens fantasy, the tale of a spiritual sleep that lay on Barly's decorous inhabitants flows to the sharp awakening of some. There is humor, tragedy, and wistful pathos; the inevitable seduction—though this time of an engaged girl by her lover; a robin that goes a-wooing and is rejected of his lady; and the fiddler's small dog Musket, a veritable Diogenes. The fiddler embodies all vagabondage, simplicity, and the sturdiness of the common ancestor as we have conceived him; the image of his desire is Everywoman in her fifties. The book is elemental, with a slightest touch of realism to render it convincing.