

SECOND THOUGHTS

By javie aiche

Well, your correspondent is one up on Edith Blez. We, too, entertained a British soldier, but we got a lead on Miss Blez on why the young man was here and what about it. Taken in tow by Paul Murray, one-time football star of Saint Thomas College, Cecil Wilder of (let's not mention his ship) was killing time until his particular unit of His Majesty's Fleet could be gotten into condition to put back to sea.

What impressed your correspondent about Cecil Wilder is that he felt no particular strictures of censorship or patriotism to give notice to some of the awful truth about what happens to a democracy when a conqueror gets astride the hobby of world power. Maybe, the United States, its officials and newspapers have been, overy reticent. It didn't scare this narrator to hear Wilder on what has happened to England.

What has happened, he said, is that there no longer is any port in England where a war vessel can be repaired. President Roosevelt performed not only a timely act but a service of salvation when he opened up the American shipyards to the battle-wagons of England and permitted them to heave to and have their wounds dressed. If Cecil Wilder knows his England, and it appeared that he did, the mere attempt to dock and get a second breath is to invite hell and damnation from the skies. The German air fleet is still that strong.

But, isn't there anything to talk about, to write about, excepting the suicide of civilization? A while ago Joe MacVeigh suggested to this scribbler that he might call one day and ask that we appear before his favorite service club to talk about "The Advantages of Living in Dallas." The immediate response was that it would be presumptuous in a slum dweller to dare to canvass the joys of the Back Mountain country, its allure of leisure, its compensations in free air and clear atmosphere.

Now we know better. We have lived almost a whole week with your co-Editor Kiefer. And we have found out that what we believed all along isn't true. Fred does have going-out clothes. It had always seemed to your correspondent that he habitually dressed in dungarees, corduroys, woolen sweat shirt, golf shoes, a disreputable hat, a pipe and the admirable nonchalance of a chap who wasn't going anywhere and didn't give a dam if he never got there.

It was the same about Dallas. Three lunches in the Tally-Ho, one night in a bar-room, a Sunday rehearsal, one afternoon and two nights of "Let Us Take Council" summed up this scribner's achievement of the community that has everything decent in the world, except a swap of a country house for a domicile in Kingston. We'll give odds any time, honest to Gawd.

Yep, we actually got to rhyming about it. Here goes:

BALLADE OF BEAUTY

Again they bloom, the apple trees,
And soon will follow plum and berry,
And Pan is piping down the breeze;
Across the mesa light and airy
The birds in conduct exemplary
Full-throated are in rhapsodies,
It's second-nature to be merry
Amid such scenes, designed to please.

The blossoms lure the honey bees
Though whimsy, quite imaginary,
Would make of their small entities
The folk of dreams, each one a fairy,
Of bees and fairies, pray be wary,
They're made to see and not to seize,

THE LOW DOWN FROM HICKORY GROVE

If you were to ask the next person you meet how much do we average in the U. S. A. per day for fires, you would get some wild answers.

I been reading where we burn down—or up—around 30 million dollars a month. Brother, that is hefty money. One million per day is not chicken feed.

And also I was reading where we could cut down on fires by a half, easy as shootin' fish, by being more careful. That is 500 thousand saved per day. Flipping a hot cigarette butt—without a look—is the champion way to start a fire.

Somebody is liable to say, "What of it, I got no forest or factory to burn." But if you have nothing to insure your own self, look at your gas man and your barber, etc. They all have insurance. The more they dig up for insurance, the more everybody has to shell out for gasoline and haircuts. I was telling Henry about it, and he says, "Jo, if you figured all that out on your own hook, I been underrating you." If anybody ever reads your stuff, he says, they can believe you—this time.

Yours with the low down.
JO SERRA.

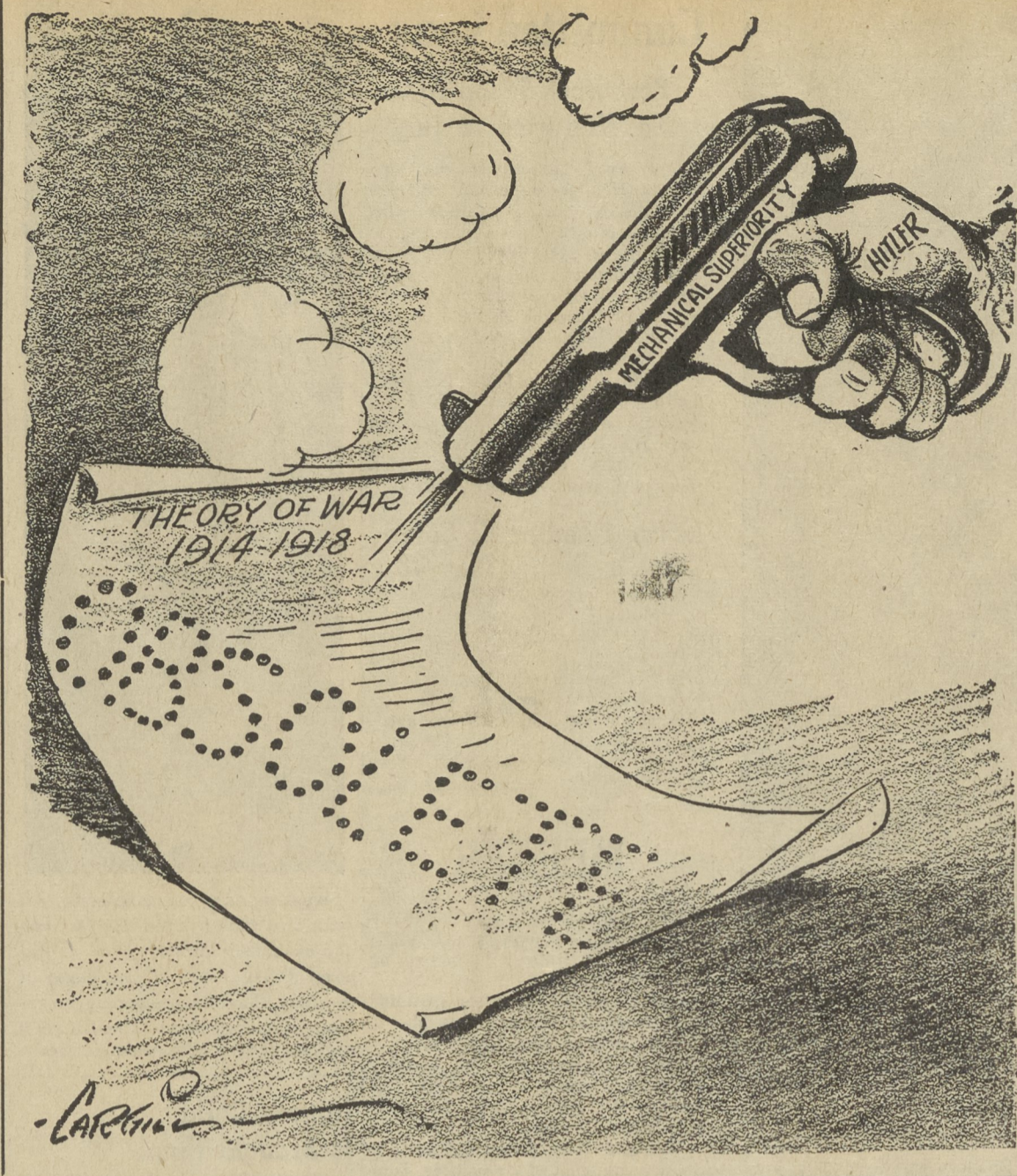
Of humankind they're more than chary
And fragile as the floral frieze.

The Susquehanna flows at ease
Offside my desk (Prothonotary)
This far away its verdigris
Are scintillant, though quite contrary

On close approach. An eagle's aerie
Would hold right now allure to tease
A mood as pure as any dairy
And white as cream and cottage cheese.

l'Envoi
Ah, Prince whose chest is brown
And hairy,
Whose lungs are free of whine
and wheeze,
What matters that the world is scary
The blooms are on the apple trees.

AUTOMATIC WRITING



GIMME A MATCH

By
FRED M. KIEFER

Harry Meiss called me on the telephone one day not so long ago, "Abe Lewis and I will pick you up about one-thirty for crows," he said. "All right," said I, and there they were.

The day was cloudy and on our third stop it began to rain. This condition, although it soon had us wet, mattered very little for the crows were caw-ing. I had never shot one of these blue-black villains and now I have—one. Our bag was nine, Harry blowing down five and Abe three. This, the two old crows told me, was a very bad shoot. Harry has killed as many as fifty in a single day, while Abe's record is thirty-two. So, we blamed it on the weather and let it go at that.

We would leave the car alongside the road and find some cover well in the woods surrounding a small, cleared space. After the first crow was brought down it was hooked in the crotch of a small tree or bush where it was visible from above. Each of us would at least partially conceal himself under spreading spruce boughs and Harry would begin the orchestration. Placing the crow call to his lips he would huff, he would puff and he would blow and you'd think he had a crow in his throat. The crows thought so, anyhow.

Surprisingly we waited no time at all until answering caws came

back and shortly the birds would appear—very high. Upon seeing the decoy they would come down and in quickly and we would put the guns to the use Mr. Remington intended.

Of course when they told me to hide I thought they meant hide and I did. I hid myself so completely that I also hid any sight of the crow I might have had. I didn't know they were there until Abe and Harry had killed them. The lattice-work of leaves and branches above my head made getting a clear view a job of some difficulty. Our visitors would come in from any angle and the finding of a hole through which to shoot took just enough time to allow the targets to get away from it. I must have looked like a rug-cutter, jitter-bugging around under my tree but the exercise was splendid.

My 16 mm movie camera accompanied me on the chance of getting some action shots. After "hiding" about twice I concluded this was not to be. It seems to be a custom with amateur photographers that upon loading the camera—when leaving home it must not be brought back without exposing the film. This regardless of whether any appropriate opportunities for good pictures turn up or not. Therefore, we faked about thirty feet.

In one very exciting scene, that had us all on edge, a dead crow

was draped in a low bush. Harry and Abe, at the word "go," moved forward in the accepted Daniel Boone crouch while I started the machine. Apparently the great woodsmen sighted the quarry simultaneously. Simultaneously they shot and I hope the puff of black feathers, which resulted, shows up well in the picture.

After this dangerous experiment, Harry threw another dead bird into the air; I followed it—I think—in the funder; Abe shot. Of course, the crow sailing up into the air feet first looked exceedingly natural while coming down its life-like appearance was phenomenal. It resembled, as closely as I could vision, a black hot-water bottle flumping through space. It sounded like one, too, when it hit the macadam highway. There was the usual explosion of feathers after the shot. Oh, well, I suspect Frank Buck did things like this, too.

Harry took the much-shattered birds along at the request of Hank Pool who intends to give his friends a grouse dinner at the Westmoreland Club in the near future.

Here is a tip for Burgess Smith. He might do the same and the next time the Dallas Scotch Club is invited to his home for a grouse dinner each of us would be served with more than the square inch we got last fall. MacVeigh and Ohlman wouldn't know the difference anyway, Bert.

THE SENTIMENTAL SIDE

By EDITH BLEZ

Have you ever walked into a strange house, a house you have never entered before and discovered a strange something to which you could give no name—something which seemed to greet you as you walked into the entrance hall? It has happened to me very recently and I would certainly like to know why it is that I should feel such a comfortable warmth about a house I have never been in before.

The house certainly was not a familiar one and I hadn't known the present occupants very long but everywhere in the house I happened to go something kept reminding me that here was a place that had been

FOOTNOTES

By EMMONS BLAKE

When I was much younger, a little shaver in fact, I thought that the greatest day in my life would be the day I started to shave in earnest. I had visions of a different type of beard for every day of the week and in no way doubted my ability to produce them.

Now when I have reached that stage and should shave every day I find it a most boring task. There are few things to alleviate the monotonous ritual. I have tried timing my shaves, in an effort to set a record. But almost always these records run end in a spurt of blood where I cut a corner too sharply. Once or twice I have tried to draw designs or letters, but the limited space hampers my aesthetic attempts. Shaving while standing on one foot, or with only one eye open to destroy perspective have their thrills but constant practice soon brings perfection and thereby minimize the effect.

If I live out my normal life expectancy I shall have to endure (barring a beard or camping trips) 21,900 shaves. At a conservative three minutes per shave that means forty-five days of ceaseless scrapping.

Like every other boy I have tried to grow a mustache. In fact I have tried twice. The first time was about two years ago. Three times in a row I did not shave my upper lip. As I hoped, my father did not seem to notice, and hence did not tell me to remove it. Two months later I woke to the realization that no one had noticed it, and therefore in fairness to myself I removed it. The second attempt was very recent. On the whole it was much more successful than the first. It lasted two days, but was most effectively squelched by a remark of my father's that went somewhat as follows: "Hey, your face is dirty."

The thought of a full beard appeals to me strongly. Not only from an economical standpoint in time and money, but also in the aura of authority that glows around one who can stroke his beard while making an important decision. Also, after the hair has grown out of the bristle stage there is the point of warmth in Wint—Gosh! I just happened to think—if I live that long what shall I ever do with the seventy-five hundred used blades?

POETRY

THE RHODORA

In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,
I found the fresh rhodora in the woods,
Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
To please the desert and the sluggish brook.
The purple petals fallen in the pool
Made the black water with the beauty gay;
Here might the red bird come his plumes to cool,
And court the flower that cheapens his array.
Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why,
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing,
Then beauty is its own excuse for being;
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!
I never thought to ask; I never knew;
But in my simple ignorance suppose
The selfsame power that brought me there brought you.
—Ralph Waldo Emerson.

lived in, here was a place where people had lived, and died, and been born, here was a house which had really been a home; the walls, the doors, the floors, everything about the place radiated a familiar air of comfortable warmth.

It wasn't an elaborately furnished place but the furniture seemed to fit right in with the lay out of the house. It was furnished exactly as it should have been furnished if you know what I mean. I felt that it was furnished as the original owners might have furnished it.

The dining room seemed to invite intelligent conversation and gracious eating and plenty of good food attractively served. There seemed to be plenty of time in that house, it seemed to have always been tenanted by people who lived graciously, people who took their time about living, people who seemed to have left much of themselves behind them; they had left something invisible but very evident.

The kitchen seemed filled with the spirit of women who enjoyed preparing meals, women who made their kitchens their kingdoms. The kitchen was large and airy and filled with something a modern kitchen knows nothing about. There was room to move about, room to sit down and chat, plenty of room for a comfortable chair or two which I suspect were there years ago when the women of the house had time to visit a little while they were doing their kitchen chores.

I particularly like the long halls and the high ceilings and the bathroom which looked out over a shady area in the garden. Everything about the place was big and wide and open; there was room to live, room to raise a family, and room for plenty of privacy.

Yes, Sir, that house had been lived in and I suspect the original owners have been dead some time but they left something of themselves which the house will never quite lose, and I sincerely hope that the people who again take the house for their own will cherish all its good points and not destroy the heart of it with too much modern fixing. I suppose it would do the floors good to be done over, and perhaps a new bathroom would help, but the house seems to cry out against too much change. It wants to retain as much as possible the dignity and graciousness it has acquired with years of good living.

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"JESUS LOVES ME"

—ANNA B. WARNER

Jesus loves me! this I know,
For the Bible tells me so:
Little ones to Him belong,
They are weak, but He is strong
Yes, Jesus loves me,
Yes, Jesus loves me,
Yes, Jesus loves me,
The Bible tells me so.

Little Stories of GREAT HYMNS

For more than half a century children all over the world, even to the interior mountains of China, have loved this hymn, and today missionaries teach it to converts wherever they go. It was written by Anna B. Warner who wrote many bible stories, but would be remembered for this if she had written nothing else.

These "Little Stories of Hymns" are presented to you by
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THE SAFETY VALVE - By Post Readers

He Respects Nobility
Editor, The Post:

My good and captious friend, J. V. H., who taught me much of what I know, and therefore must share the responsibility for what I say and do, has fault to find with my viewpoint and invites me to write again, more thoughtfully this time. What would democracy be without such friendly tiffs as the one I propose to engage in with J. V. H. when I get home?

John has me suffused by the emanations of Royalty, bedazzled by the beauty of the Union Jack floating from the bastions of New Providence. I'm sorry I must deny a charge so prettily put. I do respect nobility, John, whether it appears in the royal family, a penniless poet or an honorable ditch-digger. I do find beauty refreshing, whether it be the Union Jack fluttering over Government Hill or the sun setting over Huntsville dam, and when the beauty has symbolic meaning, I am doubly grateful for the privilege.

J. V. H. errs in trying to interpret me. Quite likely, his skepticism is merely the suspicion of the newspaperman for the unfrocked journalist who has sold his soul to the publicity trade. John thinks I want my country to go to war which, unless he has a sad opinion of me, means that he thinks I want to fight. As a matter of fact, I am as confused as he is. I only know that I can admire Joe Louis' left jab without wanting to get in the ring and get pasted by his opponent.

J. V. H. is correct when he speaks of the Bahamas' poverty. You are off base, though, John, when you say that tourists are asked not to

visit the sections where such poverty is apparent. They do, and if you will accept my repeated invitation to come down to visit me I promise to conduct you there myself, to hear you admit that the

a community institution"
THE DALLAS POST
ESTABLISHED 1889

"More than a newspaper,
A non-partisan liberal progressive newspaper published every Friday morning at its plant on Lehman Avenue, Dallas, Penna., by the Dallas Post, Inc.

Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Dallas, Pa., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Subscriptions, \$2 a year, payable in advance.

Single copies, at a rate of 5c each, can be obtained every Friday morning at the following newsstands: Dallas; Hislop's Restaurant, Tally-Ho Grille; Shavertown, Evans' Drug Store; Huntsville, Frantz Fairlawn Store.

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colored family which lives in a 40-cent-a-week cabin is happier than either you or I. What do you prefer, John, happiness or a Social Security number? A couple of spots I seem to remember in Wyoming Valley have fallen short of Utopia, too.

All this talk about "aid to England" seems to me to overlook the basic fact that Hitler doesn't love us, either. If we go to war, Heaven forbid, we shall be fighting in our own defense, quite as much as we are in Britain's. And we shall not, as John fears, be fighting for the continuation of the class distinctions which J. V. H., as a good American, abhors, any more than we shall be fighting for the preservation of Luzerne County's gang politics, the Solid South's medieval share-crop system, the Ku Klux Klan or the inverted class struggle of the C. I. O.

There's a revolution in the world, John, and it's threatening even your right and mine to argue like this and write letters to the editor. Fortunately, there's a counter revolution under weigh. Despite grave obstacles, that counter revolution has been gaining strength steadily.

We don't even have to help England if we're willing to pay the price of isolation. We are still masters of our own fate. All we have to do is decide what sort of a fate we want, and how much we're willing to pay for it. We'd better decide soon. It's fun to squabble, but too many nations have already been bankrupted by the high price of indecision.

That's all, John.
Respectfully,
Howell E. Rees.
Nassau, Bahamas,
May 13, 1941.