HELICON

THE HELICON

"From Helicon's harmonious spring a thousand rills their mazy progress take."
Gray: *The Progress of Poesy*

EDITOR
RICHARD HEZELTON TURNER

ASSISTANT EDITOR
BEATRICE SCHWARTZ

STAFF
ELEANOR CRANDALL
WILLIAM FIERSTEIN
MARGARET HOLDEN
ARLINE COWELL
MURIEL BENSON
MURIEL LABRIE
NATALIE HARLOW
EVA LEVINE
MAURICE AUGER

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Fledgling

THE great dancing studio stood silent, and bare in the soft evening darkness. From the one bulb by the piano, dull rays gleamed and thinned out among shadows which darkened increasingly toward the opposite end of the room. There in the heaviest shadow, on the broad mirror-covered wall, the dim reflection expanded the room to twice its own large size.

In the uncertain light of the mirror, long shadows appeared at intervals to stir gently, suggesting a vain desire to dance. At least so they had often seemed to fourteen-year-old Anna, who stood now with both hands resting on the wooden bar which ran from side to side across the mirror. Poised securely on her well-trained little toes, she flung back her dark curls, and gazed fascinated at the reflection of her glamorously shadowed face. What a beautiful ballerina she would be! As if to verify her hopes, she curved her arches straight downward, and pointed her toes hard against the floor. To Anna, her dainty feet were as the winged ones of Perseus. A thrill of delight carried her upwards and allowed her, with the lightness of a dragonfly, to poise and glide among the long-fingered shadows. Nothing in the world gave her more pleasure than this! She would dance, someday, dramatic *Giselle*, the *Bluebird*, and the colorful *Miller's Wife* . . . !

A light switch snapped and the shadows vanished. Anna stopped short and blinked at the sudden brightness.

"Well?" It was Madame who had spoken, and who now stood, smiling kindly, in the doorway. Two laughing girls, members of the class, dashed in past Madame and sat on the floor, busily lacing their pink toe slippers. Others followed, chattering together, while Anna, her dignity injured, stalked to the bar and coolly regarded these intruders. Resentfully she watched them limbering up at the bar.

When the lesson itself began with similar work, Anna could explain her contempt for her thoughtless classmates only by wondering how they could have patience for such tedious work. She, Anna, knew true dancing! It was inspired, wonderful!

"Anna!" Her teacher's voice brought her back to earth. Everyone stopped. "Try it again! You're growing careless!" Madame's look was strongly reproving. "Point your toes out"

The accompanist played the measure once more, while Anna carefully repeated the exercise alone, finishing just two beats behind the music. Madame gazed at her steadily and questioningly, while the class waited silent and motionless.

As the girls now moved to the middle of the floor for the first dancing steps, Anna's face was burning; but she was defiant. She would show them when the best steps came! Those would be real dancing!

In the next work, she was meticu-

lously careful, so much so that it took her longer to do the steps than the music allowed. And she had a disturbingly certain feeling that Madame was not missing a thing! At last came *tour jetes*. Anna loved these; they gave her that double, fairylike delight of soaring and whirling. As her turn came, she spread her arms, leaped high, turned, and landed beautifully, as gently as a falling leaf. Having nearly crossed the room in the process of the step, she leaned against the bar in the corner to watch the others. Madame had merely nodded at Anna's exhibition and was now helping Katherine, a tall, shy girl whom Anna pitied for her lack of grace. As she watched Katherine's struggle, Anna wondered why this girl worked so faithfully at dancing. She surely had no talent for it.

"*Premieres*, now!" Madame clapped her hands and tapped the floor with her yardstick. One after another, the girls twirled across the room while Madame guided and directed each. Anna blithely spun through her turn, finishing in a wobbling pose on one toe. The yardstick thumped. Madame strode forward. "You did it this way, Anna," she said in a carefully controlled voice. The careless pupil, watching the imitation of herself, fervently hoped that her teacher's mimicry was very inaccurate. "Come out here!" ordered Madame firmly. Anna did. "Arms!" said the teacher. "Head up!" Silently the young pupil obeyed. "Back straight! Now, point your right toe hard; . . . arch, arch; . . . knees straight! Don't forget, that left toe should be turned out! Now, step up on the right; . . . turn; . . . this way!" Anna followed, conscious of continued carelessness. "Again!" said her teacher relentlessly. "Knees straight!" This command was emphasized by a gentle tap of the yardstick on Anna's knee. It shocked Anna into concentration. She paused,

straightened, spread her arms, arched her right foot and swung it into the beginning of a turn. The pianist caught up with her when she had spun half way across the room, and stopped as she finished in a greatly improved arabesque.

"There." Madame's look and tone said, "Why don't you do that all the time?"

For the rest of the lesson, Anna felt too ashamed to think of anything but her dismal failure. When the hour was over, she flew to a corner of the dressing room where she could be alone. Slowly and forlornly, she changed her clothes and tenderly placed her dancing costume in her tiny suitcase. "Guess I don't have what it takes," she sniffed. Fitting a slender hand into each toe slipper, she turned the little shoes over. There on the sole was her good-luck insignia. All the great dancers marked their shoes with their own personal symbols. And this one, which Anna had designed for her slippers, she had hoped to have someday represent a great dancer who would be herself. Two big tears made streaks down Anna's hot face.

"Anna!" The voice near by startled her. It was Katherine's. "What's the matter?"

"Oh, nothing much," Anna sighed, rubbing her eyes.

"You're pretty sad about something," Katherine prompted and then waited.

Anna dabbed her eyes. "I'm finished as a dancer!" she announced with finality. Amazed, Katherine flopped into a chair.

"Do you mean you're crying about the lesson?" she exclaimed.

"Well . . .," said Anna, on guard, but certain that her self-pity was entirely justified.

Katherine lost patience. She waved her hand in an ecstatic gesture. "Why, if I'd had Madame do that to me, I'd . . . well, I'd be the happiest girl in town!"

Anna opened her eyes wide, forgetting that they felt as gooey as toasted marshmallows. "What for?" she demanded.

"Well!" Katherine looked as if she pitied Anna for her ignorance. "Don't you know that Madame works the talented ones the hardest?" A hint of longing crept into her voice. "And you do it so well," she said simply. "Madame knows you'll be good if you work."

So that was it! After all, those wonderful shadowy dreams of hers, those colorful ballets, could really, someday, be within her reach.

Anna took a deap breath. If *she* had anything to do with it, they certainly would be within her reach. Then she began to understand. "I have everything to do with it," she realized aloud. "Everything there is to do."

"What did you say?" Katherine, asked, mystified. She noticed that a little smile played around her friend's face, as Anna carefully tucked each dainty, smooth, satin slipper into a corner of her suitcase, and then closed and locked the cover.

Phyllis E. Glasener, '43

HAVEN

From the unshaped mass of dreams I fashioned mine,
A brittle fantasy of perfect things,
Mingling material longings with divine,
Some sober wishes, some with rainbow wings.
And next I molded from a harder clay
A shelter which would serve, though deeply scarred,
To shield it from the unkind glare of day
And keep its fragile loveliness unmarred.
Then if this sphere's deformed kaleidoscope
Should threaten to engulf and strangle me,
Within these walls I may recapture hope
At being author of such ecstasy.

Margaret Holden, '43

A Fairy Tale

The Winter loved a maiden
  Velvet-cheeked and fair
With springtime in her laughter
  And vi'lets in her hair.
She flitted through his garden
  On airy, elfin toes,
And broke beneath his window
  A twig of scarlet rose.
The red rose in her yellow hair
  Among the violets
With deft and graceful twist she twined
  With sprays of mignonettes.
One day the sun was setting
  Behind the purple hill
And through the golden bower
  The zephyrs romped, but still
The orchard woke no echo
  Of patt'ring feet or song,
For naught the Winter's window
  Was darkened all day long.
By moonlight on the path she took
  And danced o'er when she came,
Forlorn he roved and tired his lips
  In calling her sweet name.
When suddenly upon the way
  He tripped and bent his head
And saw the grass beneath his feet
  Was crushed and painted red.
Beside the pool in daffodils
  Her lifeless fingers prest;
In saffron gown the maiden slept,
  An arrow through her breast.
Then Winter's veins grew chill as ice;
  With tears and deathless woe,
He brought her to his empty house
  And spun a shroud of snow.
So now the grieving Winter brings
  The cold and moaning night
And in his barren garden spins
  The maiden's pall of white.

Elinore Snider, '43

The Song of the Sea

How endlessly and patiently
  The waves that lap my feet
Come in, go out, in cadenced rhyme,
  Advance and then retreat,
In rippled harmony unfurl
  Their foaming banners, sing
Their ancient, wordless marching tune,
  Obedient to their King.

Conscience

The night will come and I will leave
My cold and murky tomb behind;
I'll steal into your sleepless room,
Gehenna of your tortured mind.
In ev'ry unknown shape of dark
And shadow on the bolted door,
In ev'ry soulless breath of wind
And ray of moonlight on the floor—
Without a form, without a voice,
How pitiless and chill I'll stand,
Undying spectre to recall
The blood that stains your cursed hand.
All through the day I'll be with you,
I'll dog your steps and not depart,
A voiceless, self-accusing wraith
That screams the secret of your heart!

Snow

SNOW. Nothing but snow. From the east to the west, from the north to the south, nothing but the whiteness of snow. Snow, and cold, and wind. It was a bitter, icy wind that swept in great gusts. A few degrees above the horizon rested the sun. It would remain in that position now for twenty-four hours of the day, for it was the peak of the summer solstice in the southern latitudes. This, too, was the land of the midnight sun.

It had been three days since there appeared above this scene of desolation the only signs of life which the region had seen in many years. A large twin-motor cruising plane, equipped with snow-runners and an especially prepared de-icing apparatus, had roared low above the wind-swept snow.

But that was three days ago, and the plane had not returned. Nor had there been any other indication of the existence there of life since that time, until now there suddenly appeared on the crest of one of the snowy undulations the figures of a man, an Eskimo dog, and two sleds, silhouetted against the brilliant sunshine of the southern horizon.

As they approached, it was seen that upon each of the sleds to which the dog was harnessed, reclined the figure of a man. The three men were wrapped to the ears in thick sheepskin jackets and wore on their heads furlined hoods which gave them the appearance of Eskimos, the two on the sleds being covered in addition with heavy canvass tarpaulins. The group moved forward slowly, the dog tugging hard at his straps and moving in short stops and starts, the deepness of the snow retarding his progress. The leading figure was finding difficulty in moving through the snow. His large, webbed snowshoes sank too deeply into the surface snow to allow for rapid progress. From time to time he raised his hand to his eyes to shield them from the terrible brilliance of the snow's glare.

Suddenly the leader paused.

"Whoa, Binnie!"

The dog stopped. Brill raised his hand to his eyes again and peered long into the distance. The man on the first sled raised himself on one elbow and looked at Brill.

"What's the matter, Brill? See anything?"

Brill, still shielding his eyes, turned toward the sleds.

"Nothing yet, Lieutenant. Thought I saw something . . . guess it was only another ice-pack. We'll get there, though . . . I'm watching for smoke. It's the glare, Lieutenant . . . I wouldn't mind anything . . . only it's the glare."

He stamped toward the first sled.

"How's the leg?"

"Never mind me. Take a look at Wace . . . haven't heard a murmur out of him for three miles. He's pretty bad, I guess."

Brill trudged over to the second sled, knelt down beside the prostrate

figure of Wace, and lifted the canvass.

"How is it, old man? Wace," he said softly, "what's the matter? Speak to me, old man. Wace!"

Realizing at last what had happened, he rose slowly to his feet and stood a moment looking down at the inert figure of his companion, his eyes shifting repeatedly from the glassy, staring eyes to the reddish-brown blotch which stained the front of Wace's jacket. Then slowly he turned and trudged back to the first sled, his eyes on the ground, a grim expression on his face.

"How is he?" asked the Lieutenant when Brill approached.

"He's dead," said Brill quietly and without emotion. "The propeller shaft must have punctured a lung. He's dead," he repeated. "If only the medical supplies hadn't burnt in the crack-up! Wace dead!"

They laid Wace in the snow, and as the wind whistled its funereal accompaniment, Haley leaned upon Brill's shoulder, then with their heads uncovered, they pieced together a funeral service from scraps of sermons which they could remember. They covered him with a mound of snow, and erected on top of the mound a large cross made from the broken wood of Wace's sled. As they turned their faces northward again, the shadow of the cross darkened the snow far ahead of them, and merged indistinguishably with their own advancing shadows.

Hour upon hour Brill trudged through the soft snow, leading the dog by the harness. Hour upon hour the snow seemed to become gradually whiter and whiter, and the glare to become ever more intense. Brill's hand went more frequently to his eyes, until finally he could stand it no longer. He stopped completely, pressed both hands to his eyes, and dug them in so fiercely that the sockets turned red. He stood there a few moments, trying by sheer force to press the pain out of his burning eyeballs. Then slowly he dropped his hands and stared about him, first at the place where Binnie was standing, waiting for the command to move on; next to the place where Haley was lying quietly on the sled; suddenly in consternation he threw his hands up directly in front of his eyes, stared hard at them a moment, and emitted a shriek of terror.

"Haley! Haley! I can't see! What's the matter with me? There's nothing here, Haley! I'm blind! Everything's white! Haley . . . where are you? Haley!"

Haley raised his head abruptly from the supply pack against which he had been leaning, and stared hard at his panic-stricken companion.

"It's all right, Brill," he said at last . . . "Now take it easy. There's nothing to get excited about. It'll pass off, Brill . . . you've seen enough of this to know it's only temporary. Maybe in a couple of hours, Brill . . . now get hold of yourself."

As if he had not heard, Brill was staring straight ahead, muttering half audibly.

"I can't . . . see. I can't . . . see. It's the damned snow . . . I knew it would get me at last" . . . His voice choked and he stopped abruptly.

Then he appeared to take a mental hold on himself, for when he spoke again, his tone was subdued.

"I'm all right now, Haley . . . you're right, it won't last. Only it was the shock of finding I . . . couldn't see. I should have known it would come sooner or later . . . the damned snow. I'm all right. I can go on . . . but you'll have to direct me now."

So Brill, his features set in a more determined expression, turned his sightless face northward once more, and began the long, wearisome trudge towards a destination which meant protection from the snow, the bitter cold, and the fierce, wild blasts of wind, and perhaps the return of his precious eyesight. To Haley it meant relief from the terrible numbness which was slowly spreading from his leg to the rest of his body. As the interminably long hours passed on, and the snow spread around them endlessly in all directions, his voice became fainter and fainter, until finally nothing but a hoarse whisper could be heard intermittently between the shrieks of the wind.

"To the left, Brill . . . bear to the left . . . follow the sun . . . to the left. Right now, Brill . . . more to the right. Now left again, left, left, left. God, how much farther! Left, left."

Hour followed hour. Haley was moaning in his sleep. Brill was stopping to rest now every five minutes. Once he stopped for twenty minutes, and sat down in the snow, but a drift piled against him up to his waist, and he had to move.

Then suddenly Binnie stopped short, and stood trembling at attention, sniffing the air. A low growl escaped from her throat.

"What's the matter, girl? Mush, Binnie, mush. Don't stop now. What is it? My God! Haley! Wake up, Haley!"

Haley raised his flushed head and slowly his features dissolved their haggard, despairing expression, and a gleam of hope rose to his eye.

"I see him, Brill. Thank God, they've found us. There's a figure, far off . . . beckoning to us."

Brill leaped up and stumbled forward to the dog.

"Come on, Binnie," he yelled, "mush, old girl . . . mush, Binnie . . ."

But Binnie refused to move. She stood there, her ears pricked up, sniffing the air and emitting sporadic growls.

"What's the matter with the damned dog? Mush, Binnie! You hear me? Mush!"

Binnie still refused to move. Then Brill in desperation unharnessed the dog and unstrapped the supplies from the sled; and left both the dog and supplies behind in the snow as he himself struggled forward, drawing the sled behind him.

"Where now, Haley?"

"Straight ahead. There he is ahead. Thank God they've found us. The ridge, Brill. Straight ahead."

And so Haley jabbered on endlessly, while for a half hour Brill struggled forward toward the ridge.

"How far, now, Haley?"

"Just beyond that ridge. Only a

little way. We're almost there now. Straight ahead, Brill, straight. Here's the ridge now. Just over the top. I knew we'd get there. Thank God we're safe. There he is . . . MY GOD!!" Haley's shriek cut the air like a knife, and he fell back upon the sled, his face frozen in a hideous look of terror. For there, just beyond the summit of the ridge; there, standing stiff and gaunt, its outstretched arms covered with ice, and swaying back and forth in the wind, there stood the large wooden cross, protruding from the half uncovered grave of Wace.

As Haley's shriek rent the air, Brill stopped short and stood as if turned to stone. Bewildered, alarmed, he dropped the harness and turned toward the sled.

"What's wrong, Haley? Speak to me! Where are you, Haley? Which way, Haley? Haley! Haley!"

But Lieutenant Haley was beyond the reach of any human voice. He lay there on the empty sled, his face still red from the fever, his eyes staring vacantly at the heavens, the look of terror still disfiguring his features.

And Brill. Brill was stumbling around aimlessly, his fists digging into his eyes, his mouth twisting in helpless contortions, his face registering nothing but hopeless despair. And round about him was the snow. Nothing but snow. From east to west, from north to south, there was nothing to be seen but the whiteness of snow.

William Fierstein, '42

ABANDON

Oh, wild, sweet rhythm of gypsies—
Colors to put to shame
The orchid, rose, the tulip red,
And musical notes of fame!
Come, dance to the beating gaiety,
And smile into coal-black eyes,
And fling back dusky tresses,
And swing a chant to the skies!
Come, dance in the dusky woodland
Of green and gold and tile,
And dream in the wild, white moonlight
To the tune of a gypsy's smile!

Eleanor H. Crandall, '41

UNDONE

All you have ever said will be forgot,
Will drift in listless currents from the mind,
Leaving the spirit's eye, the body's, blind,
Because of this one word, electric, taut,
Shattering silence inconceivably
Into scant bits. Not that you understand
What you have done. You take me by the hand.
You smile. You touch my forehead quietly.
You do not see that I am not the same
That stood before you not a moment's space
Ago. You do not see that I erase
All you have ever said. With pointed flame
You etch this one word cruelly on my brain,
Beyond all power to forget again.

Elizabeth Ormsby, '41

Adoption

THE bus jolted over a depression in Fifth Avenue. Mr. Hopkins felt the gentle impact of an elbow; a tiny voice said, "Excuse me, please; it was the bus."

Mr. Hopkins, whose mind had been busy with thoughts of finance, shut off the changing figures and inclined his head in the direction of the voice.

He saw a tiny blond creature with blue eyes and red cheeks, brown ski suit, badly worn at the edges, woolly cap, and a most engaging smile. Despite the trousers and the tight fitting cap that hid the hair, the creature was easily seen to be a little girl. A very little girl.

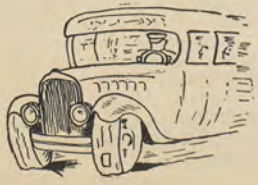
"Excuse me, please. It was the bus," the creature repeated. "It rocked something awful."

Mr. Hopkins excused her.

"Thank you," said the creature.

"Are you alone?" asked Mr. Hopkins.

This was, incidentally, the longest remark Mr. Hopkins had ever addressed to any child since he had ceased to be one himself—and that was a matter of almost a half a century.



The little girl leaned closer. "Auntie's right behind," she whispered very softly. "I live with her, because Mummy's dead and Daddy's gone away. She doesn't like me to talk to strangers, but she's got her nose in her book. See."

Mr. Hopkins turned cautiously. Two seats behind was a sharp-visaged one whose near-sightedness brought her book grotesquely close to her eyes.

"Absolutely the wrong person for this youngster," reflected Mr. Hopkins. But so many, many people were wrong for each other in this world. He had once made a tabulation of the misfits—'way back in the days when he was still enough interested in people to think about them. In recent years all his speculations had been about affirmable things like graphs and audits.

"What will happen to a child like this?" thought Mr. Hopkins, the longest thought he'd had about another human being since the day the girl he had believed some day might marry him had announced her engagement to an ex-football-hero.

"She will grow up to be like fifty-million other dull women. She will marry an ex-football player or some other over-healthy male who will never appreciate her. It is too terrible to think about."

But Mr. Hopkins continued to think about it. The more he thought about it, the more terrible the thought became. Suddenly he had an impulse. Mr. Hopkins seldom had impulses and never acted on them

when he did have them, but this was the great exception.

"We are passing the zoo," he said. "Let us visit it."

The child clapped her hands. Mr. Hopkins pulled the bell cord. He glanced back slyly, but the aunt was still sitting with the book pressed against her nose.

Mr. Hopkins and the little girl descended the steps of the bus. They were on the sidewalk, the bus vanishing down Fifth Avenue.

They visited the zoo. Policemen passed and repassed, but evidently as yet there had been no alarm sent out, for they all smiled benignly at the incongruous couple.

Noon came and the sight of people eating reminded Mr. Hopkins that his guest might be hungry. He, himself, never ate lunch.

The little girl couldn't enjoy her ice-cream, she said, unless he had some. It had been many, many years since any one had insisted on sharing happiness with him. He ate a dish of chocolate ice-cream and found it surprisingly appetizing. That was the word he used. The little girl had called it "yummy," but Mr. Hopkins was not yet prepared to go that far.

No police siren sounding in their ears, Mr. Hopkins decided he might as well take his ward home. He was already thinking of her as a "ward." He was feeling something much tenderer and warmer and more emotional, but Mr. Hopkins had no words for tender and warm feelings, so he fell back on legal verbiage.

The little girl loved his apartment and was not in the least awed by Bridges, Mr. Hopkins' man-servant. Mr. Hopkins had been afraid she might be. Nor was Bridges displeased by the intrusion of the little girl, a possibility that had given Mr. Hopkins a few minutes' pause.

Indeed, Bridges showed more enthusiasm than Mr. Hopkins could ever remember him to have displayed when in answer to his question, "Is the young lady staying?", Mr. Hopkins inclined his head. "Very good, Sir," Bridges said. That was his customary, unvarying reply, but this time he made history by adding, "I think it's splendid, Sir."

That from Bridges! Imagine!

There were difficulties, of course. Clothes had to be bought, a physician had to be consulted so that the little girl would have the proper diet, a school had to be found.

Difficulties, yes, but Bridges found them fun and Mr. Hopkins found them educating. New worlds were opening to him, and as these sunlit areas of life unfolded before him, he began to realize how dark and narrow and arid and dismal his mathematical existence had been.

Graphs and charts and tabulations —he shuddered now to think how these criss-cross lines and figures had combined to make an impenetrable hatching that shut out the sight of Heaven—yes, and of earth too.

Thank God for that morning on the bus, thank God for that impulse, thank God—

"Excuse me," piped a little voice beside him. "I want to say 'goodbye.' This is Fifty-first Street. Here's where we get off."

Elizabeth Ormsby, '41

The Orchard

WHENEVER I see a barefoot child, I think of the carefree days of my childhood in the country. There were six of us in our big white house on the hill. Isolated as we were from other children, a deep bond of affection grew up among us. Together throughout long summer days we went blueberrying in the woods, hobbled over the stubble of new-mown fields, fished for bull-heads through the lily-pads, played under the backyard appletrees . . .

Certain memories stand out from the rest. One of these is the daily round we made of the orchard each evening before dusk. After crossing a rocky pasture hill, we squeezed through the bars and entered the orchard. The cows, before the fruit season, had had access to this lot, and we often trailed single-file down the paths they had worn in the lush orchard grass. Of course, detours were worn where the early yellow apples ripened in their golden splendor, or the soft summer pears mellowed in the sunshine.

On the western side of the orchard, where sunsets glimmered away, flowed a brook muddied by the cows coming down to drink. On our ramblings we always looked for soft places in the banks where turtles might have laid their eggs. We were not very lucky, however, and usually did not find where the eggs had been hidden until the empty shells lay crisping in the hot sun, and the little turtles had crawled down the bank and slipped away into the brook.

Odd as it may seem, though it is a peculiarity of many New England orchards, a graveyard lay grimly among the trees; here in due season, the cows were free to wander, the early windfalls free to lie. In this graveyard the only identified grave is that of John Crandall, a Seventh-Day Baptist preacher, who was born in Wales in 1630. Although as children, we had no idea to whom even one grave belonged, we often stopped to place wild flowers by the nameless stones.

From the graveyard we followed along the edge of the woods and up the hill homeward. I remember how the mosquitoes chased us indoors; we paused only to wipe our feet in the dewy grass. When we were all snuggled into our beds, you may be sure there never were six sounder sleepers!

Today the orchard is still there. The brook is still muddied by cows' feet. Only now there are no flowers on the graves, and the apples that fall lie rotting in the grass. I wonder if the orchard misses the laughter of children!

Eleanor H. Crandall, '41

A Highland Maid's Lament

The bagpipes' melancholy wail
That echoes through Loch Lomond's vale,
Fills me with the strangest fear
And longing for you, Bonny dear.
When bagpipes sad are sounding low,
It's to the wars the men must go
And many hearts they leave to break
And mourn for them by Lomond's Lake.
O, Bonny dear, 'twas years ago
When bagpipes loud were sounding so,
You seized your sword and said goodbye,
And went away to fight and die.
On Glencrag's mountain far and high
In slumber undisturbed you lie.
I sigh, for other maids must weep,
When their loves, too, have gone to sleep.

Elinore Snider, '43

Assignment

There was a young Senior with glamor
Who ran down the halls with a hammer;
When a Freshman passed by,
And ventured a "Why?",
She replied, "Just a 'rush' diorama!"

Eleanor H. Crandall, '41

With All the Frills Upon It!

With Easter coming very soon,
The men can sigh and moan.
The new creations out this year
Make all men walk alone.
"I won't be seen with you!" they cry,
"With such a crazy hat!"
And there's no use in arguing,
They won't, and *that* is *that!*

They've murdered birds, they've stripped them too,
They've stuffed them for the top.
They've congregated everything
From lampshades to a mop!
Well, girls, you know the men will yell
About this year's green toque.
They'll want to put a match to it,
And watch it change to smoke.
But next year when you buy a hat,
The cry will sound, sincere,
"Why don't you buy a nice green hat
Like the one you wore last year?"

Arline Cowell, '44

Student Teaching

NOW that I look back on it, thinking of it, day by day, I get to cherishing memories; the exasperations, the noisy classrooms, and the quiet minutes, the satisfaction of a really busy class and the troubled minutes of "settling down" —the challenge in children's eyes that said, "I won't!" and my own strong-willed flash-back in the conversation of the eyes that said, "Oh, yes, you will!"

Remember the first day! Remember the clean blackboards, and writing with a little flourish my name and the date . . . my classroom! Oh, pride of possession! Little benevolent dictator, I, leading my flock of citizens who did not elect me and may want to de-throne me. I shall wear my crown humbly, I promised myself. I shall make them love and respect me.

I sharpened my pencils and put reading books on each desk. I did a hundred little things to get ready. I read over the enrollment list and tried to imagine what each child looked like. I think I wanted Madeline to look like a Russian peasant girl with a babushka, and she had red hair and dimples. I thought "Anthony Nicholas Petriolli" too much of a burden for a second grader to carry . . . (I was right). I looked at the clock and told myself to stop trembling. I wanted to skip around the room to satisfy the tingling in my toes, but a teacher must be dignified, you know.

The bell rang, and the children came in! Thirty-three of them! They ran over one another and rushed into the cloak room; they talked very loudly; they pushed and quarreled; and oh, they frightened me!

This day cannot last forever, I told myself after ten minutes had dragged by. But it threatened to. The room was too warm. And then too cold. The children wiggled. They staréd at me. I wanted them to like me.

"Take out your reading book," I said, "and read." It wasn't so bad now, except that someone was humming. I tried hard to find out who it was. Then I saw a laughing eye. "Anthony Nicholas Petriolli!" I said sternly, and it sounded like roll call in the Army. He stood beside the desk, but the humming continued.

"Do you hear anything?" I asked. How like a student teacher! He moved his head, and it was exactly half way between a negative shake and a positive nod.

The morning continued and so did the humming. Anthony was perfectly on tune, finishing one verse of "Onward Christian Soldiers" before going on to the next. I felt my mind humming along with him. It kept me from concentrating, and I needed so much to concentrate. The morning ticked away endlessly. At long last the morning finished, and the children and the humming were dismissed.

Anthony Nicholas Petriolli returned with the humming. I started the afternoon by having everyone sing

the hymn. But all during the arithmetic period, the hymn resounded steadily and softly throughout the room, until I wanted to stand on tiptoe and shout, "Stop it!"

The conversation of the eyes began. I looked piercingly at him, and he returned with a very grown-up, "Well?" "The insolence!" my eyebrows replied. "Sure," his black eyes retorted.

I said aloud, "It would be such a shame to have to keep someone after school the very first day." His eyes met mine and said, "So what?" and all through the next hour the humming continued, until I saw "Christian Soldiers" marching up and down the aisles of my classroom (my one-day old classroom.)

"Anthony," I said, "come into my little room." I had spoken on the spur of the moment, and while the young man followed me into my little room, I wondered what I was going to say. All the tension of the days of looking forward to this first day welled up in me; all the nervous twitching fingers; my eyes burned; minutes of my day danced in my head; and all I could hear was the humming of "Onward Christian soldiers marching as to war . . ."

I sat down at the little table in my room, and Anthony, closing the door behind him, looked challengingly at me. "Go ahead and hit me," his eyes seemed to say, "I can take it." For a minute I hated the child with every fiber in my being. Then the steady glare of my eyes into his was broken, and like a little girl tears came up over the brims and swam down my cheeks. His eyes, in a flash, ceased to challenge and filled with remorse. I put my head on my arm to hide my tears. His clumsy hand reached over and patted my shoulder. "Don't cry, teacher," he said, "I'll be good. I promise. I'll never be bad again. I promise, teacher. Don't cry."

I picked up my head and smiled gingerly at him, while he took out a smudgy handkerchief and handed it to me. Rather than insult him by reaching for my own, I used his. That moment, Anthony Nicholas Petriolli became "Tony" and Tony was the best student I had.

The every-day problems that teachers meet, I met. And there were some that weren't everyday. Billy and Ralph both had marbles, exactly alike. One of the marbles got lost in the playground, and each youngster swore that the remaining marble belonged to him. I hated to do it, but they quarreled so bitterly I had to take the marble away.

Ralph went home that night, feeling ill. I thought perhaps that was for my benefit, for he did want the marble very much. His mother called a week later to say that he was dangerously ill with pneumonia. I went to see him, and he lay on his little bed, his face so pale and colorless, I hardly knew him. His eyes shone feverishly, and his broken voice could hardly speak above a whisper to thank me for the marble I had brought, which he clutched happily in his hot little hand.

When they told me he had died, I sat and stared at the little desk where he had sat. Ralph hadn't even lived. I kept thinking that he couldn't pronounce "Precious." "It's such an easy word to sound, Ralph," I had said. "Try it. Pre-shus." But he didn't know what precious meant. After all, he was so young.

They told me they buried him with the marble in his hand. And when I went to the funeral, I wondered if, perhaps, he had, after all, seen a sun beam riding down eternity which had revealed to him the meaning of a little word—"Precious."

I guess Billy couldn't understand why I never called on him those last few days. I couldn't look at him because it hurt so much. He didn't understand. The day after Ralph was buried, Billy came to me after school and in his childish, high-pitched voice said, "Ralph's dead now, anyway. Could I have the marble?"

Now that I look back on it, thinking of it, day by day, I get to cherishing memories.
Mostly I recall children's eyes, children's faith, and the throne of the little dictator, and I recall those hours of student teaching as precious!

Beatrice Schwartz, '42

THOREAU

Who is this man that walks by Walden Pond
When twilight lulls the world to sleep;
Who has with nature's God so close a bond
Eternally this silent tryst must keep?

Who strolling here among the dusky trees,
Blood-brother to the ancient, whispering wood,
Seeks from the universe its mysteries,
And finds life merciful and good?

And who is he that turns from worldly care
And strips his life to mete simplicity,
To here partake of richer, plainer fare
That nature offers men with eyes to see?

Who is this man that ambling up the trail,
Stops by his cabin door a minute's space?
I know—But one would watch the sunset pale
Beside such honest glory in his face.

Eleanor H. Crandall, '41

WORLD WAR

No one wanted war. They all agreed that
It was useless and destructive,
But, somehow, propaganda hurled from every side
Changed their opinion.
Then, war - - -
(the smoke of battle and a billion broken bodies, and so many broken hearts for each of them)
Taught again the lesson - - -
But the broken hearts and lives and bodies could not be mended.
Man paid the price of folly, and for a while, remembered.
But Mars laughed, and stroked his sword.
He knew, how well he knew, how long they would remember.

Muriel Vaughn, '42

COMMONPLACE

How still the meadow lies in country green,
The brook sings on—its song is sweet and bright,
The wooded valley glows in wondrous sight,
As westward falls the golden sun serene.
The meadow lives adorned in beauty's sheen,
Year after year spring's emerald delight
Departs; the gold of autumn, too, is soon in flight;
Its splendor is unheeded and unseen.
For little does humanity regard
The compensation of the commonplace,
The world seeks out the dazzling—and ne'er again
Returns to gaze upon the work of God.
The meadows live; these nothing does replace,
The change is not with them, it is with men.

Elena A. Calabro, '41

HARVEST

It is a bright September afternoon. Before a background of autumn maples three tanned young men are cutting corn. As I watch the lusty swing of their knives and hear their light-hearted laughter, I wonder if before another harvest these men will be kneeling in some muddy trench, slaying, as ruthlessly as now they slay the corn, men who once were equally as young and confident. One of the three is a friend, one is my cousin, one my brother.

Eleanor H. Crandall, '41

Joseph Richard Lunt

I HAD not wanted to speak to anyone, nor remember, nor to think—but she stood before me, puzzled, uncomprehending. "What was he like?" she asked.

My eyes looked past her at the cold gray mist enveloping the tall, proud buildings. "He was not like that," I whispered.

She was impatient; she could not understand my inability to describe him. But I did want her to know; to see his kind, fatherly eyes above his slow smile; to hear his hearty laughter, and to feel the friendliness and warmth of his handshake. I wanted to take her back with me in memory to those few hours I spent as a member of his classes, so that she might listen as he fondly told of those boys who had meant much to him (And he to them!). They had lain, he said, flat on their backs, gazing up at the star-studded heavens while he told them the stories of Orion and the Big Dipper. One street urchin realized "that there must have been a God to make those stars." I know the gentle ways he taught these truths.

How could I put into words his many kindnesses—those little things he did which mean much and yet in words appear meaningless. If I could only help her to see with my eyes and remember, as I did, his profound humility, his child-like earnestness, his eagerness, and his simplicity!

I looked at her, and perhaps we read each other's thoughts; then with an understanding smile, I took her hand, and together we climbed to those rooms on the third floor. There on a chair lay his worn working coat, inert, lifeless; across the room were strung his multi-colored "planets"; and on the desk a camera stared blankly into space. I have no remembrance of how long we stood there, but I do recall that in the distance we could hear the slow mournful cry of the train whistle and that my companion inexplicably and involuntarily cried out, "Oh, but I know he'll be happy!"

I know what prompted her to say it.

Josephine A. Calabro, '41