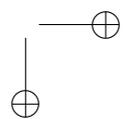
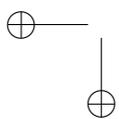
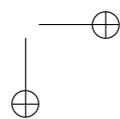
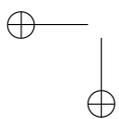
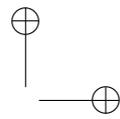
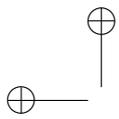
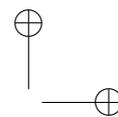
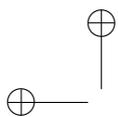


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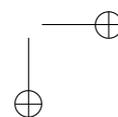
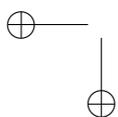


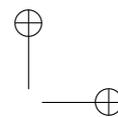
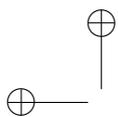


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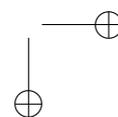
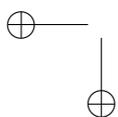
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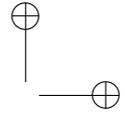
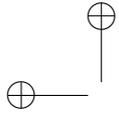
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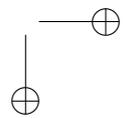
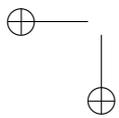


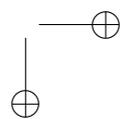
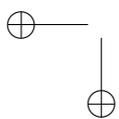
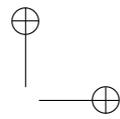
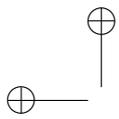
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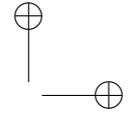
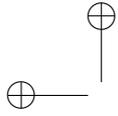




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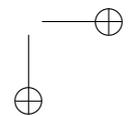
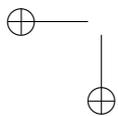


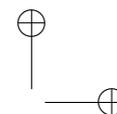
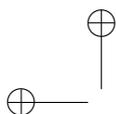


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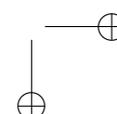
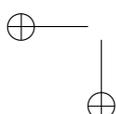
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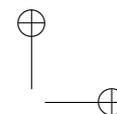
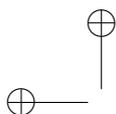
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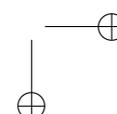
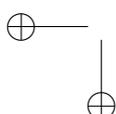


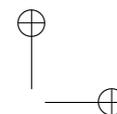
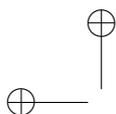


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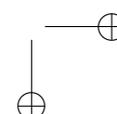
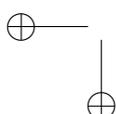
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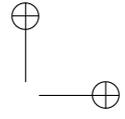
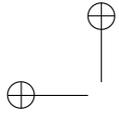
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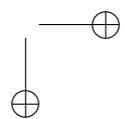
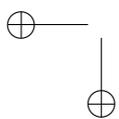


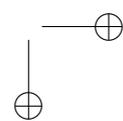
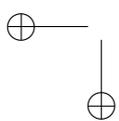
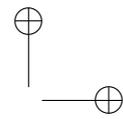
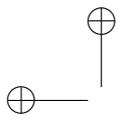
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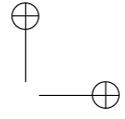
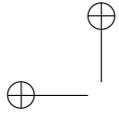




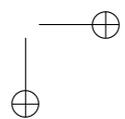
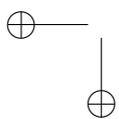
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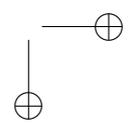
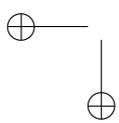
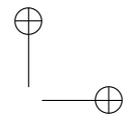
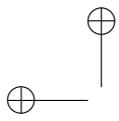


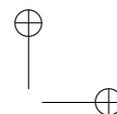
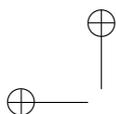




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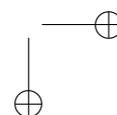
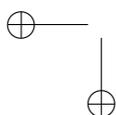
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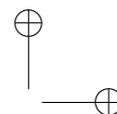
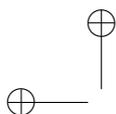
*Moscow is Red, Pittsburgh is gritty.
I know a nicer kind of city.
It's on the Hudson, not the Rhine.
Manhattan, be my valentine.*

Tumultuous town, absurd and thunderful,
I think you're wonderful –
Sleeping or waking, frivolous or stable,
Down at the heel, or opulent in sable,
I like your voices, single or together.
I even like your weather
(Your rains, your wind that down the river blows,
Your heat, your fogs, your perishable snows).
I like your pomp and civic ceremony.
I like you real. I love you when you're phony.
In other words, no matter where I gad about,
You're what I'm mad about.

Then stay with me and be my dear,
Accept this honest flattery,
And I will sing your praises, clear
From Harlem to the Battery.

I sing the Empire State by tourists pondered.
I sing the Library that's just been laundered,
Bedraggled square and screaming boulevard,



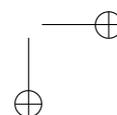
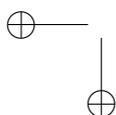


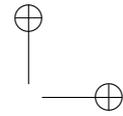
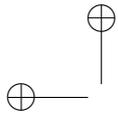
And Mr. Morgan's elegant back yard.
I sing St. Thomas's, which sponsors marriages.
I sing your parks equipped with lads and wenches,
With dogs on leashes, and with tots in carriages
And men on wooden benches.
I sing the penthouse, harboring your elite,
And four-flight walkups snug on Barrow Street;
Your native cops, more virile than the bobby,
And Powers models and the Astor lobby.

I sing your Automats,
Your gentle tearooms, wary of the scallion;
The Colony, where wend the risible hats,
And tables d'hôte excessively Italian;
And ferryboats and boogie-woogie bands
And Nedick Orange stands.

*Metropolis, aloud I praise
Your febrile nights, your clamorous days.
Not even the sales tax, trying hard,
Can cut in two my deep regard.*

Be mine, be mine:
Shop, subway, danceteria, picket line;
The Planetarium, replete with stars;
Buses and banks and debutante bazaars;
And traffic lights reflected, when it rains,
In all the pavements; and the skiing trains;
Orchids by Schling and men in areaways
Selling bouquets;
The show that wows 'em and the one that closes;
Auctions, and all the deeds of Mr. Moses,
And Sunday bells, and pretty secretaries
Eating their lunch at soda stands or dairies;
Progressive schools that cope with Freudian symbols,

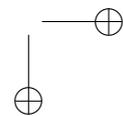
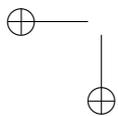


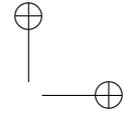
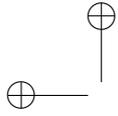


And monasteries selling cheap at Gimbels;
Jaywalkers, and St. Patrick's Day parades;
And part-time maids,
And art museums, where I take my aunts;
And Mott Street, and the Ballroom Renaissance,
Where sound the brasses that the dancers spin to;
And El Morocco, which I've never been to;
And garrulous cabbies whom no tip can placate,
And linen stores forever "Forced to Vacate,"
And kitchenettes and pubs,
And Kansas clubs;
The elms at Radio City, spreading tall;
Foghorns, and pigeons – yes, and Tammany Hall.

Let others, finding flaw or pointing fault,
Accept you with their cautious grains of salt.
Egregious city, facing toward the sea,
You're oke by me.

*Boston's well bred, Philadelphia's Blue.
Borough of Manhattan, I love you.*

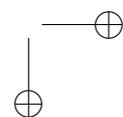
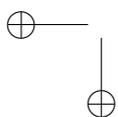


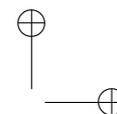
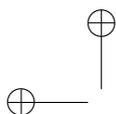


COUNTRY CLUB SUNDAY

It is a beautiful morning, calm and free.
The fairways sparkle. Gleam the shaven grasses.
Mirth fills the locker rooms and, hastily,
Stewards fetch ice, fresh towels, and extra glasses.
On terraces the sandaled women freshen
Their lipstick; gather to gossip, poised and cool;
And the shrill adolescent takes possession,
Plunging and splashing, of the swimming pool.

It is a beautiful morn, opinion grants.
Nothing remains of last night's Summer Formal
Save palms and streamers and the wifely glance,
Directed with more watchfulness than normal,
At listless mate who tugs his necktie loose,
Moans, shuns the light, and gulps tomato juice.





THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

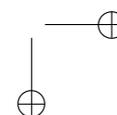
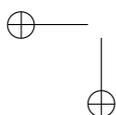
The brunt [of the new tax] will be borne by the middle brackets.
– News item from the *New York Times*.

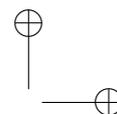
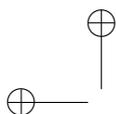
I'm a middle-bracket person with a middle-bracket spouse
And we live together gaily in a middle-bracket house.
We've a fair-to-middling family; we take the middle view;
So we're manna sent from heaven to Internal Revenue.

We're the pride of every sector.
We're the darlings of the land.
To the income-tax collector
We extend a helping hand.
For the poor have empty pockets
And the rich bewail the Day,
But the middle-bracket patriots
Are steady with their pay.

When there's duty to accomplish, it's our duty that we do.
Though the world is in a muddle, we contrive to muddle
through.
We are first in all the battles as we're first in every peace,
And we lead the van devoutly when the levies must increase.

The upper brackets, nightly,
Have dreams of What's Beyond,
And to their bosoms tightly
They clutch the taxless bond.



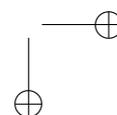
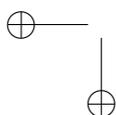


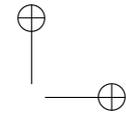
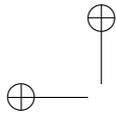
The cheerful lower brackets
Get coupons from the gov.,
But the people in the middle
Own the legislature's love.

Oh, we reimburse the dentist and we meet the butcher bills.
We're the folk who keep the temples up, along the templed
hills.

We are sturdy as to shoulder and our collars all are white.
So the income-tax department keeps us forming to the right.

Then sing a song of sixpence
And ninety billions more.
Hum a ballad for the wolf
That hangs about the door.
But chant a pretty ditty
Until the welkin rings
For the middle-bracket citizens
Who bear the brunt of things.





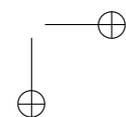
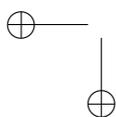
HOSTESS

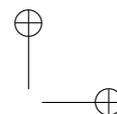
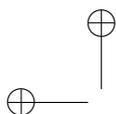
Her delicate hands among the demitasses
Flutter like birds.
She smiles, and from her smiling mouth releases
A shower of words
Shrewdly designed to lay
The dust of any private tête-à-tête.

Now, having drained the ceremonial cup,
Let none expect her pardon
But every guest fanatically take up
The evening's burden,
Answer the roll of names
And spring with quick obedience to the Games.

Let every voice grow shrill, let laughter rise.
He who has fed must caper.
She prowls the drawing room with watchful eyes,
Filling the glasses, passing the slips of paper,
And desperately bent
On stirring up a scheduled merriment.

No calm must fall, however brief and narrow,
Lest to her dread,
From some small knothole of silence, some hidden burrow,
The scotched snake, Thought, should rear its venomed head.

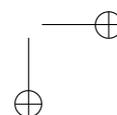
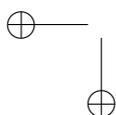


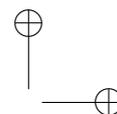
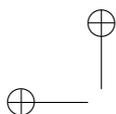


NOTES FOR A SOUTHERN ROAD MAP

Carry me back to old Virginny,
Land of cotton and the Williamsburg Plan,
Where the banjo calls to the pickaninny
And the sun never sets on the Ku Klux Klan.
Carry me anywhere south of the line, there,
To old Kentucky or Fla. or Tenn.,
But when I hear that it's time to dine, there,
You can carry me North again.
For Dixie's myth is a myth I dote on;
The South's my mammy is what I mean.
But never, ah never, they'll get my vote on
Their pet cuisine.

For it's ham,
Ham,
Frizzled or fried,
Baked or toasted,
Or on the side.
Ham for breakfast
And ham for luncheon,
Nothing but ham to sup or munch on.
Ham for dinner and ham for tea,
Ham from Atlanta
To the sea,
With world-worn chicken for change of venue,
But ham immutable on the menu.

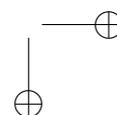
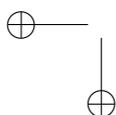


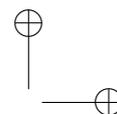
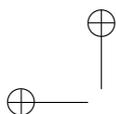


Dear to my heart are the Southland's bounties,
Where honeysuckle is sweet in May,
Where warble the Byrds from important counties
And everything runs by the TVA.
I love the mint that they spice the cup with,
Their women fair and their horses fast;
An accent, even, can I put up with,
And stories, suh, from a Noble Past.
So carry me back to an old plantation
In North Carolina or Alabam',
But succor me still from a steadfast ration
Of ham.

Ham,
Ham,
Not lamb or bacon
But ham in Raleigh
And ham in Macon.
Ham for plutocrats,
Ham for pore folk,
Ham in Paducah and ham in Norfolk;
In Memphis, ham, and in Chapel Hill,
Chattanooga,
And Charlottesville.
Ham for the Missy,
Ham for the Colonel,
And for the traveler, Ham Eternal.

Oh, patriotically I implore,
Look away, Dixieland, from the smokehouse door.



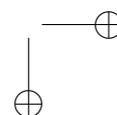
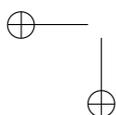


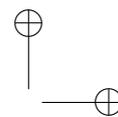
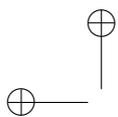
BANS ACROSS THE SEA

James C. Petrillo, president of the American Federation of Musicians, announced in Chicago that the union will not permit American radio stations to broadcast musical programs coming from any foreign country. . . . State Department officials expressed fears that the Petrillo order might be detrimental to the government's efforts to establish better relations with foreign powers. – News item from the New York Herald Tribune.

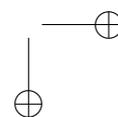
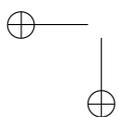
A harpist (Italian) sat lost and forlorn
Singing "Trillo, Petrillo, Petrillo!"
And, "Maestro," I said to him, "why do you mourn
With a 'Trillo, Petrillo, Petrillo'?"
America's waiting – we're brothers alike –
So strike up your harp, sir. For amity, strike."
But he answered, "I'm barred from the use of the mike
By Trillo, Petrillo, Petrillo."

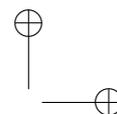
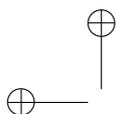
The fiddlers of Russia, the flutists of Greece
Sob "Trillo, Petrillo, Petrillo!"
And Albion's orchestras currently cease
For Trillo, Petrillo, Petrillo.
The King of the Ether is airing his phlegm.
Now foreigners get what is coming to them
For not being pledged to the A. F. of M.
And Trillo, Petrillo, Petrillo.





“Let genius cavort in its national yard,”
Cries Trillo, Petrillo, Petrillo,
“Or pay up its dues for a button and card
From Trillo, Petrillo, Petrillo.
A Congress of Nations may lightly agree
The world to unfetter, the peoples to free,
But what, may I ask, is such doctrine to me?”
Says Trillo, Petrillo, Petrillo.



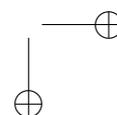
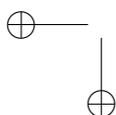


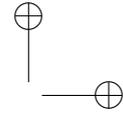
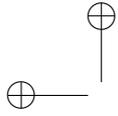
A BALLAD OF ANTHOLOGIES

An urchin at his father's knee
Sat scribbling on his slate,
And "Dearest father," quavered he,
"When I grow up I long to be
A writer, rich and great."
That parent gently laid his hand
Upon the curly head,
And in a voice of deep command
He sorrowfully said:

"Oh, shun, lad, the life of an author.
It's nothing but worry and waste.
Avoid that utensil,
The laboring pencil,
And pick up the scissors and paste.
For authors wear hand-me-down suits, lad;
Their cuffs, they are frayed at the wrist.
But castles and riches
And custom-made britches
Belong to the anthologist,
My boy,
Await on the anthologist."

"Now, father dear," the youth replied,
"Mere wealth, I am above it.
It is the reputation wide,



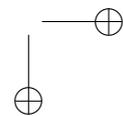
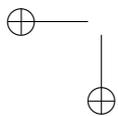


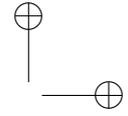
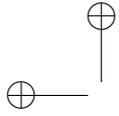
The playwright's pomp, the poet's pride,
That eagerly I covet."
Then wrath lit up his elder's face,
And in an accent burning
He shouted, "From your mind erase
Such vain creative yearning!

"You'd better compile a collection
Of words that another has wrote,
It's the shears and the glue
Which will compensate you
And fashion a person of note.
For poets have common companions.
Their fame is a wraith in the mist.
But the critics all quarrel
To garland with laurel
The brow of the anthologist,
My son,
The brow of the anthologist."

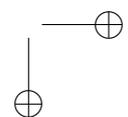
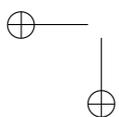
Years passed. To heed, that urchin failed,
What his papa had hinted.
Not thinking what the act entailed,
To magazines his lines he mailed
And often got them printed.
But when reviewers passed him by
For books he'd helped adorn,
"I wish I'd listened," he would sigh,
"When father used to warn:

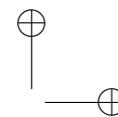
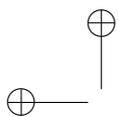
"Oh, shun, lad, the life of an author.
It's a road unrewarding and vile.
For the miracle's wrought
With a mucilage pot
And a feasible reference file.





Forever that Ode on the Urn, sir,
 Has headed the publishers' list.
But the name isn't Keats
On the royalty sheets
 That go out to the anthologist,
My lad,
 The sedulous anthologist.'”

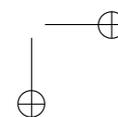
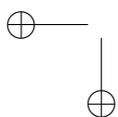


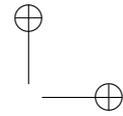
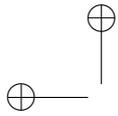


THIS SIDE OF CALVIN

The Reverend Dr. Harcourt, folk agree,
Nodding their heads in solid satisfaction,
Is just the man for this community.
Tall, young, urbane, but capable of action,
He pleases where he serves. He marshals out
The younger crowd, lacks trace of clerical unction,
Cheers the Kiwanis and the Eagle Scout,
Is popular at every public function.

And in the pulpit eloquently speaks
On divers matters with both wit and clarity.
Art, Education, God, the Early Greeks,
Psychiatry, Saint Paul, true Christian charity,
Vestry repairs that shortly must begin,
All things but Sin. He seldom mentions Sin.





CONTEMPLATIONS IN SEPTEMBER

With all the blooms of summer spent
And all vacations at their bleak end.
I pause to wonder why I went
So rashly forth at every week end,

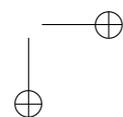
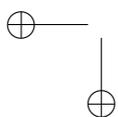
What strange compulsion bade me shut
My doors, and bound o'er hill and highland
To visit in Connecticut,
Vermont, Bucks County, or Long Island?

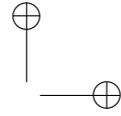
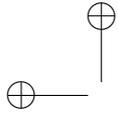
Ah, what the magnet, what the lure?
At home, as weedy turf I tread on,
Inveighing at the temperature,
And by my own mosquitoes fed on.

Here, just as surely as in Lyme,
My roses wither on their fences,
And I can marshal, every time,
As many inconveniences.

No doubt New Hampshire houses own
Some bumpier mattresses, and harder,
A more eccentric telephone
And less invention as to larder;

At Montauk Point, where water laps
Against the sands that glow and glister,
The midday sun can raise perhaps
Upon my back a rarer blister;





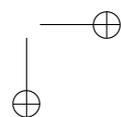
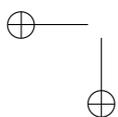
And I can almost guarantee
 In Westport (and I think in Redding)
On cooler nights that there will be
 A greater scarcity of bedding.

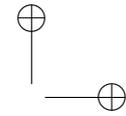
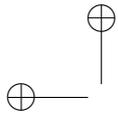
But here upon my private sod
 The poison ivy twines as thickly,
And virulent the goldenrod
 As in Hyannis or Sewickley.

And when we're dining out-of-doors
 My porch is just as damp, or damper;
And I have spiders by the scores
 And ants to raid the picnic hamper.

So now at summer's end, I pause
 To marvel why on every Frid'y,
Weighed down with gifts like Santa Claus,
 Disheveled, panting, and untidy,

I speed to store my brush and comb
 In someone's reconverted stable,
When I could be as hot at home
 And, likely, as Uncomfortable.



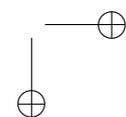
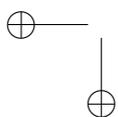


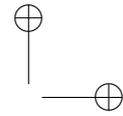
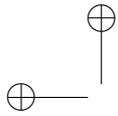
I HATE BACHELORS

Married men have paunches
And feeble repartee.
Their conversation launches
Upon a chartered sea.
Married men with loathing
Regard the hour grown late
And cling to formal clothing
Some seasons out of date.
But whether plump or harried,
With thinning hair or hoar,
I love a man that's married
Above a bachelor.

For, marital saints or domestic sinners,
They come on time to your festive dinners,
Come, unattended by hound or terrier,
And don't leave early for some place merrier.
Talk of your progeny doesn't bore them.
They're nice to the partner you've picked out for them.
At passing canapés they've a knack,
And they frequently entertain you back.

Now, bachelors are witty
And elegantly browned.
The night-enchanted city
They know their way around.

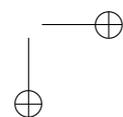
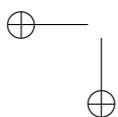


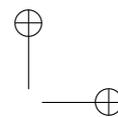
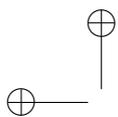


Through fretless days and gay days,
Admired of debutantes,
They stroll, the dole of pay days
Augmented by their aunts.
At vintages they're clever
And their responses quick.
But I prefer forever
The guileless benedick.

For married men pummel their friends and hearties,
But they don't bring strangers to week-end parties,
Or lend their presence upon your stairs
As if the courtesies all were theirs.
When breakfast's ready they answer roll call.
They ask permission to make a toll call.
They drink your Scotch with a word of gratitude,
And ennui isn't their natural attitude.

So when the chops are breaded
And next the wine is poured,
That male, alone, who's wedded
Shall revel at my board.
For bachelors are slim men
And expert at the dance;
They're tailor-made and trim men,
With pleatings in their pants;
They neither fetch nor carry;
At others' cost they dine,
But till they up and marry
They'll be no guests of mine.

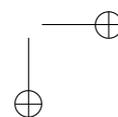
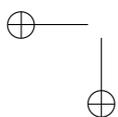


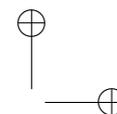
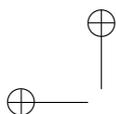


DEALER'S CHOICE

Mrs. McGregor likes her hand, regards
The sweetening pot with pleasure. This is poker
Where stud brings never less than seven cards
And deuces are as puissant as the joker.
The Campbells have no luck tonight and, pouting,
Blond Mrs. Campbell borders close on tears.
Four aces lose. The host, from pantry shouting,
Sorts out requests for ginger ales or beers.

The gentlemen grow ever so faintly ribald,
While ladies ante out of turn and blush.
The glasses empty. All the nuts are nibbled.
Lewellyn Hatfield shows a Royal Flush.
And Mrs. Campbell, seething with emotion,
Deals forth another round of Spit-in-the-Ocean.



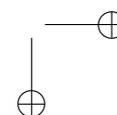
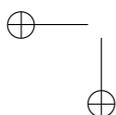


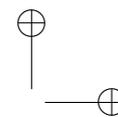
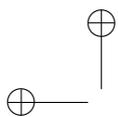
ESSAY ON A NATIONAL PHENOMENON

Of all the chaps that lead the van
For any human cause,
Most curious is the Congressman
Who makes our country's laws.
No acrobat was ever found
With talent so immense.
He keeps an ear upon the ground
While sitting on a fence.
His heart is huge, his soul sublime,
Love is his shield and arm'r.
And O! around election time
How dear he loves the farmer.

The farmer in the dell,
He marks a ballot well.
Heigh-O, the dairy-O,
The farmer in the dell.

A Congressman is filled with pride.
Impartial is his tone.
He looks at things from every side –
Especially his own.
So godlike his acumen is
That, were a sparrow falling,
He'd hear the frailest sound of his
Constituency calling.



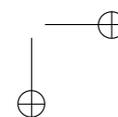
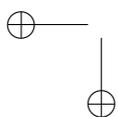


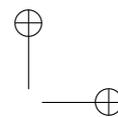
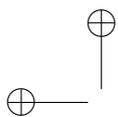
So when agrarian voices beg
For legislative charity,
The Congressman essays to peg
Their prices over parity.

The farmer casts a vote,
And that is news of note.
Heigh-O, the dairy-O,
The farmer casts a vote.

Then hail the Representative,
And also hail the Sen.
In Washington they like to live,
And hope they'll come again.
But though they hail from northern clime
Or district that is warmer,
Around about election time,
They all adore the farmer.

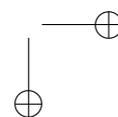
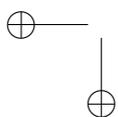
The farmer says his say
Upon Election Day.
Heigh-O, the dairy-O,
The farmer says his say.

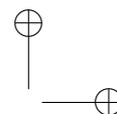
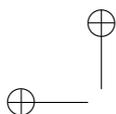




THE WEB

Oh, what a tangled web we weave
When first we practice to deceive!
Which leads me to suppose the fact is
We simply ought to get more practice.



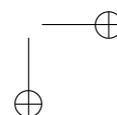
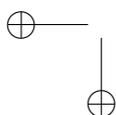


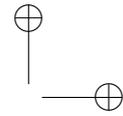
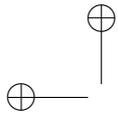
SONG FOR AN ENGRAVED INVITATION

Now, warm and sweet, the summer days
Are opening like the rose,
With drowsy airs and languid ways
Inviting to repose.
But not for me a green retreat
Or any vernal asset,
Since up and down the panting street
I stalk the demitasse set,
Or trail the silver berry spoon,
While lunch I dare not stop for.
For what's so rare as a day in June
Without a gift to shop for?

O June, fair June, what a month you are –
The costliest time in the calendar!
Filled, as a nettle is full of stings,
With sweet occasions for giving things.

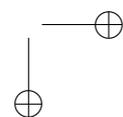
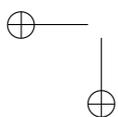
Wherever I look, whenever I listen,
Solitaires gleam and diplomas glisten
Or babes from darkness
Emerge at Harkness
Or somebody's child is ripe to christen
Or somebody's daughter is taking a spouse
Or somebody's warming a country house
Or somebody's fledgling has finished the tenses
At Taft or Groton or maybe Spence's.

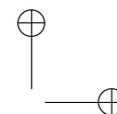
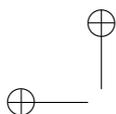




December giving strains the purse,
December lists are grievesome.
Still, Christmas presents might be worse –
You're certain to receive some.
But when I scurry far and wide
Or fevered errands fly on
In search of plates to please a bride
Or mugs to suit a scion,
I know full well that I must brood
For solace through the summer
On pretty notes of gratitude
And a whacking bill from Plummer.

Sailings and weddings and births and showers!
My fate is sealed for the month of flowers.
When the first June wind blows soft and south,
I'll be looking a gift shop in the mouth.





HEAT WAVE

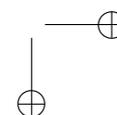
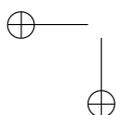
These are the days democratic, the days without barriers.
Every man is a brother.
Strangers speak at the stations, at counters. In common
carriers
They commiserate with each other.

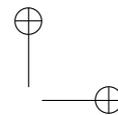
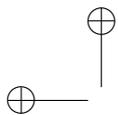
Mopping their foreheads, they mutter. The walls have been
leveled
That divided the sheep from the goats.
The banker wilts with his clerk. Their gear is disheveled.
They carry their coats.

Now the neat city sprawls like a village, untidy
In the smothering air.
The dazed pedestrian walks where the awnings are shady.
The legs of the ladies are bare.

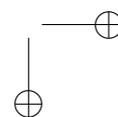
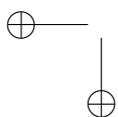
Time turns like a mill wheel, slowly, but reason is wanting.
The heat is all.
(Avert your eyes from the shop windows crazily flaunting
Black satins for fall.)

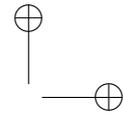
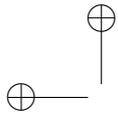
The pavement sucks at the foot, the skies are ferrous,
The roofs come alive after dark.
These are the days when glasses litter the terrace
As Dixie cups the park.





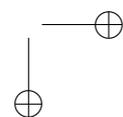
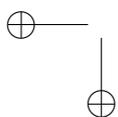
And war is a tale unread while the town lolls, poring
With a masochist's delight
On the final, terrible headlines: TEMPERATURES SOARING
And NO RELIEF IN SIGHT.

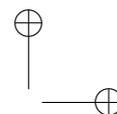
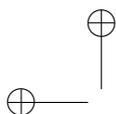




OCCUPATION: HOUSEWIFE

Her health is good. She owns to forty-one,
Keeps her hair bright by vegetable rinses,
Has two well-nourished children – daughter and son –
Just now away at school. Her house, with chintzes
Expensively curtained, animates the caller.
And she is fond of Early American glass
Stacked in an English breakfront somewhat taller
Than her best friend's. Last year she took a class
In modern drama at the County Center.
Twice, on Good Friday, she's heard *Parsifal* sung.
She often says she might have been a painter
Or maybe writer, but she married young.
She diets. And with Contract she delays
The encroaching desolation of her days.

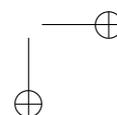
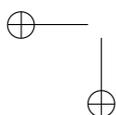


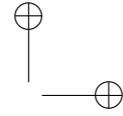
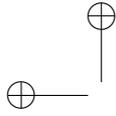


MOTTO TO BE FRAMED IN A GUEST ROOM

Some folk they say
At break of day
 Ecstatically awoken
And straightway rise
With joyful cries
 To sniff the rasheded bacon.
Their hearts are light, their heads are clear,
 For repartee they're able,
And neatly buttoned they appear
 Each morning at the table.
Well, doubtless they're a worthy crew,
 More potent than a powerhouse.
But God forbid that they should do
 Their breakfasting at our house.

For hark,
The lark
At heaven's gate
 Like Lily Pons may warble –
The clan of Ames
Morosely claims
 There is no bird so horr'ble.
The rosy dawn delights us not.
 We view the sun with loathing,
While staggering from reluctant cot
 To don distasteful clothing.

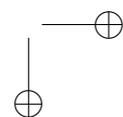
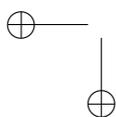


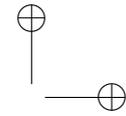
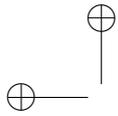


Two figures bowed with haste and gloom,
Daring the day to flower,
Each glares at each across the room
And stumbles to the shower.

Oh, chill, forlorn,
Unholy morn
The Ameses are not friend to!
With dull accord
The breakfast board
We drearily descend to.
No gladsome quips
Escape our lips.
In epithets we mutter,
Or beg at most
The plate of toast
Or snarl above the butter.
And we must drain the Java's dregs
And quaff the juice and crack the eggs
And find the energy to stuff in
A second cup, another muffin,
Before conceding that we may
As well exist another day.

Yes, some folk rise
With starry eyes
When dawn's a kindling ember.
But here's a warning and a clue.
Till breakfast's positively through,
The Ameses can't be spoken to.
And we'll thank you to remember.





ALL GOD'S CHILLUN GOT HELICOPTERS

The glittering shape of things to come
When man shall dwell, prefabricated,
I look upon with pulses numb
And breath unbated.

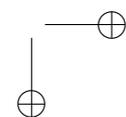
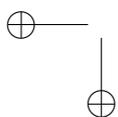
What are to me the Plastic wonders
Promised for piping times of peace
Whereof the purple adman thunders
And does not cease?

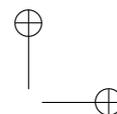
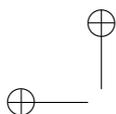
I contemplate, while reason reels,
What lies in store for future voters –
The vaster cogs, the mightier wheels,
The super-motors,

The wires our lives will be entwined to,
The weather furnished by a filter,
The nightmare gadgets, all designed to
Go out of kilter.

Worn down already by the spite
Of automatic things, and shifty,
I shudder at our monstrous plight
In nineteen-fifty.

What clogging pipes, what grinding gears,
What valves defective we must coddle,
While mired in double-deep arrears
For each new model!





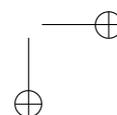
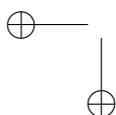
In soil-less plots we'll grow our lettuce.
From sphere to sphere shall we converse,
And bridge the seas. And where'll it get us?
Right here, or worse.

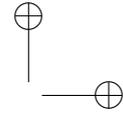
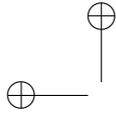
Across the Modulated air
Quips will fly frequenter and duller,
And crooners serve horrendous fare
In Technicolor.

Still will the Sunday pilots soar,
Reckless of holiday disaster,
To meet it as they did before
But somewhat faster.

While in the Lucite-lovely flat,
Serviced by unimagined buttons,
Still will the bridegroom glower at
His ill-cooked muttons.

For though we shift the changing scenery,
One motto blazons bright as day:
Those Gods descending from machinery
Have feet of clay.





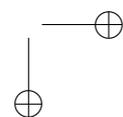
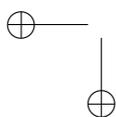
WARNING TO RUSSIANS

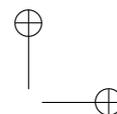
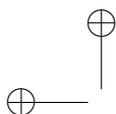
The Russian Government has resumed plans for construction of the Palace of the Soviets, which is intended to be the "tallest edifice in the world." – News item from the New York Times.

Come, Comrades, turn your minds away
From schemes so enterprising
Or you will rue the bitter day
That saw those girders rising.

Lest from its hard-won pedestal
The Revolution crumble,
Take care. Design a meeker hall,
Some pleasure dome more humble.

For look – you build for all you're worth
The highest edifice on earth.
So what? You've got the biggest building,
Complete with mural and with gilding.
You kiss its cornerstone and date it,
In speech and song you celebrate it,
Take tourists through (admiring, cynical),
Nickname it, spit from off its pinnacle,
Walk up its stairways, breathing hard,
And limn it on the postal card.



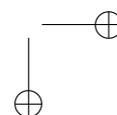
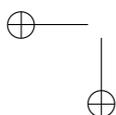


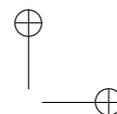
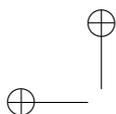
O.K. Tuned, then, to concert pitch,
You'll catch the urge, you'll get the itch,
And, wishing on a crimson star,
You'll make the fastest motor car,
The longest bridge, the fleetest train,
The highest-soaring aeroplane,
The vastest tunnel, statue, ship.
All caution spent, you'll let 'er rip
Till through your borders loud will ring
The tumult of the Super-Thing.

You'll boast the World's Divinest Leg,
The Earliest Peach, the Freshest Egg,
The Champion Swimmer, Milker, Knitter,
Hog Caller, Skater, Flagpole Sitter,
The most inveterate gawks and gapers,
The blackest headlines on your papers,
The funniest laws, the biggest debt.
Beware, beware, O Soviet!
Or finish, sure as sure can be,
With something called Democracy,

While every chap from shore to shore
Industriously labors
Upon some private project more
Expansive than his neighbor's.

Tovarisch, stay your hand. Be wise,
And in this fateful hour
Scale down to less redundant size
Your Communistic tower.



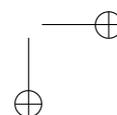
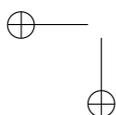


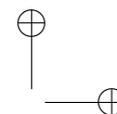
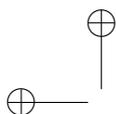
MIND OVER MATER

Of all the instincts in the breast,
Mundane, angelic, or infernal,
I sometimes think the silliest
Is the maternal:
A passion blowing no one good
Save the obstetric brotherhood,
Dictators, dairies, Toddle Toys,
And possibly the census boys.
Yes, honest as the bold Diogenes,
I swear I do not hold with progenies.

For lo, you wed! With beaming face
You do your duty as a woman
And swell the overcrowded race
With one more human.
That's not enough. So very soon you're
Having a sister just for Junior,
And to what end? That at the best
You lost your figure and your rest
Tending with fervor apostolic
Teeth, tantrums, diapers, and colic;

That on your satin couch may linger
The sticky hand, the buttered finger,
And on your ears may hourly beat
The horrid sound of little feet;

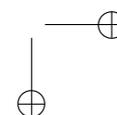
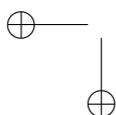


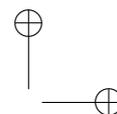
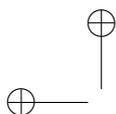


Your days beset, your nights made hideous
With voices infantile or kiddy-ous;
That for two decades at the inside
What you'll be handed is the thin side:
The Zoo instead of Belmont's races
And from the dentist golden braces
Running four figures and a comma
In lieu of diamond rings for mamma.

They're reared. But do you live in clover?
No, no. They try to make you over.
They criticize the drinks you mix,
Your hair, your friends, your politics,
Professing that their souls are cankered, too,
By the dull home that they are anchored to.
And what's the final meed you draw?
You end your days a mother-in-law.

Of all the passions of the breast,
Of all the sentiments it's large in,
Maternity's the silliest
By quite a margin –
A pretty piece of nomenclature
To hide the shabbiest trick of Nature.
Progeny is a plague and bore.
I wish I had a dozen more.

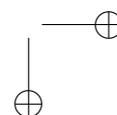
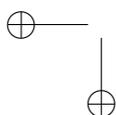


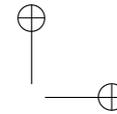
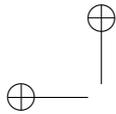


BEAT ME, ADAGIO, FOUR TO THE BAR

The town is so full of a number of shows
 With mirth and with melody proffered,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as Rose
 Or Abbott or Miss Cheryl Crawford.
Shows fresh as tabasco
 Come wittily done.
They're lovely (see Rascoe),
 Or lavish (the *Sun*).
They're moving and mystic
And highly artistic,
Sophisticate, literate,
Surrealistic.
And all of the cast
 From villain to valet
Dance swooningly past
 Now and then in a ballet.
So likely I'm rudely ungrateful
 And better had never been born
To yearn as I do for a plateful
 Of succulent, old-fashioned corn.

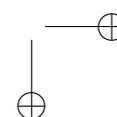
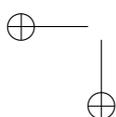
But couldn't they give me a tap dance?
 One chorus that trips on the beam?
Though deep in my heart
I'm devoted to Art,

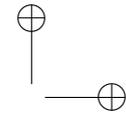
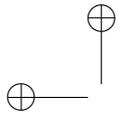




If I have to watch another ballet interpreting
the ingénue's Wish-Fulfillment, I'm going
out in the lobby and *scream*.
Oh, do you remember Sweet Alice, Ben Bolt
(The blond one, the third from the right)?
She kicked up her heels like a high-stepping colt,
But you won't see Sweet Alice tonight,
For Broadway's an alley
That thrives on results,
And only the ballet
Is throbbing its pulse.
Now dancers must frolic
In attitudes Dalic,
Employing jetés
That are richly symbolic,
By willowy poses
Develop the plot,
And show what neuroses
The heroine's got.
No more saunter, upstage and haughtily,
The tall girls in statuesque pairs,
And ponies no longer wink naughtily,
And nobody taps down the stairs.

So here's to the light ballerinas!
They're tireless, they're graceful, they're
pets.
They charm, they amuse me.
But if you'll excuse me,
I think I'll just drop in at the Music Hall
for a moment and take a look at the
Rockettes.





LETTER FROM A COUNTRY INN

Dinner's at one. They ring an outside gong
To summon cottagers from down the hill.
The blue, anonymous days are seasons long,
And nights derisive with a whippoorwill.

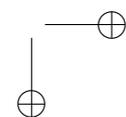
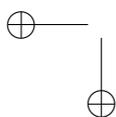
We brag on postal cards about the blankets
We sleep beneath, or praise the altitude.
The meadow wears its butterflies like trinkets,
Gaudy and inexhaustibly renewed.

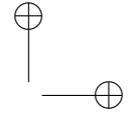
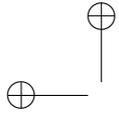
And all the hours are loud with children falling
From habitable trees or in the lake,
Forever at the tops of voices calling
The gossip that consumes them while they wake,

Pursuing goose or fleeing jealous gander,
Fishing for minnow fabulous as whale,
Or scooping up the luckless salamander
From violated pool to secret pail.

Here time swings idly as a toy balloon,
Empty of struggle, almost of thought itself.
Yesterday's paper comes this afternoon
And lies unopened on the mantel shelf,

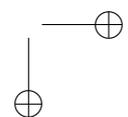
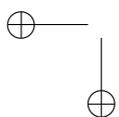
And all is innocent and desultory
As we'd forgotten that a world might seem.
Only at week's end does the tempo vary.
Then dreaming women rouse themselves from dream,

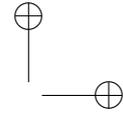
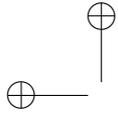




Tie ribbons in their hair with rapt attention,
Discard their knitting, put their novels down,
And half-delighted, half with apprehension,
Await the train that carries up from town

Their stranger husbands, fetching even here
Reality's outrageous atmosphere.





RETURN OF THE NATIVE

The summer's exile has its end.
Now stirred as by my hope of heaven,
A sunburned pilgrim, home I wend
To turn the key in F-11.

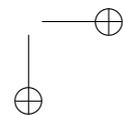
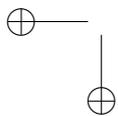
Farewell at last to wood and shore,
Mosquitoed breeze and drafty cottage.
My birthright I have swapped once more
For this well-seasoned mess of pottage.

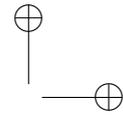
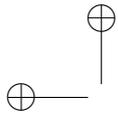
How good to feel beneath the foot,
Instead of grass, the asphalt tickle!
Oh, happy circumstance, to put
In subway slot the usual nickel,

To find the Plaza's prospect fair,
To breathe again with nought to hinder
The ripe, monoxide-scented air,
And from my eye to blink the cinder!

What matter in New Hampshire now
That fall encrimsons vale and highland,
Or frost has fired the shimmering bough
In Maine, and, I suppose, Rhode Island?

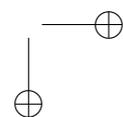
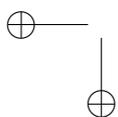
Here in the neon-flaming town
The season burgeons undiminished.
Here autumn lays no burden down.
The year is born instead of finished.

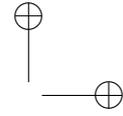
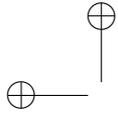




Now leaps the pulse as if it were spring.
Now every John seeks out his Julia,
And musicals awake and sing
And hats are tall and look peculia',
And ladies for their sables yearn
And landlord to his lease is plighted.
Oh, lovely time! Oh, dear return
From regions wholesome but benighted!

Let red October burn its way
Amid the suburb's tattered greenery.
From any window I survey
A more engrossing kind of scenery,
And to my nostrils cometh faint,
Sweeter than sumac, sooner or later
The smell of fresh, autumnal paint
Scorching upon a radiator.

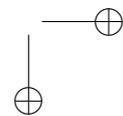
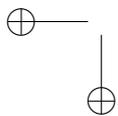


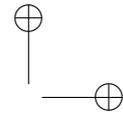
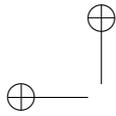


MONOLOGUE IN A PET SHOP

Some folk discourse
On the noble horse
 And some by newts are smitten,
While others aver
Their heartstrings stir
 At sight of a frolic kitten.
For every brute,
Though meek, though mute,
 There's somebody madly cares,
But me, I ghink
Til settle for mink
 Done up by Revillon Frères.

For I am a lady with pet resistance.
Now, take the dog (and to any distance).
He's a faithful buddy
 To man, no doubt,
But his paws are muddy,
 His hair falls out.
In accents florid
 At dawn he rehearses.
His bark is horrid,
 His bite much worse is.
At little dangers
 He crawls away closer.
He follows strangers
 But nips the grocer.



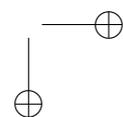
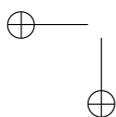


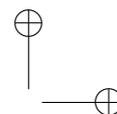
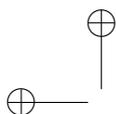
You fondle, you feed him,
You guard his habits.
And when you need him,
He's chasing rabbits.

I lift my lute and I tune my lyre
In bold defiance of Ellin Speyer.
For cats are claws.

 Their blood runs clammily,
In bureau drawers
 They deposit their family.
Horses are splendid
 As things to bet on,
But not intended
 For me to get on.
Goldfish stare at one,
 Calm and chilly.
Parrots swear at one,
 Monkeys act silly.
Mice I'm at bay from.
 Birds are a bore.
Pets, keep away from
 My cottage door.

It's true the acumen
Of Genus human
 Is lower than spire or steeple,
But the more I see
Of the Pekinee,
 The more I am fond of people.





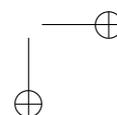
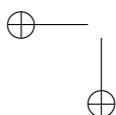
PETITION TO REALTORS

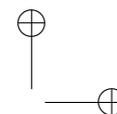
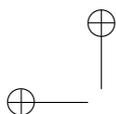
BY ONE WHO KNOWS NOT WHERE TO LAY HER HEAD

Gentlemen, most cherished sirs,
Ornaments of this, our city,
If within your bosoms stirs
For the homeless any pity,
Search your lists with eye of eagle,
Send a bloodhound forth, or beagle,
Find me somewhere in the town
Place where I can set me down.

Just a roofree and a casement,
South or north or east or west,
Penthouse, parlor floor, or basement,
Club, flat, cranny, nook, or nest.
Suppliant upon my knees,
View me, Elliman & Pease.
Darling Messrs. Bing & Bing,
Can't you show me *anything*?

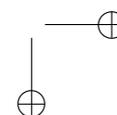
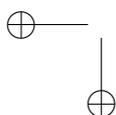
Sirs, in me you shall behold
Tenanthood's delightful flower.
Water either hot or cold
I'll run thrifty in the shower.

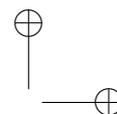
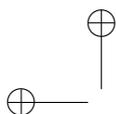




Stairs Ill climb without complaint,
Turn the steam down, spare the paint,
Keep the shining fireplace fireless,
Muffle, after ten, my wireless,
Shun the marring picture nail,
Pay you prompt by monthly mail,
Lock, punctilious, my doors,
And be meek to janitors
When they chide me loud or snip'ly.
Be my landlord, Prince & Ripley.

Be my savior, be my lover,
Charles F. Noyes Company, Inc.,
Or infallibly I hover
Straight on desperation's brink.
Vincent Astor, Wittman-Farber,
Chace & Chace or Sailors' Snug Harbor,
Douglas Elliman, Douglas Gibbons,
Men who strive at Clark McKibben's,
Joseph Day or H. Stanley Hillyer,
House me somewhere safely, will yer?
Hear me clamoring at your gates,
Realty Associates.
Ere existence I resign,
Cruikshank, be my Valentine.





COUNTRY WEEK END, RAINY

The rain is raining all around,
From regions moist and upper,
On field and tree and picnic ground
Where we had planned our supper.

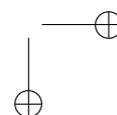
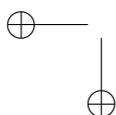
It rains on rivers and on roots
With merciless abundance,
And boats, and wrung-out bathing suits,
Which seems to me redundancy.

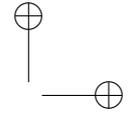
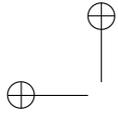
It rains upon the tennis court
We don't expect to get to.
According to the last report
Tomorrow will be wet, too.

Tomorrow we will yawn the same
While boredom dulls the eyeballs,
And play the mournful parlor game
And drink too many highballs.

God made the singing rain to flow
And God knows what we will do.
It is not raining rain, you know,
But sinus pains and mildew.

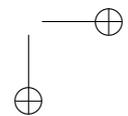
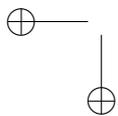
It's raining gnat, it's raining midge,
And drawer that sticks, and casement.
It's raining sharp remarks at bridge
And water in the basement.

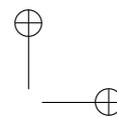
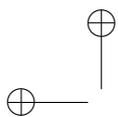




For guest, for host, it rains despair.
Oh, hark that silver pealing!
The rain is raining everywhere,
Including through the ceiling.

Perhaps in town it also rains
But not as on the yokel.
Won't someone please look up the trains
And help me catch the local?

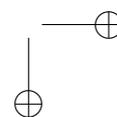
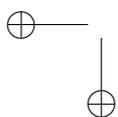


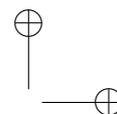
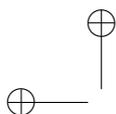


BEAUTY PARLOR

The lady in Booth Three is discontented
With her last wave, rejects the oil shampoo
As if it were a bribe. Ammonia-scented,
The permanent begins in Number Two.
Five thinks perhaps she'd like to take a flier
In something up-swept. Elderly Mrs. Sloane
From Number Seven, deafened by the drier,
Confides abruptly in a public tone

To Miss Estelle the history of her spleen.
Six orders sandwiches. The pages flutter
On aproned laps of Look and Silver Screen.
Seven, alarmed, subsides now to a mutter.
While Three debates the problem whether to dapple
Her nails with Schoolhouse Red or Stolen Apple.



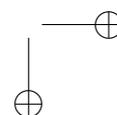
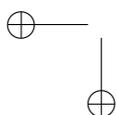


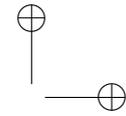
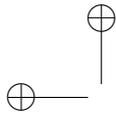
MESSAGE FOUND IN A BOTTLE

THROWN FROM A WINDOW AT HARKNESS PAVILION

When next upon my narrow cot,
A prey to symptoms horrid,
I lie awake for fever's sake
Or hold my aching forehead,
Let doctors come and doctors go,
They'll meet with no resistance.
I'll gulp the bitterest brew. But, oh,
Let nurses keep their distance.

For the hearts of nurses are solid gold,
But their heels are flat and their hands are cold,
And their voices, lilt with a lilt that's falser
Than the smile of an exhibition waltzer,
Yes, nurses can cure you, nurses restore you,
But nurses are bound that they'll do things for you,
They make your bed up
On flimsy excuses.
They prop your head up
And bring you juices.
They run with egg-nogs from hither and thither.
They fling out your flowers before they wither.
They fetch your breakfast at dawn's first crack.
They keep on pleading to rub your back.
With eau de Cologne they delight to slosh you.

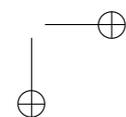
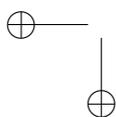


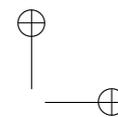
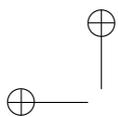


And over and over they want to wash you.
The nurse-at-night you can't recall,
 She's vaguer than a dream is;
But when she whispers down the hall
 You think you're *in extremis*.
The day nurse owns a beaming face
 Designed your soul to hearten,
And speaks to you with studied grace
 As to a kindergarten.

Oh, the deeds of nurses are noble and pure,
But they're always taking your temperature.
And, dewy morn till the light grows paler,
They guard you close as a Nazi jailer,
They pull your shades and they shut your doors.
They snub convivial visitors,
Your veriest frown
 They take to heart
And scribble it down
 On a stealthy chart.
When you reach for a smoke they're there to nab you.
With pills they dose you, with needles they jab you.
They order you porridge instead of kippers.
They steal your pencils and hide your slippers.
They eat the candy your friends bequeath,
And hourly urge you to brush your teeth.

The tribe of Florence Nightingale,
 Ah, let me not disparage.
How deft their ways with luncheon trays,
 How masterful their carriage!
But when the pallid look I wear
 That marks the Liquid Diet,
I wish they'd go some otherwhere
 And let me groan in quiet,
Abandoned to my germy nest,
Unnursed, unlaundered, unoppressed.

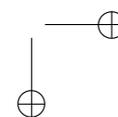
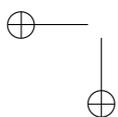


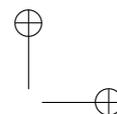
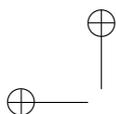


P.T.A. TEA PARTY

The hats are flowered or the hats are furred
According to the season. Plump and pretty,
Madam the Chairman says a plaintive word
About the Milk-and-Midday-Lunch Committee.
The secretary, fumbling through her papers,
Murmurs inaudibly the bleak returns
From Tuesday's Fun Fair. Someone lights the tapers
Set, geometric, by the coffee urns.

Now from their chalky classrooms straggle in
The apprehensive mentors of the young,
To be impaled like beetles on a pin
By the sharp glance, the question-darting tongue
Of vested motherhood – while daylight droops,
To smile and sip and talk of Hobby Groups.

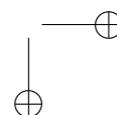
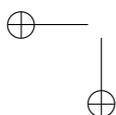


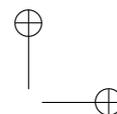
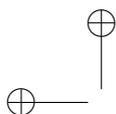


PROGRAM FOR THINKERS

Now that the summer fades forlorn,
And grimmer grows the weather,
Oliver Ames and I have sworn
A covenant together.
Too many winter nights we've spent
On pastimes ineffectual.
This year it shall be different.
Our program's intellectual.
No more we'll lounge in slippers ease,
Rusting away our faculties
With murder tales in scandalous number
Or double solitaire or slumber.
No, no. Pursuits of higher kinds
This season shall improve our minds.

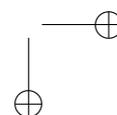
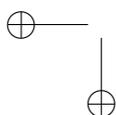
At bridge let others waste their force
Or dial a radio ditty.
The Amesese plan to take a course
Of lectures in the city.
Not musicals, but plays with plot –
Assiduously we'll see 'um.
We'll patronize the arts and trot
From gallery to museum.
To concerts we shall bravely sally,
Attend the opera and the ballet,
Applaud the speakers with decorum

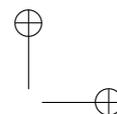
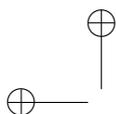




At every economic forum,
Or sometimes flee the madding crowd
To read the Classics. And aloud.

This year, our tarnished wits we'll rub
Till they are polished bright.
Perhaps we'll join some sort of club.
But don't let's start tonight.
For listen, how the winds conspire!
The storm has slipped its muzzle.
Let's just draw closer to the fire
And work a crossword puzzle,
Or set a hand of rummy out. . . .
Besides, my soul is gnawed with doubt.
Was not our pledge the same we swore to,
Last winter and the one before too?
It was? Well, never mind, my dear.
It's very comfortable here,
While learning's halls are chill and misty.
Let's compromise on Agatha Christie.





POST-ELECTION RUMINATIONS

The tumult and the shouting dies.
The Captains rally to their mutttons,
And from lapel the voter pries
His bright, identifying buttons.

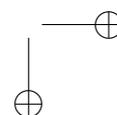
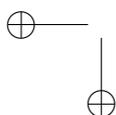
Manned by a loud-exulting crew,
The Ship of State is safely harbored
(Or else, according to one's view,
Has sunk to leeward and to starboard).

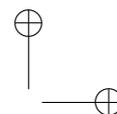
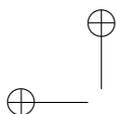
Now lesser voices split the air,
Crying their cosmic pills and nostrums;
Now droop the placards in the square,
Now fades the bunting round the rostrums.

While friend with his dissenting friend
Speaks once again, assured and hearty,
Finding the world has yet to end
With victory for the Other Party –

That heaven stands, the sunset burns,
Cheerful, accustomed, and eternal,
In spite of what the late returns
Foreshadowed in an evening journal.

And on we stumble as before,
Skirting somehow the black abyss,
Tough from a hundred years or more
Of crises noisier than this.



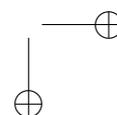
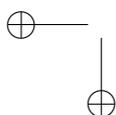


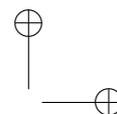
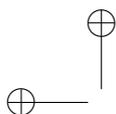
**DEAR MADAM:
WE KNOW YOU WILL WANT
TO CONTRIBUTE. . .**

*Christmas is coming,
The geese are getting fat.
Please to put a penny in an old man's hat.
If you haven't got a penny, a ha'penny will do.
If you haven't got a ha'penny, God help you!*

Please to put a nickel,
Please to put a dime.
How petitions trickle
In at Christmas time!
Come and Save a Scholar.
Bring the heathen hope.
Just enclose a dollar
In the envelope.
Send along a tenner,
Anyhow a five,
And let the Friends of Poetry inaugurate their Drive.

Share your weekly ration
With miners up in Nome.
Give a small donation
To build a Starlings' Home.
Please to send a shillin'
For lawyers in the lurch.

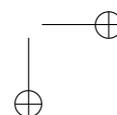
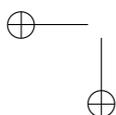


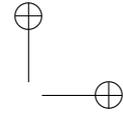
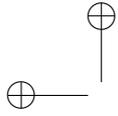


Drop a pretty bill in
The offering at church.
Remember all the orphans,
Recall the boys at camps.
And decorate your letters with illuminated stamps.

The Common Colds Committee
Implores you to assist.
They're canvassing the city,
They've got you on their list.
Demonstrate your mettle
For half a hundred Causes.
Fill the yawning kettle
Of the corner Santa Clauses.
Give for holy Charity
Wherever she appears.
And don't forget the Firemen and the Southern Moun-
taineers.

*Christmas is coming,
The mail is getting fat.
Please to put a penny in every proffered hat.
If you haven't got a penny, a ha'pence let it be.
If you haven't got a ha'pence left, you're just like me.*

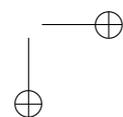
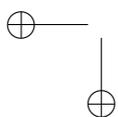


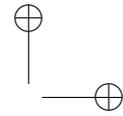
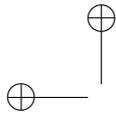


BEAUTY AND OBESITY

WEIGHT PROBLEM BOTHERS DIONNES; QUINTUPLETS ARE
GOING ON A DIET – Headline in the *New York Times*.

Poor, plump, inhibited Five,
Unhappy Quintses.
Scarcely a female anywhere alive
But counts her luncheon calories and winces,
Reading what's said of you
And brooding on the fate that lies ahead of you.
Alas, the waist that strains the bib and tucker,
The lovely bread that's buttered over par!
Alas, the bonbon and the all-day sucker!
Alas, the cookie jar!
Now 'tis the daily dozen you give up to,
And bending from the hips,
Since it's decreed that childish lines live up to
The faces that have launched a thousand quips.
Well, better dry your tears and comb your curls,
And learn it early, girls.
The scales were never any woman's friends.
These trials are but a sample.
There's a divinity that shapes our ends
Not wisely but too ample,
And the one thing a lady cannot do
Is eat her cake and have her figger too.

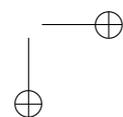
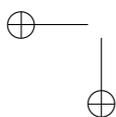


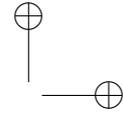
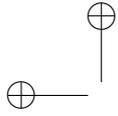


SURCEASE AT THE HAIRDRESSER'S

Though cinemas I seldom haunt
Or on the talkies spend my forces,
As keen as any debutante
I chart their starry courses.
As well as Miss Louella Parsons
I know the Goddards and the Garsons,
Their fame, their fancies, and their faces –
Who sat with Hedy at the races,
How platinum girl met golden boy,
Who lately wedded Myrna Loy,
What salaries drooped and whose went higher.
For once a week beneath a drier
I gulp the Pierian waters pure
Of beauty-salon Literature.

Now, dentists' offices have hosts
Of *Collier's*, *Journal of Ideas*,
And doctors rally to their *Posts*
Or *Esquires* or *Hygeias*.
There's many an anteroom that trafficks
In *Harpers*, *Vogues*, or *Geographics*,
While teeming *Life* lies everywhere,
Complete with photographs of Clare.
But in the moist, sweet-scented haven
Where Mr. Robert puts my wave in,
No stuff so thin, no fare so mortal,

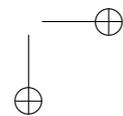
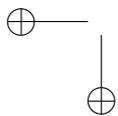


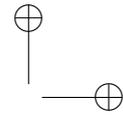
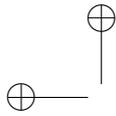


Dare pass that consecrated portal.
There Lovely Letters always means
The motion-picture magazines.

Weekly I drain the ultimate dregs
Of revelations superhuman:
How Shearer likes her breakfast eggs,
What Cagney thinks of Woman.
With what a racing pulse I peep on
The bed Joan Bennett falls to sleep on,
Or hear the excruciating sally
Made by Bob Hope to Rudy Vallée.
While Elsie does my manicure
I learn the foibles of Lamour,
When summer sportsmen strive and pant,
What garb is worn by Cary Grant,
Which marriages are ripe for Reno,
And who squired whom to what casino.

There Thought's a pastime for a dullard.
There Love and War come Technicolored,
While News is what, on trembling wire,
Flies hot from Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.
So when my world seems crumbling dust
And all its mirth, by carking care, done,
I think of Robert's, and I just
Go down and get my hair done.





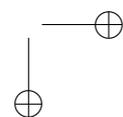
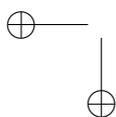
DEATH WITH SOUND EFFECTS

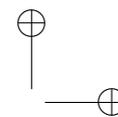
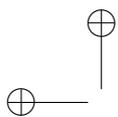
VERSES COMPOSED UPON HEARING THAT SCIENTISTS ARE
RECORDING THE MATING CALLS OF MOSQUITOES AND PLAN
TO USE THEM TO LURE THE INSECTS TO THEIR DOWNFALL.

When summer's warm upon the breeze
And evening shrouds the glens,
Oh, pity poor Anopheles
And Culex Pipiens,
Whom Science, on deliberate vote,
Has destined for a *Liebestod*.

The mists will fall, the moon will rise,
Darkness the daylight veto.
Then forward to his strange demise
Will race the blithe mosquito,
Antennae turned to catch the tender
Accents of the female gender.

From duty will he turn away
To bear an ardent torch.
He'll leave his work and leave his play
On patio or porch,
Desert the foray intramural,
The city roof, the terrace rural,
The chosen grasses, moist and deep,
The chamber dedicate to sleep,

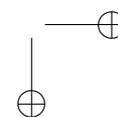
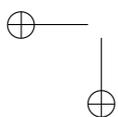


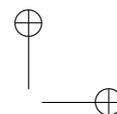
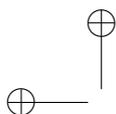


The bright, the unscreened living room,
And hurry off to meet his doom –
Yea, quit, no matter how it rankles,
His job on easy arms and ankles.

Foregoing much, forgetting all,
Save love or matrimony,
He'll fly – to find that mating call
A trick, a trap, a phony,
And come to grief with no defense,
The victim of his sentiments.

For thus, weighed down by nature's fetters,
The lower orders ape their betters.



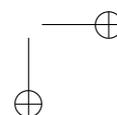
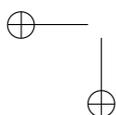


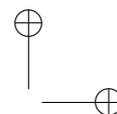
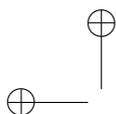
**THIS ONE'S ABOUT TWO IRISHMEN;
OR, OLIVER AMES IS A RACONTEUR**

When meekly to Judgment I come,
 When marital virtues are passed on,
For comfort I'll cling to a crumb,
 One noble attainment stand fast on.
Though manifold duties remiss in,
 Addicted to phoning my folks,
I think that They'll have to put *this* in:
 I giggled at Oliver's jokes.

*The new ones, the old ones,
 The couldn't-be-sillier;
The pure and the bold ones;
 The grimly familiar;
The dialect stories
 In dubious brogue;
Entire repertories
 Some months out of vogue;
The puns; the inventions –
 Whatever their worth,
At merest of mentions
 Convulsed me with mirth.*

My prowess with thimble and thread,
 Inadequate doubtless They'll judge it.
From kitchen encounters I fled.
 I wasn't much good with a budget.

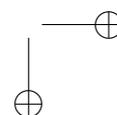
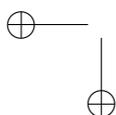


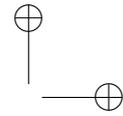
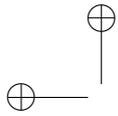


That vain was my nature and idle,
I'll likely be forced to admit.
But Oliver, stanch at my side'll
Recall how I relished his wit.

*How raptly I harked to
Each lengthy relation
Of what he remarked to
The boys at the station.
Will tell how I nodded
Not once at a jest,
But bravely applauded
The worst with the best,
No one of the crop, sir,
So whiskered and hoar
I ever cried, "Stop, sir,
I've heard that before."*

Let wives who are clever with bills
Or versed in the pot and the kettle,
Deride me. I scoff at their skills,
Convinced of superior mettle.
Yes, let them go ruffle a curtain
Or trim their ineffable toques.
This marriage is solid and certain.
I chuckle at Oliver's jokes.





LENDING LIBRARY

Between the valentines and birthday greetings

With comical verses, midway of the aisle,

Here is a rendezvous, a place of meetings.

Foregathers here the lady bibliophile.

A dollar down has bought her membership

In this sorority. For three cents daily

Per paper-jacketed volume she can dip

Deep in Lloyd Douglas or Miss Temple Bailey,

Lug home the current choices of the Guild

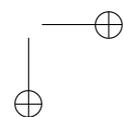
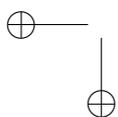
(Commended by the press to flourish of trumpets),

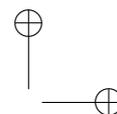
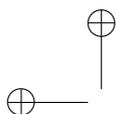
Or rent a costume piece adroitly filled

With goings on of Restoration strumpets –

And thus, well-read, join in without arrears

The literary prattle of her peers.



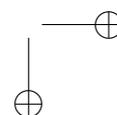
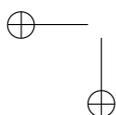


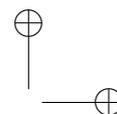
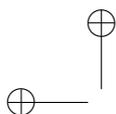
THE GREAT ENIGMA

I hear that Mr. Snyder now,
Who sits in office, stately,
Has many a wrinkle in his brow
Which was not there till lately,
From wondering how to solve aright
This problem on his docket:
The money that is burning bright
In everybody's pocket.
But though it's money, plain enough,
That turns inflation's key,
What happens to the pretty stuff
Before it gets to me?

*The money, the money,
It's surely very funny
What happens to the money
Before it reaches me.*

Now everyone is getting rich –
The infant and his elder,
The digger in the union ditch,
The merchant and the welder.
The miner climbs a golden ground,
The jack a golden steeple,
But I don't seem to get around
Among the proper people.

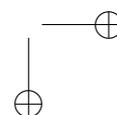
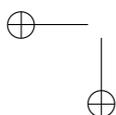


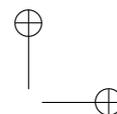
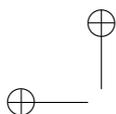


For faithful as the wolf who howls
 Along this private sector,
Beside my door, incessant, prowls
 The income-tax collector.
My salary dwindles when it's due,
 Exploding like a comet,
And every day there's something new
 To be deducted from it.

So let each bureaucratic gent
 Improve the shining hour
Inventing plans to circumvent
 The nation's buying power,
And let him study in his cell
 How best to prick the bubble,
But as for me, he might as well
 Just save himself the trouble.
For farmers live on clotted cream,
 Machinists draw their pay,
But something dams the flowing stream
 Before it comes my way.

*The money, the money,
That makes existence sunny!
What happens to the money
Before it comes my way?*





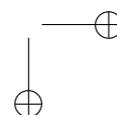
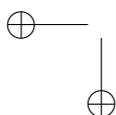
THE TOWN THAT TRIES MEN'S SOULS

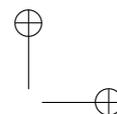
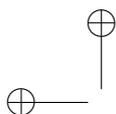
PHILADELPHIA – *The Fairmount Park Commission refused permission today for a statue of Tom Paine to be erected in the park on the ground that “his writings indicated that he was an atheist.”* – News item in the *New York Times*.

I give you the City of Brotherly Love,
The home of the Blue Law, the haunt of the Dove,
Where the Liberty Bell in a showcase resides,
With dents in the clapper and cracks in the sides.
There Sunday's reserved for the spirit that droops,
There all of the houses have similar stoops,
And there on the greensward no hero may perch
Who didn't belong to an orthodox church.

For Philadelphia,
Philadelphia,
Has Standards to maintain,
And they wouldn't care
To pollute the Square
With a statue of Th-m-s Pa-ne.

Ah, think of the gossip and think of the scandal
To bell and to book and municipal candle!
Consider the shock to a village so cloistered,
Whose train is the Pennsy, whose taverns are oystered.
The cricket clubs shiver, the Main Line is trembly,



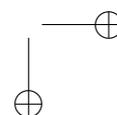
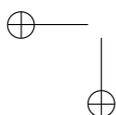


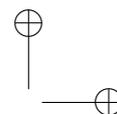
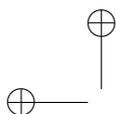
While debutantes pale at the gilded Assembly
Lest Thomas the Doubter and Thomas the Dark
Should dare to invade a respectable park.

O Philadelphia,
Philadelphia,
Her virtue is pearled and rubious,
And she swerves no jot
For a patriot
With background a trifle dubious.

For Tom might star on historical lists,
But he didn't confide in the Calvinists;
He wasn't a Baptist, he wasn't a Shaker,
He certainly wasn't an affluent Quaker.
Doubtless his sentiments pleased the Lord,
But he never sat on a vestry board;
He seldom quoted from Chapter and Verse,
He didn't sprinkle, he didn't immerse.
His words were food for a hungry nation,
But where's the letter from his congregation?

We mustn't encourage his like again
In the city founded by William Penn.





TORTURE IN THE SECOND ACT

BUSINESS: SONYA LIGHTS A CIGARETTE

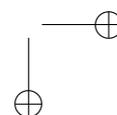
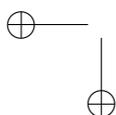
The curtain's up. The villain, hell-bound,
Has sworn he'll foil Llewellyn yet,
And I sit panting, rapt and spellbound,
Till *Sonya lights a cigarette.*

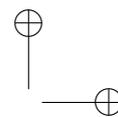
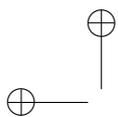
With gesture insolent or artless
She takes a package from her muff
And – beautiful as she is heartless –
Exhales a predatory puff.

She blows a circle toward the ceiling.
She flicks her ashes in the fire,
While I, with all my senses reeling,
Grow weak and dizzy with desire.

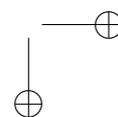
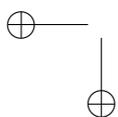
Vanished the magic of the show is.
My yearning breath forgets to bate.
Trapped in the darkness, all I know is
That I must smoke or perish straight.

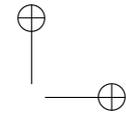
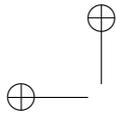
As brooklets are the hart's ambition
And home the wistful prisoner's thought,
I pray aloud for Intermission,
And lose the final thread of plot,





Vowing that, free from rules or strictures,
Henceforward I shall take my ease
At Palaces of Motion Pictures,
Where, snug in smoky balconies,
I'll sit in debonair delight there
With ammunition in my bag,
And when an actress strikes a light there,
I'll match her neatly, fag for fag.





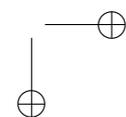
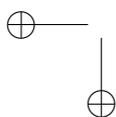
MAKE MINE GRAND RAPIDS

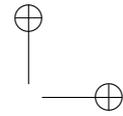
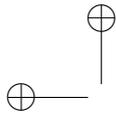
DECISION REACHED AFTER SURVEYING THE SURREALIST VICTORIAN
IN OUR FURNITURE DEPARTMENTS

Victoria was a potentate
Impeccable and stuffy.
She liked her repartee sedate,
She liked her comforts fluffy.
But pity old Victoria –
Her cheek must flush with shame
To see the decorating sins
Committed in her name.

Lord & Taylor, Bloomingdale,
Veil the horrid scene.
What is this you're doing to a poor, dead queen?
How her ghost must shudder, her haughty spirit shrink
From curly-legged consoles
Painted Schiaparelli pink!

There never was on sea or land,
Or sponsored by Disraeli,
So monstrous an umbrella stand
As this one colored gaily,
While Dickens, no, nor Thackeray,
A whatnot never knew
With such a bric-a-brac array
Or striped so powder blue.

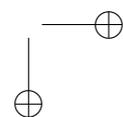
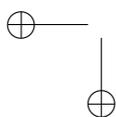


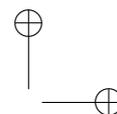
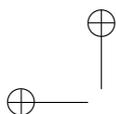


Everything's bewitched here.
Nothing keeps its labels.
See the highborn hatracks, now, turned to dressing tables,
Wardrobes into radios, urns into lamps,
And into clever flowerpots
Those cuspidors of Gramp's.

Altman, hide your guilty brow.
Dignity's a mock tale.
Watch the solemn washstand, now,
Serving forth a cocktail.
Beds, how wildly clad they are,
Chairs 'neath chintzes faint,
How mad and bad and plaid they are,
And, God, how they are quaint!

Lushly, plushly,
An era's on display.
But take, oh R. H. Macy, these curlicues away.
Merchants, send these gauds back,
These fearful ends and odds back,
The tin things, the tôle things,
The hardly ever whole things,
The glued-together-thinly stuff,
The awful late-McKinley stuff,
The marbleized, the panic,
The dread decalcomaniac.
I'm tired of things dramatic
Converted from an attic,
Of cherubs on the mantels,
Of clocks that seldom tick.
Let's all go back to Mission, while you make your peace with Vic.

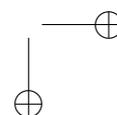
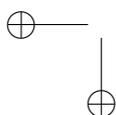


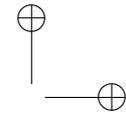
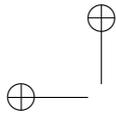


VILLAGE SPA

By scribbled names on walls, by telephone number,
Cleft heart, bold slogan, carved in every booth,
This sanctum shall be known. This holy lumber
Proclaims a temple dedicate to Youth.
Daily in garments lawful to their tribe,
In moccasins and sweaters, come the Exalted
To lean on spotty counters and imbibe
Their ritual cokes or drink a chocolate malted.

This refuge is their own. Here the cracked voice,
Giving the secret passwords, does not falter.
And here the monstrous deity of their choice
Sits bellowing from his fantastic altar,
A Juke-Box God, enshrined and well at home,
Dreadful with neon, shuddering with chrome.

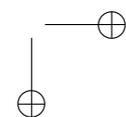
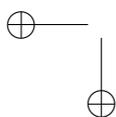


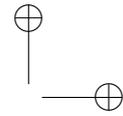
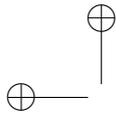


PATTERN FOR REFORMERS

I know a modest hero
More valiant than the rest,
Who never felled a Zero
Or charged a sniper's nest.
No ribboned medals weigh him
Immoderately down,
But cheerfully I pay him
This tribute of renown.
From Nome to the Equator
Let lesser men salute him.
He doesn't tip the waiter
If the waiting doesn't suit him.

A lad of stanch opinion,
Inviolable and rare,
He dares to snub that minion
Who hides the bill of fare,
Who leaves him sitting rigid,
Lean, famished, and forgot,
Or brings the hot things frigid
Or brings the cold things hot,
Makes off with knife and napery,
Serves soup by rule of thumb,
And for this sullen japery
Expects a tidy sum.

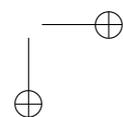
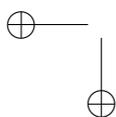


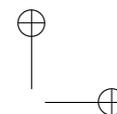
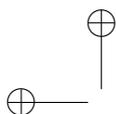


Ah, valor's very scion, he!
A fellow of aplomb!
For braver than a lion, he
Ignores the itching palm.
On desultory porters
Or bellhops slower still,
He seldom squanders quarters
Or wastes the verdant bill.
No flunky's frown can freeze him,
Nor curling of the lip,
If haircuts do not please him,
The barbers get no tip.

Through perils dark and divers
His courage never cracks.
He faces down the drivers
Of falsely metered hacks.
Embarked on paths of pleasure
In night clubs where he's at,
He pays no princely treasure
For ransoming his hat;
While, though alluring mam'selles
Fetch willing cigarettes,
He simply thanks the damsels
And keeps the change he gets.

He's a prophet, he's a hero; may his virtue be extolled.
And I wouldn't go around with him for anybody's gold.





THE VELVET HAND

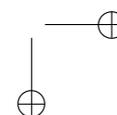
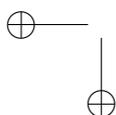
I call that parent rash and wild
Who'd reason with a six-year child,
Believing little twigs are bent
By calm, considered argument.

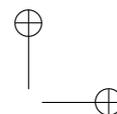
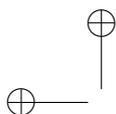
In bandying words with progeny
There's no percentage I can see,
And people who, imprudent, do so,
Will wonder how their troubles grew so.

Now underneath this tranquil roof
Where sounder theories have their proof,
Our life is sweet, our infants happy.
In quietude dwell Mom and Pappy.

We've sworn a stern, parental vow
That argument we won't allow.
Brooking no juvenile excess here,
We say a simple No or Yes, here,

And then, when childish wails begin
We don't debate.
We just give in.



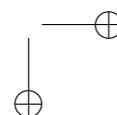
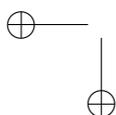


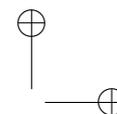
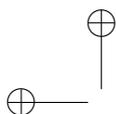
TIGER, TIGER

Verses composed upon hearing that the Association for Childhood Education, as well as other groups, was calling Little Black Sambo an “undesirable book,” because “it disseminates racial and religious prejudices.”

Little Black Sambo, mind your cues;
Behave like a wary fella.
Hold on tight to those purple shoes,
That beautiful green umbrella.
Better be careful, better not bungle,
Strolling soft through this civilized jungle.
Branches bow
And the grass is hollowed.
Don't look now
But I think you're followed.
Something's after you, angrier far
Than even your fabulous tigers are –
A striped thing with a public cry
And a hot, fanatical tiger eye,
That lives in bluster and dwells in storm.
And one of its names is called Reform.

Oh, one of its names's Self-Righteousness.
It feeds on the flesh of rumor
And quite makes up in its zeal, I guess,
What it lacks in a sense of humor.

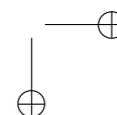
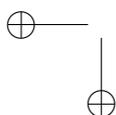


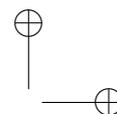
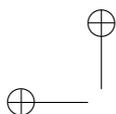


Loose in the world, it prowls and pants,
Terming intolerance Tolerance,
Or out of its lair
 Comes daily tumbling
To fill the air
 With enormous rumbling.
So listen, listen, Little Black Sambo.
Take it hastily on the lam, bo.
Whiten your dark, endearing face.
Hide in the bush, deny your race.
For that which formerly hunted witches
Bays on the trail of your sky-blue britches.

Hit for shelter, but as you do so,
Shout a warning to Robinson Crusoe.
Bid him tidy
 The footprints, straight,
Or Good Man Frid'y
 Will share your fate.
Close the covers on Mr. Kipling,
Calling to Mowgli, the sunburnt stripling.
Snatch the palm
 (May the Lord redeem us!)

From Uncle Tom
 And from Uncle Remus,
Epaminondas, and, just to be sure,
Maybe Othello, the noble Moor.
The peril stalks.
 It will soon have treed' em.
For though it walks
 In the clothes of freedom
And wears a bright, respectable name,
It's a full-grown tiger just the same.





LADY SELECTING HER CHRISTMAS CARDS

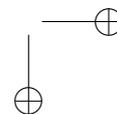
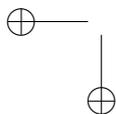
Fastidiously, with gloved and careful fingers,
Through the marked samples she pursues her search.
Which shall it be: the snowscape's wintry languors
Complete with church,

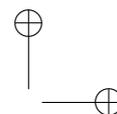
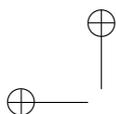
An urban skyline, children sweetly pretty
Sledding downhill, the chaste, ubiquitous wreath,
Schooner or candle or the simple Scottie
With verses underneath?

Perhaps it might be better to emblazon
With words alone the stiff, punctilious square.
(Oh, not Victorian, certainly. This season
One meets it everywhere.)

She has a duty proper to the weather –
A Birth she must announce, a rumor to spread,
Wherefore the very spheres once sang together
And a star shone overhead.

Here are the Tidings which the shepherds panted
One to another, kneeling by their flocks.
And they will bear her name (engraved, not printed),
Ten-fifty for the box.





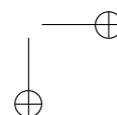
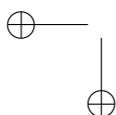
WARNING TO A SUSPICIOUS CHARACTER

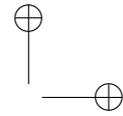
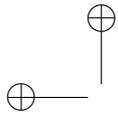
The Santa Claus myth has lived too long, declares Professor Ivan E. McDougle of Goucher College, in Baltimore. Parents, he suggests, should substitute democratic philosophy. – News item.

Away, old man! Be off! Vamoose,
You legend plump and Dutch, you!
The hounds of fact are on the loose
And by the whiskers clutch you.
Subversive, false, and full of guile,
Shows forth that too-benevolent smile,
That nose which glows as red as cherry can.
Saint Nicholas, you are un-American.

Too long (so run our current thoughts)
Your stale regime has flourished.
Too long the unsuspecting tots,
On propaganda nourished
(Dazzled by dreams of tinsel mornings,
Undone by promises and warnings,
By bribes, by threats, by bells that jingle),
Have cast a solid vote for Kringle.

For lollipop and sugar plum,
For fire engine that rolls out,
For scooter, for a noisy drum,
They've sold their tender souls out.

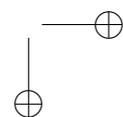
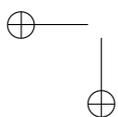


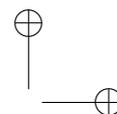
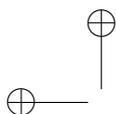


In most undemocratic manner
Yearly they've heiled your hollied banner,
Till, land to land and isle to isthmus,
Nothing remains but Total Christmas.

So scat, attenuated hoax,
 As quick as you are able.
And if it seems the little folks
 Grow wistful for the fable,
Their childish minds we shall regale
With some political fairy tale,
Some social credo fairly comic,
Or ism, plain or economic.

And thus shall burgeon every youth,
Clear-eyed and stalwart for the truth,
Emancipated to the core –
Or so they say in Baltimore.





THE COSMIC VIEWPOINT

Famous characters in The Comic Weekly, such as Jiggs & Maggie, Blondie, Toots & Casper, Popeye, and the Katzenjammers, depict life as it is – Advertisement in The New Yorker for Puck, The Comic Weekly.

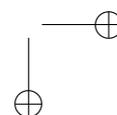
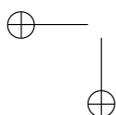
Life is a shrew's voice, loudly shrilling.
Life is a cops-and-robbers race.
Life is a pie with custard filling,
Flung in the face.

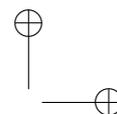
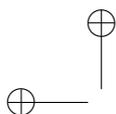
Life is firecrackers under the chair.
Life is the shoe with a lighted match in,
The string festooning a cellar stair
For the foot to catch in.

Life is Popeye and Donald Duck,
And a mother-in-law to be answered meekly
(At least in the lexicon of *Puck*,
The Comic Weekly)

Here on this daft, revolving star,
Bleak as Avernus is, but madder,
Life, says *Puck*, is a trick cigar
And a swaying ladder.

The print is blurred and the type is lino,
The verisimilitude is slight.
But one thought lingers: For all that *I* know,
Maybe they're right.

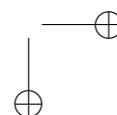
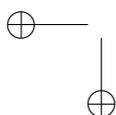


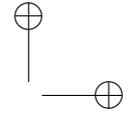
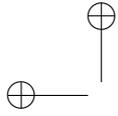


**ADVICE TO A YOUNG PERSON
ABOUT TO WRITE A BOOK
WITH NO EQUIPMENT OTHER THAN TALENT**

Anachronistic stripling,
If you would see your name
In living letters rippling
Across the scroll of fame,
Then shun those regions airy
Where geniuses are made,
Lay down the dictionary,
And learn another trade.
For not among the dwellers
On bleak Parnassian heights
Are born the sleek best-sellers
Complete with movie rights.

Fatuous boy, to art apprenticed,
Leave your Muse and be a dentist,
Be an actor, be a hooper,
Welder, architect, or roofer.
Chart the heavens' starry courses,
Ride the rails or play the horses.
Have a hobby, keep a pet,
Photograph the Soviet.
Build a dam or paint a steeple,
Or just know a lot of people



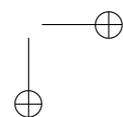
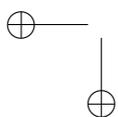


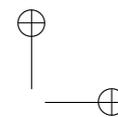
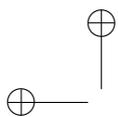
And with anecdote and hint
Scandalize them well in print.
Then what radiance will flash off
From the volume that you dash off!

His royalties are slighter,
And meagre grow the bays
For any simple writer
Who loves the polished phrase.
He gives his strict attention
To Character and Style,
And lands in "Briefer Mention"
And ends on Liggett's aisle.
But scrivening physicians
Or raconteurs in pubs
Recount their twelve editions
For Book-and-Author Clubs.

Therefore, stripling, if you choose
To acquire the best reviews,
Join the circus, buy a dairy,
Be an expert military,
Be a captain on a liner,
Lawyer, preacher, dress-designer,
Rich man, poor man, beggar, thief,
Someone lately on relief,
Dodger, weary of the bat,
Reminiscent diplomat.
But the best of all to be
Is some sort of refugee.
Then, with contracts tailored to you
How the publishers will woo you.

Art, lad, is an eccentricity,
But sweet are the uses of publicity.

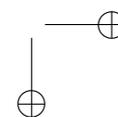
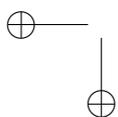


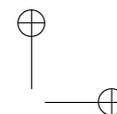
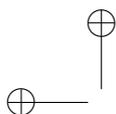


SUBURBAN NEWSPAPER

Headlines, a little smudged, spell out the stories
That stir the Friday village to its roots:
TOWN COUNCIL MEETS FOR MAY, MISS BABCOCK MARRIES,
SHORE CLUB TO PASS ON TOPLESS BATHING SUITS.
While elsewhere thunders roll or atoms shiver
Or ultimate tyrants into dust are hurled,
Weekly small boys on bicycles deliver
News to our doors of this more innocent world –

A capsule universe of church bazaars
Where even the cross-stitched aprons sell on chances,
Of brush fires, births, receptions, soda bars,
Memorial Day parades and high-school dances,
And (though on various brinks the planet teeters)
Of fierce disputes concerned with parking meters.



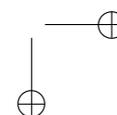
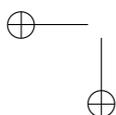


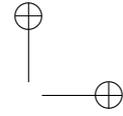
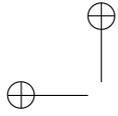
WHAT TO DO AFTER THE DOCTOR LEAVES

You're finished now
With the aching brow?
 The fever and fog you win through?
And you're looking for'd
To your just reward
 Describing the trials you've been through?
Well, gulp your tonic and swallow your pill
 Till health is a waxing crescent.
But shut your doors on Amelia Brill,
 The Scourge of the Convalescent.

For Amelia Brill is a medical wonder.
She'll match your woes and she'll steal your thunder.
Whatever the symptoms that you rehearse,
She's had them all,
And she's had them worse.
Maladies rare have filled her cup.
If half your relatives gave you up,
Her shave was narrower still, and closer.
It took ten doctors
To diagnose her.

Perhaps your ailment is strictly dental.
Your anguish, my love, was elemental.
You should have seen how her wisdoms acted.
Four of them, dear,



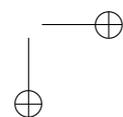
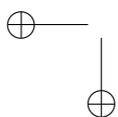


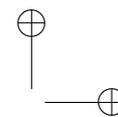
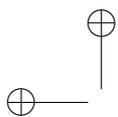
And all impacted.
Your blood count shrinking?
 Oh dear, Oh dear, Oh,
How hers went sinking
 Right down to zero!
And you call that grippe? Why, you couldn't be serious.
With grippe, Amelia was quite delirious.

Name her the poison you toss and groan with.
She has some virus
To hold her own with.

Yes, she can double
Your dearest trouble,
 And cap you on matters clinical.
But I've put thought
On a little plot
 To topple her from her pinnacle.
When next I lie on my bed of ill,
 Surrounded by germs and glory,
I'm going to foil Amelia Brill,
 The Queen of the Bedside Story.

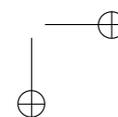
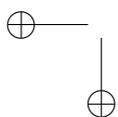
She can bring me roses, she can bring me freesia.
But she can't compete with a case of amnesia.

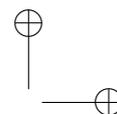
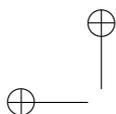




REPORT ON A SITUATION

Tears at midnight
 Stain the pillow
Tears at morning
 Puff the eye.
Twilight tears are
 Brief and shallow –
Easy-summoned,
 Quick to dry.
Saltier sting those tears, they say,
 Never shed by night or day.





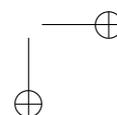
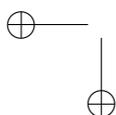
OPEN LETTER TO BERNARD DE VOTO

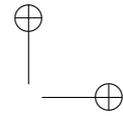
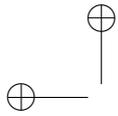
WHO, IN "THE LITERARY FALLACY," SCOLDS THE WRITERS
OF THE NINETEEN-TWENTIES FOR THEIR PESSIMISM.

Oh, once our House with plenties
Was fabulously deckt
(And that was in the twenties,
As you must recollect).
Then every couch seemed fluffy,
Then died the winds of doubt,
And some folks thought it stuffy,
And some folks wanted out.

They laughed at the draft that others sneeze in.
They opened the windows and let the breeze in.
It jarred the doors that were shut from habit.
It blew up Main Street and blew down Babbitt.
It called the maids and the men to play
In an earnest sort of a Hemingway.
It swept the cupboards of old deposits.
It rattled the skeletons hiding in closets.
And you must admit that from where we stood,
That air, though chilly, felt fresh and good.

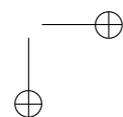
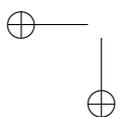
But now, amid the welter
Of storm and hurricane,

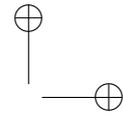
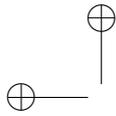




Once more we seek a shelter
And close the battered pane.
We huddle round the fire now,
We sip the warming cup,
And piously aspire now
To count our blessings up.

We count our blessings, we pray and mutter.
We praise the lock and we press the shutter.
Admire how the walls are weatherproof,
And point with pride to our sturdy roof.
This do we now, with rhyme and reason –
It suits the climate, becomes the season.
But Mr. DeVoto, your words are stinging.
Why blame the boys for that old Spring Cleaning?
Perhaps the House, on its firm foundation,
Smells all the sweeter for ventilation.



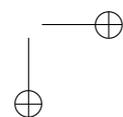
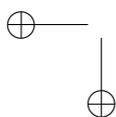


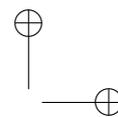
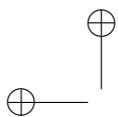
A MODEL FOR MUDDLERS

GENERAL TWADDLE BLAMES "POLITICAL PRESSURE" FOR
KEEPING POSTS OF LITTLE MILITARY VALUE – Headline in
the *New York Times*.

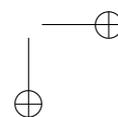
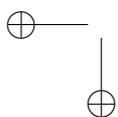
Said General Twaddle,
And nodded his noddle,
"Toward ruin
We toddle;
We huddle
On Brinks.
With useless and raddled
Cantonments we're saddled,
While lawmakers, addled,
Play tiddle-
De-winks.

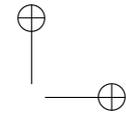
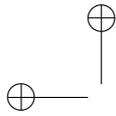
"Though poor Yankee Doodle's
Hell-bent for the poodles,
Like Nero
They fiddle,
When Rome
Was aflame.
Red ruin they coddle,"
Fumed General Twaddle,
"Yet idle,
We dawdle.
I call it a shame.





“Quick! Out of this muddle
Whose riddles befuddle,
Or, kit and caboodle,
In peril
We’ll be.
While congressmen diddle,
Our thumbs must we twiddle?”
Cried Twaddle.
“Pish, piddle,
And fiddle-
De-dee!”



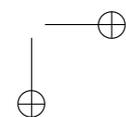
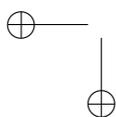


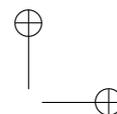
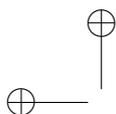
LITANY FOR THE UNORGANIZED

I want to belong to a Union
And own a Union card
With time and half for overtime
And benefits by the yard,
With a Union pin for my coat lapel
And a Union scale of pay.
For the garrulous names of the A. F. of L.
Keep haunting me night and day.

Do I hear a rousing welcome from the laborers of the nation?
International Union of United Brewery, Cereal & Soft Drink
Workers of America, are you with me to a man?
Will you have me for a member, Roofers, Damp & Waterproof
Workers' Association?
Or you, Union of Journeyman Horseshoers of United States
& Can.?

From scholarly toil
By the midnight oil,
I droop with dull fatigue.
So I long to join an Alliance
Or anyhow a League,
Where Mr. Dubinsky and Mr. Green
Will sign my Union ticket,
And all for the good
Of a Brotherhood
Can show me how to picket.





I yearn to mate (platonically) with the Masters, Mates & Pilots.

Union of Egg Inspectors, grow old along with me.

Or come, Searfarers' Union, and cast your lots with my lots,
And we'll get investigated in the columns of Westbrook P.

Before my years turn colder

And the days toward darkness press,

Oh, give me the card of a Molder

Or a Special Delivery Mess.!

For the dues they weigh in my pocket,

Ambition burns like flame,

And I want to dwell

In the A. F. of L.

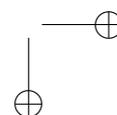
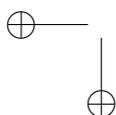
And wear a Union name.

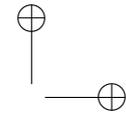
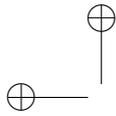
Sheepshearers of North America, think lengthily and well on me.

Union of Glass-Bottle Blowers, come give me your answer true,

For the sound of your teeming titles has cast a fatal spell on me.

International Association of Marble, Slate & Stone Polishers,
Rubbers & Sawyers, Tilers & Marble Setters, Helpers
& Terrazzo Helpers, I love you.





**THE SEVEN AGES
OF A NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIBER**

From infancy, from childhood's earliest caper,
He loved the daily paper.

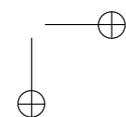
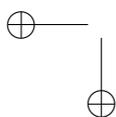
Propped on his grubby elbows, lying prone,
He took, at first, the Comics for his own.
Then, as he altered stature and his voice,
Sports were his single choice.

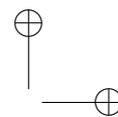
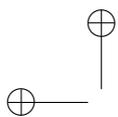
For a brief time, at twenty, Thought became
A desultory flame,
So with a critic eye he would peruse
The better Book Reviews.

Behold the bridegroom, then – the dazzled suitor
Turned grim commuter,
Learning without direction
To fold his paper to the Housing Section.

Forty enlarged his waistline with his wage.
The Business Page
Engrossed his mind. He liked to ponder well
The charted rise of Steel or Tel & Tel.

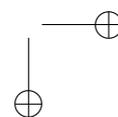
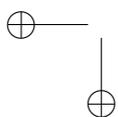
Choleric, pompous, and too often vext,
The fifties claimed him next.

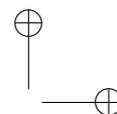
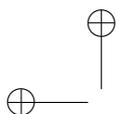




The Editorials, then, were what he scanned.
(Even, at times, he took his pen in hand.)

But witness how the human viewpoint varies:
Of late he reads the day's Obituaries.



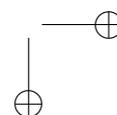
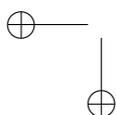


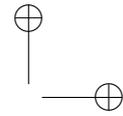
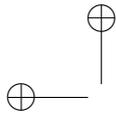
SONG FOR A PERSONAL PREJUDICE

January's bearable
In spite of bad report.
Though February's terrible,
It's short.
With snows in proper season,
Each burdens down the larch.
But March is full of treason,
And I hate March.

Hold your hats and duck, boys, March is nearly
due.
The sleet is on the windowpane, the slush is on
the shoe.
The pneumococcus carols a loud, triumphant
song,
And not a holiday's in sight the whole month
long.

On many a wedding present
In June my ducats fly.
The temperature's unpleasant
In July.
As August airs grow olden,
Hay fever's what I've got.
But any time seems golden
Compared to you-know-what.

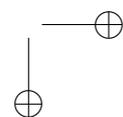
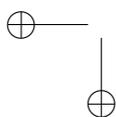


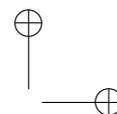
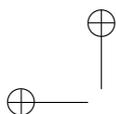


Pick your shovels up, lads, you'll never know
 reprieve,
For March is on the threshold with a blizzard up
 its sleeve,
With a pussy-willow fable that is feeble on its
 facts,
And a brand-new estimation of your extra income
 tax.

October leaves I rake with
 An ardor far from faint,
And April wettings take with-
 Out complaint.
Serene, in weather lawful,
 I shiver or I parch.
But March is merely awful.
 I can't stand March.

Away, that month despicable, those days of dread
 and doubt,
When the gale blows down the chimney and the
 oil is running out.
(Besides, I own a private cause to call the time
 accurst –
I'll have another birthday when it's March the
 twenty-first.)

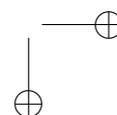
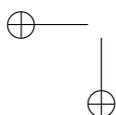


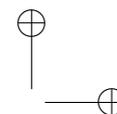
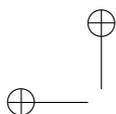


VOLUNTEER FIREMAN

Four strident whistles means the business section,
Two longs and a short, the Manor; three, the Park.
He knows the signals vaguely. With direction
He can unhook a ladder in the dark,
Rescue canaries, save a mattress whole
Or pass the cups of coffee laced with brandy.
No midnight blaze but finds him ready to roll,
Providing he's awake and the Buick handy.

Monthly he drills. But valor has its inning
That autumn night when by an annual route,
Helmeted, gloved, with all the torches shining,
He marches proudly in his crimson suit –
A boy of forty who has skimmed the cream
From childhood's first and most enduring dream.



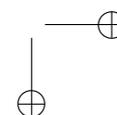
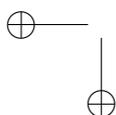


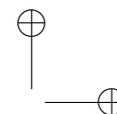
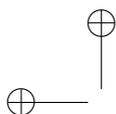
SONG FOR A NEW ERA

ON HEARING THAT THE MUNICIPAL STREETCAR LINES OF
SAN FRANCISCO HAVE STARTED COURTESY CLASSES FOR
EMPLOYEES

Embattled consumer,
For seasons oppressed,
Give ear to this rumor
That flies from the West.
Look well on this omen
And leap in the sun.
The day of the No-men,
Consumer, is done.
From pillar to post, now,
Their regiment flees,
For out on the Coast, now,
Conductors say "Please."

*Now men on the trolley
Grow civil and jolly,
Their "Thank you's" and "Pardon's" polite,
And all in a chorus they're chanting, sonorous,
"Remember the customer's right,
My lads,
The customer's finally right."*

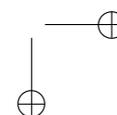
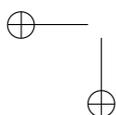


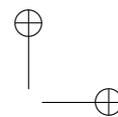
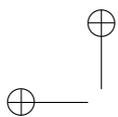


Nobody shouts, "Hey, there!"
But mild as a lamb
It's "Sir" that they say there,
Or possibly "Ma'am."
They give you directions
With tender accord,
At all intersections
They let you aboard.
On signal they stop now,
They heed the command,
And transfers they drop now
At once in your hand.

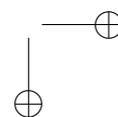
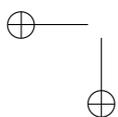
*The jovial driver
Loves changing a fiver
Or helping old ladies alight.
For this is the rule they are learning in school:
"Once more is the customer right,
My boys,
The customer's finally right."*

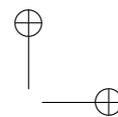
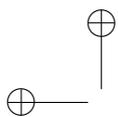
Let grocers, atremble,
Turn pale at the news.
Let milkmen dissemble
And shake in their shoes.
Let butcher and baker
And man-eating clerk
Go call on their Maker
And shudder at work,
While, blander than Crisco,
They practice to smile.
Conductors of Frisco
Are setting the style.





*Let waiters, aflutter,
Fetch rolls with the butter
And see that their manners are bright.
Though leftward the world may be currently hurled,
The customer's bound to be right,
Tra-la,
The customer's finally right.*



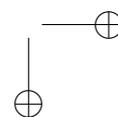
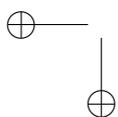


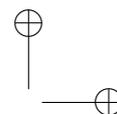
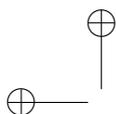
FUNERAL

Expensively, in white chrysanthemums,
He keeps a more than customary state,
While down the velvet aisle his partner comes,
Discreetly desolate.

The honorary bearers smooth their coats
And ascertain who their companions are.
A plump divine sonorously misquotes
The Crossing of the Bar.

Knees grope for cushions. Softly a bell tolls.
The organ plays a quite well-known selection.
And Bishop Botts fastidiously rolls
Each "r" in Resurrection.



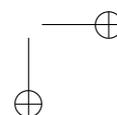
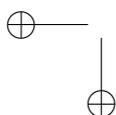


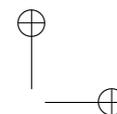
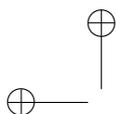
PLEA IN A CHILDREN'S BOOKSHOP

Do you have a book for a literate girl
Who's six years old tomorrow?
A book to be read when it's time for bed
And hidden from those who borrow?
She leans to the magic of just-suppose,
She's fond of a tale that's merry,
But she doesn't care how the story goes
Or whether it's true or fairy,
And she doesn't mind how the pictures look.
She'd blink at a price inflation,
So long as the book is a regular book
Instead of an Animation.

Sir or Madam, I beg you hop up.
Find her a volume that doesn't pop up,
Fold, make comical noises, bend,
Waggle, or wiggle, or stand on end –
Something not so up-to-the-minute,
That isn't sold with a record in it
Or a chime that rings if your fingers strike it.
It may be Art, but she doesn't like it.

Her eyes would glisten if she might listen
To Sinbad the Sailor's progress.
With sweet compliance she'd hear of giants,
Or ogres, or maybe an ogress.

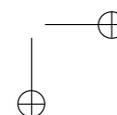
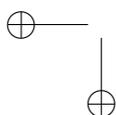


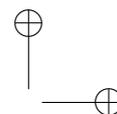
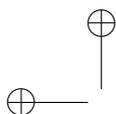


She'd like a dwarf of a proper size
Or a stepmother cruel and clever.
But she doesn't want them to roll their eyes,
Propelled by a paper lever.
Away with audible tigers, please,
And sheep (you can comb their wool out).
The lady's learning her A.B.C.'s
And she isn't amused by a Pull-out.

Seller of narratives juvenile,
Scan your counter and search your aisle.
Surely somewhere amid the welter
A book immobile is taking shelter
Whose pictured dragon, whose painted wizard
Wasn't designed to be stroked or scissored,
Pasted, colored, or strung with beading.
Haven't you anything meant for reading?

By the Boots of Puss, by the Captain's Hook,
I swore to buy her a just plain book,
For novelty stuff is tears and sorrow
When a girl's about to be six tomorrow.





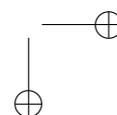
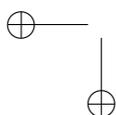
OUT OF THE MOUTHS —

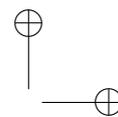
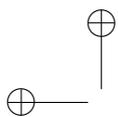
What man of ignorance undefiled
First praised the prattle of a child
Or called its stumbling accents gentle?
He was a fraud, and sentimental,
A chap whose promise I deplore —
A hermit or a bachelor.

No babes of my acquaintance speak
In syllables below a shriek.
This golden boy, this dimpled bouncer,
Studies to be a train announcer.
That rose-lipped girl with tress of flaxen
Outdoes, by any odds, the klaxon.

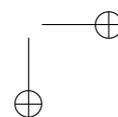
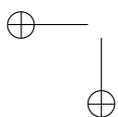
By roars and bellows each rejoices.
They tell their woes at the tops of their voices,
And in a shy, stentorian shout
They pant their young affections out.
In the bright lexicon of lispers
There's no such puerile word as "whispers."

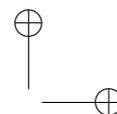
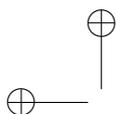
Calliopes chant soft and formally
Compared to tots conversing normally,
While in the wails of urchins crossed,
The riveter's refrain is lost.
Articulate, they come and go,
But never pianissimo.





I'll wager – coming to the heart of this –
That fellow mentioned at the start of this
Had no experience, even cursory,
With pretty babblings from a nursery,
Or his fine lines had died aborning
At seven o'clock some Sunday morning.





CONFESSIONS OF A RELUCTANT OPTIMIST

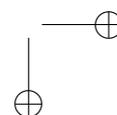
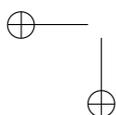
When flaming comrades I admire
 (And in whose breasts was ever coddled
Dissatisfaction's honest fire)
Argue how to their hearts' desire
 The universe should be remodeled –

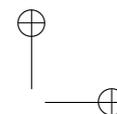
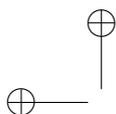
When of their wrongs they call the roll,
 Vowing that fortune is a hellion,
Shamefaced I sit, an outcast soul,
 Incapable of true rebellion.

For, though aware that life is what
 One ought to view with wrath and gravity,
I live delighted with my lot,
 Sunk in content as in depravity.

Less woman, I expect, than mouse,
 To alter fate I would not bother.
I like my plain suburban house.
 I like my children and their father.

I like my neighbors very well,
 Believe them kind, allege them witty.
I like the village where I dwell.
 I like commuting to the city.





At growing old I cannot rage.
If youth was maybe purest heaven,
Still, thirty-odd's a cozy age
And likely so is fifty-seven.

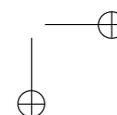
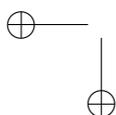
Quite able to believe the decks
Are stacked for females – much it boots me!
I would not willing change my sex.
It is the very sex which suits me.

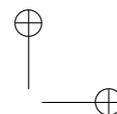
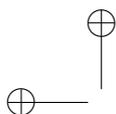
In fact, I find it hard to see
Exactly what I ought disparage.
I like my nationality,
I like my relatives-by-marriage.

The wings on which I meant to soar
Are clipped like any barnyard bidy,
And *that* perhaps I might deplore,
Except that flying makes me giddy.

Trapped, tricked, enslaved, but lacking sense
To enter in the conflict single,
I wear my chains like ornaments,
Convinced they make a charming jingle.

Alas, alack, how well I know
My kind's a drawback to the nation!
But here I am and here I go,
Contented with the status quo,
And quite beyond salvation.

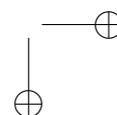
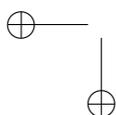


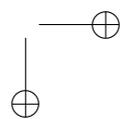
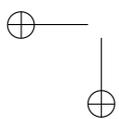
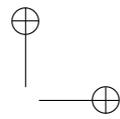
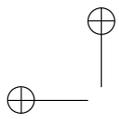


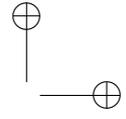
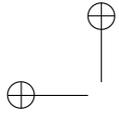
THE 5:32

She said, If tomorrow my world were torn in two,
Blacked out, dissolved, I think I would remember
(As if transfixed in unsundering amber)
This hour best of all the hours I knew:
When cars came backing into the shabby station,
Children scuffing the seats, and the women driving
With ribbons around their hair, and the trains arriving,
And the men getting off with tired but practiced motion.

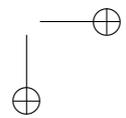
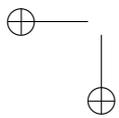
Yes, I would remember my life like this, she said:
Autumn, the platform red with Virginia creeper,
And a man coming toward me, smiling, the evening paper
Under his arm, and his hat pushed back on his head;
And wood smoke lying like haze on the quiet town,
And dinner waiting, and the sun not yet gone down.

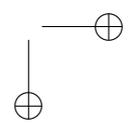
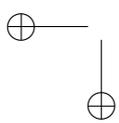
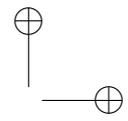
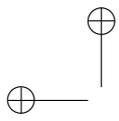


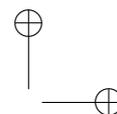
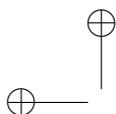




IT SEEMS LIKE YESTERDAY







THE PORTENTS

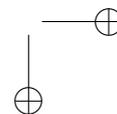
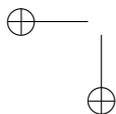
A new type of gas mask for U.S. civilians is being turned out in large quantities in this country. – News item in the New York Times.

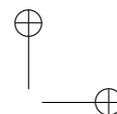
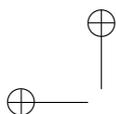
TRIAL BLACKOUT OF CITY IS STUDIED BY OFFICIALS – Headline in the *New York Times*.

By a cloud, by rings on the moon
Or a bough that casts no shadow,
By the snowflake falling at noon
In a shriveled meadow
Do the knowing eye and the reason
Predict the season.

So who can regard the least
Of these things with pulse untroubled?
The wind has veered to the east,
The fields are stubbled,
And the shrewd airs inform
Us of the storm.

Whose hands – not yours, not mine –
Shall hold the floods in tether?
We have seen the cloud and the sign,
But we cannot stay the weather.
Run to your house. Pull fast
Your shutters on the blast.
Though there is no safety there,
I think. Nor anywhere.



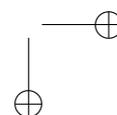
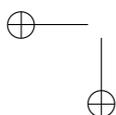


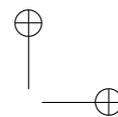
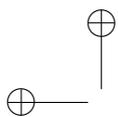
THE MIXTURE AS BEFORE

Summer is icumen in,
 Sound the sirens, light the torches,
Warn the roses to begin
 Climbing up suburban porches.
Let the laurel run like fire
 Over all the upland reaches
(But be wary of the wire,
 Barbed and bright, along the beaches).

Hark! The blithe, the morning bird,
 Early singing, stirs our slumber
Where the young man, undeterred,
 Waits upon his legal number.
Now the wren's unmortgaged nest
 Hugs our hospitable acre,
And the ski pole takes its rest
 With the rationed Studebaker.

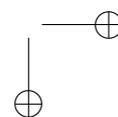
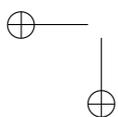
Now the sails of summer fill,
 Now the waves are all a-glimmer,
Though attentive at his drill
 Stands the lean and sunburnt swimmer.
Now the lilies swoon with sun,
 Now the cricket pipes the shadows
(And the anti-aircraft gun
 Crouches in astonished meadows).

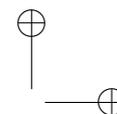
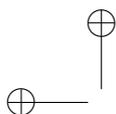




Here is June. So let the ice
 Tinkle in unsweetened glasses.
Fling the immemorial rice.
 Strew the picnic on the grasses.
Tell the chattering mind to hush
 For one soft, deceptive hour
While the berry fires the bush
 And the bee invades the flower,

Till in lupine-colored light
 Dusk dissolves, the stars are certain,
And the aromatic night
 Leans against the blackout curtain.





LANDSCAPE WITHOUT FIGURES

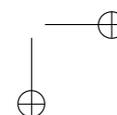
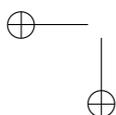
The shape of the summer has not changed at all.
There is no difference in the sky's rich color,
In texture of cloud or leaf or languid hill.
The fringed wave is no duller.

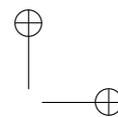
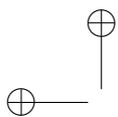
Even the look of this village does not change –
Shady and full of gardens and near the sea.
But something is lacking. Something sad and strange
Troubles the memory.

Where are they? – the boys, not children and not men,
In polo shirts or jeans or autographed blazers,
With voices suddenly deep, and proud on each chin
The mark of new razors.

They were workers or players, but always the town was theirs.
They wiped your windshield, they manned the parking
lots.
They delivered your groceries. They drove incredible cars
As if they were chariots.

They were lifeguards, self-conscious, with little whistles.
They owned the tennis courts and the Saturday dances.
They were barbarous-dark with sun. They were vain of their
muscles
And the girls' glances.

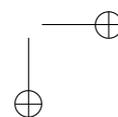
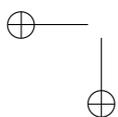


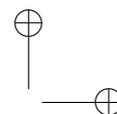
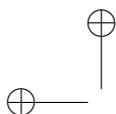


They boasted, and swam, and lounged at the drugstore's
portal.

They sailed their boats and carried new records down.
They never took thought but that they were immortal,
And neither did the town.

But now they are gone like leaves, like leaves in the fall,
Though the shape of the summer has not changed at all.





THE BREAD OF FRANCE

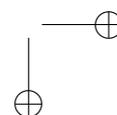
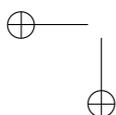
For giving a crust of bread to a beggar without payment, a baker of Chartres was fined 200 francs, and his shop closed for a month. – News item in the New York Times.

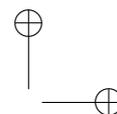
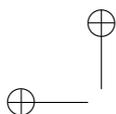
In the New Order, now, how stable
The world – and Justice how secure!
The dark loaf sits upon the table,
Safe from the hungry and the poor.

Now Charity's a felon's daughter.
Now he that asks receives a stone.
Cast but a crumb on any water
And for the sacrilege atone.

And if a man, in stubborn blindness,
Complain his share is dry as dust
Without the milk of human kindness
To moisten his immaculate crust,

Let him be humbler with his betters –
Present his coupons, bow his head,
Or learn to love by fines and fetters
The taste of this egregious bread.





SOLDIER ASLEEP

Soldier asleep, and stirring in your sleep,
In tent, trench, dugout, foxhole, or swampy slough,
I pray the Lord your rifle and soul to keep,
And your body, too,

From the hid sniper in the leafy tangle,
From shrapnel, from the barbed and merciless wire,
From tank, from bomb, from the booby trap in the jungle,
From water, from fire.

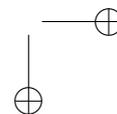
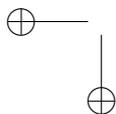
It was an evil wind that blew you hither,
Soldier, to this strange bed –
A tempest brewed from the world's malignant weather.

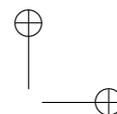
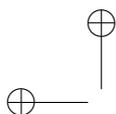
Safe may you sleep, instead,
Once more in the room with the pennants tacked on the
wall,

Or the room in the bachelor apartment, 17 L,
The club room, the furnished room across the hall,
The room in the cheap hotel,

The double-decker at home, the bench in the park,
The attic cot, the hammock under the willow,
Or the wide bed in the remembered dark
With the beloved's head beside you on the pillow.

Safe may the winds return you to the place
That, howsoever it was, was better than this.





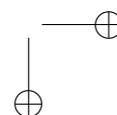
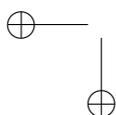
BALLAD OF SIMPLE CONFUSION

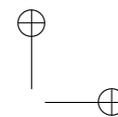
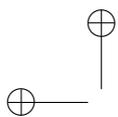
AFTER HAVING LOOKED OVER THE CROP OF BOOKS
ABOUT GERMANY AFTER THE WAR

Mares eat oats and does eat oats
And publishers munch clover,
And What'll We Do with Germany
When all the fuss is over?
What's to be done
With the conquered Hun
Whose sins are so enormous?
Like chattering birds,
Ten million words
Come winging to inform us.

From every critical mountain peak
The pundits ponder, the sages speak.
The expert thumps on his armchair's arm
And views a view of distinct alarm.
And some cry "Punish!" and some shout "Mercy!"
And some by turns are both vice and vercy,
And some to Versailles still trace the trouble
And most of the talk is faintly double.

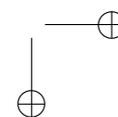
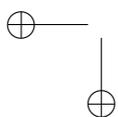
It's Let's Partition and off we go
With Lamzy divey and heigh-de-ho.
It's fire and sword for the Prussian scamps.

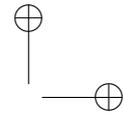
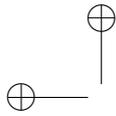




It's Propaganda, it's Labor Camps.
It's Occupation, and how endurable?
It's Germany Sick and Germany Curable.
It's Education, it's Bread and Cheese,
And a sound in my ears like the sound of bees.

Oh, Mairzy Doats and Dozy Doats
And what'll we do with Germany?
Well, here are tracts which envisage Facts
And here is a tome that's sermony.
From pole to pole
Do the presses roll,
The arguments fall like dew,
While prophet and seer
Make everything clear
With a Kiddley divey, too.



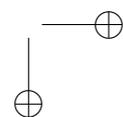
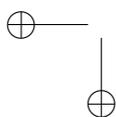


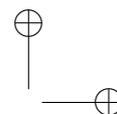
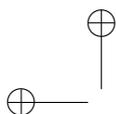
A READER'S-EYE VIEW OF THE WAR

Now sound the trumpets, beat the drums,
Let joy be open-handed,
For hail, the conquering hero comes,
His brow with garlands banded.
He bears the marks of battles proud,
Assorted honors grace him,
And who is first amid the crowd,
Most fervent to embrace him?

His wife? His sire? The children four
Whose features star his locket?
No, no! It is an Editor
With contracts in his pocket.
And who, more tender than a spouse,
His hand with rapture presses?
A scout, I think, from Random House
Or maybe S. & S.'s.

*Here come the valiant, here march the bold.
After them, Macmillan, e'er their deeds grow cold.
Home rolls the sailor, rescued from the brine;
Henry Holt will sign him on the signatory line.
Bring unholy ghosts, now, fetch the frantic quill.
The Publishers, the Publishers,
Are crouching for the kill.*

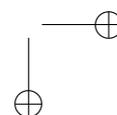
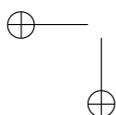


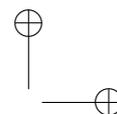
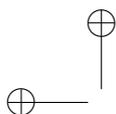


Upon some bloody field tonight
Men breast the flood infernal,
For God, for Country, for the Right,
And many a weekly journal.
No gunner at his smoking gun
Lays down that grim utensil
But Mr. Luce is on the run
To furnish him a pencil.

The castaway upon his raft
Is probably engrossed now,
Composing, neatly paragraphed,
His saga for the *Post* now,
While paratroopers turn a phrase
In perilous positions.
The paths of glory nowadays
Lead on to twelve editions.

*Back fly the bombardiers with medals on their hearts.
Read it all in Collier's, complete in seven parts.
Look will have the story with pictures underneath.
Uneasy lies the head, lads, that wears a laurel wreath.
Though you escape the bullet and live to see the day,
The Magazines, the Magazines,
Will have you for their prey.*





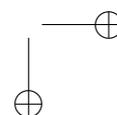
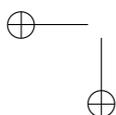
ADMONITION

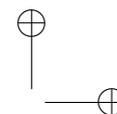
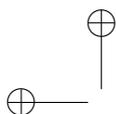
TO THE CHICAGO DAILY TIMES, WHICH IS ADVOCATING A ONE-DAY SMOKERS' FAST TO RELIEVE THE CIGARETTE SHORTAGE

O *Times*, O reckless journal,
O sheet unblest!
What is this mischief, this design infernal
That you suggest?
Let smokers for one dreary day and night
Absent themselves, you say, from all delight.
Then we might see the secret stores unlocked,
The Luckies back, the shelves with Camels stocked.
Perhaps. I merely tender this advice:
Consider the Price.

Consider a nation
Biting its nails and wrestling with temptation
For twenty-four desperate hours.
Think of the tempers poised on murder's brink,
Of men at morning fainting in their showers,
Or driven, at eve, to drink.

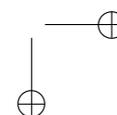
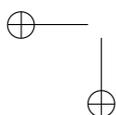
Think, think
Of the vast quarrels let loose, the evil forces,
The words across the tables, the divorces,
Tots scurrying from the path
Of strange parental wrath,

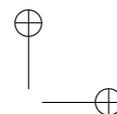
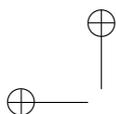




Bosses, for once unwary,
Firing the blond and guiltless secretary,
Collaborations coming to an end,
Friend bickering with friend,
The innocent delivered to the furies
Of untobaccoed juries,
Deals lost, wives beaten, relatives told off,
And all for lack of a carload and a cough.

Through the small haze which wreathes about me yet
(From what now passes for a cigarette),
I conjure up the horrors of that day,
And, gentlemen, I say,
Resign your scheme. Quick, take your project back.
Better the lack,
The scramble, the shortage, the barley-flavored brand
Than anarchy across this smiling land.
Better, I cry, a bottleneck met head on
Than Armageddon.



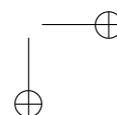
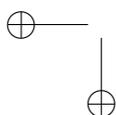


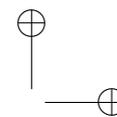
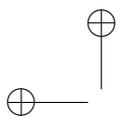
CHANT OF THE OPTIMISTIC BUTCHER

Oh, once I sang of the sirloin,
 Of hamburgers once sang I,
Or oft would boast
Of the prime rib roast,
 Unrationed and hanging high.
But now with unction akin to piety,
I hymn the meats that are called Variety:

*Variety meats, Variety meats,
Who will buy my variety meats?*

Regard, dear Moddom, this rich array.
 I've kidneys and sweetbreads
Fresh today.
I've tongue (a sliver),
 I've shanks and shins,
I've liver aquiver
 With vitamins.
I've succulent parts
 Of a similar stripe.
I've heads and hearts
 And masses of tripe.
Stew 'em with herbs or simmer in wine,
Season, stir,
And go out to dine.



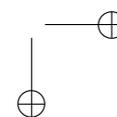
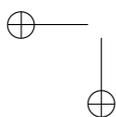


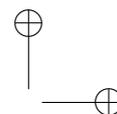
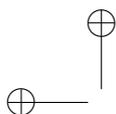
The chop has gone from the showcase,
The bacon no more I slice,
And I seldom drape on
The duck, the capon
A Saturday Special price.
So gladly now to my soul I grapple
An order of Philadelphia scrapple.

*Variety meats, Variety meats,
Who will buy my variety meats?*

Moddom, dear Moddom, take a chance.
They're highly regarded,
I hear, in France.
The color's queer
And the taste is awful,
But everything here
Is yours, and lawful.
Yes, merry as grigs,
Come sound the tocsin.
I've knuckles of pigs
And tails of oxen.
And if the prospect should leave you glum,
Cheer up, for the Wurst
Is yet to come.

I've a morsel of brains for occasional treats.
Won't somebody buy my Variety meats?



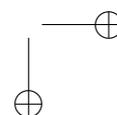
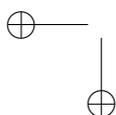


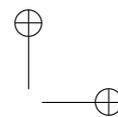
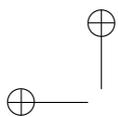
FIESTA IN THE REICH

The German Propaganda Ministry last week warned the people not to discuss military defeats and not to "look depressed." – News item in the New York Times.

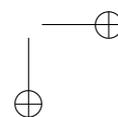
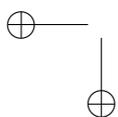
Come, lift a blithesome roundelay
To wake the Seventh Sleeper.
The bomb is dropping from the bay,
The Russ has crossed the Dnieper.
The Anglo-Saxon threatens Rome
And perils every border.
But we'll be merry here at home
By Goebbels' special order.
(Tra-la, tra-lay,
We're awfully gay,
By brisk, official order.)

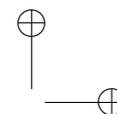
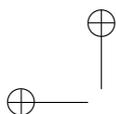
Though Liberators tour these skies
So sacredly *der Führer's*,
We'll swear it's all a pack of lies
Or maybe done with mührrors,
And dance and deck the streets with flowers
Until our brows are beaded,
When told some new retreat of ours
Has cleverly succeeded.
(We've made attack
By moving back,
And brilliantly succeeded.)





The casual tear, the downcast look
Are banned on edict simple.
We practice daily by the book
To wear an *ersatz* dimple.
And if some fellow lost to shame,
When friends break bread together,
Should call the future by its name,
We talk about the weather. . . .
(Report the dunce
Of course, at once,
And then discuss the weather.)





VALEDICTORIAN

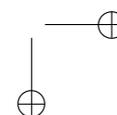
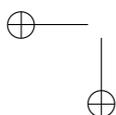
HIGH SCHOOL – 1943

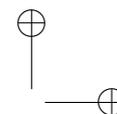
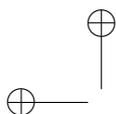
Stand up, young man with the pink and earnest
face,
Tonight grown paler.
The crease of your new flannels pinch into place,
Tug at your collar.

The Principal, beaming parentward, has left the
stand,
Having given his Message, complete with whim-
sical comment.
Stand up, my boy. Clutch the notes tight in your
hand.
This is the eloquent moment.

On behalf of the Class, for yourself, for the mon-
itors with their badges,
You have much to say.
Make the goodbyes, make the promises and the
pledges,
Map out the way.

Never farewells like yours were spoken before,
Against this shabby and familiar curtain.
Never was any future so naked and sure,
Or any path so certain.



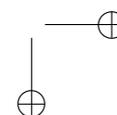
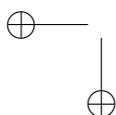


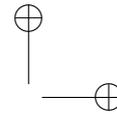
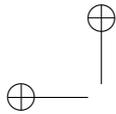
There was always in other years a sound that
was hollow
To the adolescent vow.
There were always the climbers and those who
could not follow.
You will march together now.

One flashing destiny awaits you all:
Neither the job at the mill (or the drugstore
counter)
Nor the wide campus colored with the fall
Nor the poolroom's banter.

There will be none left idling at the gate,
No prizes for the bolder,
But only the rifle resting its equal weight
On every shoulder.

So stand up, boy, forgetting the Golden Fleece.
Step to the rostrum, bow, and speak your piece.
There were never farewells spoken so stoutly here
Nor a path that showed so clear.





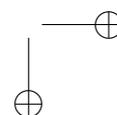
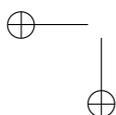
ADDRESS TO THE PLAYWRIGHTS

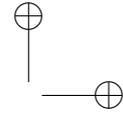
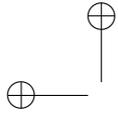
*... Miss Hellman appears to have been more interested in her politics than in the love story: And quite properly. – Review of *The Searching Wind* in the *New York Times*.*

Now perfumed airs are tender.
Now birds at nesting play,
And the earth is ripe with gender
And the world goes mad with May.
But shut your ears on Springtime.
Don't let it play you tricks. –
The proper plot
For a hit, red-hot,
Is petulant politics.

Romeo, Romeo, drop that pose.
The customers yawn and the critics doze.
They want a message, they want a martyr,
And something about the Atlantic Charter.

O, merry blows the myrtle,
The tendril bursts its pod,
And the voice that woos the turtle
Is heard once more abroad.
But not for earnest authors
Are prophecies like these meant.
Their Jacks and Jills
Must trudge up hills
To contemplate appeasement.



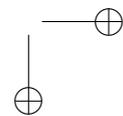
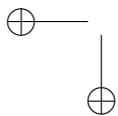


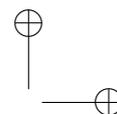
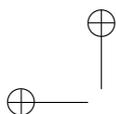
Juliet, Juliet, burning bright,
Alter your text for the opening night.
Shun the potion and take your cues
From the Tory traits of the Montagues.

Now lovers praise the weather,
Now lovers stroll the dark,
And lovers twine together
On benches in the park.
At every railroad station
Their eyes with tears are blind,
But the play's the thing,
In spite of spring,
And boasts a social mind.

Young Leander, you've come a cropper.
Your story's pretty but quite improper.
Your little affair rates justly zero.
Goodbye, and give our regards to Hero.

Let passion rage
In the lurid Flicks.
We're stripping the Stage
For politics.





BALLAD OF FINE DAYS

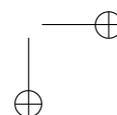
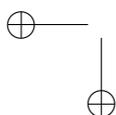
Temperatures have soared to almost summer levels... making conditions ideal for bombing offensives. — Excerpt from B.B.C. news broadcast.

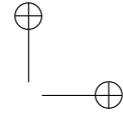
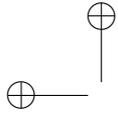
All in the summery weather,
 To east and south and north,
The bombers fly together
 And the fighters squire them forth.

While the lilac bursts in flower
 And buttercups brim with gold,
Hour by lethal hour,
 Now fiercer buds unfold.

For the storms of springtime lessen,
 The meadow lures the bee,
And there blooms tonight in Essen
 What bloomed in Coventry.

All in the summery weather,
 Fleeter than swallows fare,
The bombers fly together
 Through the innocent air.





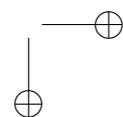
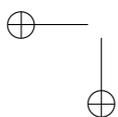
DIDO OF TUNISIA

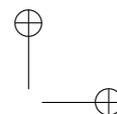
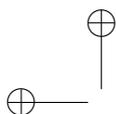
I had heard of these things before – of chariots rumbling
Through desolate streets, of the battle cries and the
danger,
And the flames rising up, and the walls of the houses crumbling.
It was told to me by a stranger.

But it was for love of the fair and long-robed Helen,
The stranger said (his name still troubles my sleep),
That they came to the windy town he used to dwell in,
Over the wine-dark deep.

In the hollow ships they came, though the cost was dear.
And the towers toppled, the heroes were slain without
pity.
But whose white arms have beckoned these armies here
To trample my wasted city?

Ah, this, Aeneas, you did not tell me of:
That men might struggle and fall, and not for love.





PROFITS WITH HONOR

The six New England Governors agreed today to ignore tradition in 1944 and observe Thanksgiving on the fourth Thursday of November instead of the last Thursday. . . . When the Federal proclamation chose an earlier date a few years ago, the New England Governors refused to comply. – News item from the New York Times.

Said the Governors of New England

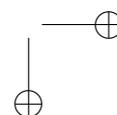
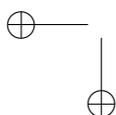
In 1941,

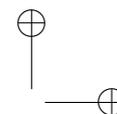
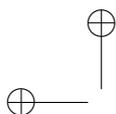
“What! Hold Thanksgiving early? It cannot, sirs, be done.
From Hartford’s teeming houses to the cots of Marblehead,
November’s final Thursday must see our tables spread.

“We swear it by this holy sod,
By primal Rock and sacred Cod,
New Hampshire’s lofty mountain peaks,
Maine’s shores, Connecticut’s antiques,
Lexington’s loud, immortal shot,
That bridge which arched the you-know-what –
By Berkshire’s festivals we swear,
By dark Vermont’s salubrious air,
By lobster pot and lighthouse,

By the spires of Beacon Hill.

That fellow in the White House
Shall feel our granite will.



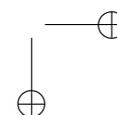
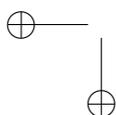


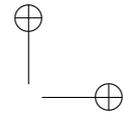
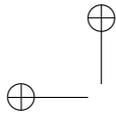
“We scorn the Proclamation, the sacrilege we shun,”
Said the Governors of New England
In 1941.

Said the Governors of New England
In 1944,
“We’d like to call attention to a motion on the floor.
Those people down in Washington, intractable and surly,
Are eating turkey late this year. By gad, we’ll eat it early!

“To custom moldering in its grave,
New England never shall be slave.
Therefore we swear by Faneuil Hall,
By Cabot and by Saltonstall,
By Concord’s battle, old and terse,
By Jordan Marsh and S. S. Pierce,
Our grateful prayers shall all be prayed
In time to help the Christmas trade.
Can Freedom keep on living
With business in the red?
No! Let us move Thanksgiving
A week or two ahead.

“Go write it on the records that we’re stubborn to the core,”
Said the Governors of New England
In 1944.



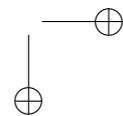
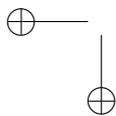


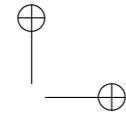
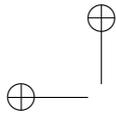
ALL THIS, AND HEAVEN TOO

Princess Elizabeth of England, at seventeen, is slim, with a girlish figure. She is keen on dancing, her lively eyes are blue, and her hair has become brunet with a natural wave. – News item from the New York Times.

Elizabeth of England,
Going on eighteen,
Was born to be a princess, bound to be a queen,
And poets have been telling us since history's dawn
How harried lies the head that a crown rests on.
It's a fate ill-fated, it is worse than death.
But I can't walk weeping for Elizabeth,
For she lives in a castle with quite extensive yards;
She waltzes with the laddies in the Grenadier Guards;
She rates a salutation from the whole Royal Navy,
And her hair is reported
To be naturally wavy.

Ah, there, Betty!
Yoo-hoo, Bess!
Thrones are confetti,
More or less.
But I taste of despair
And I wake up surly
When I think how your hair
Is naturally curly.



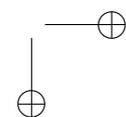
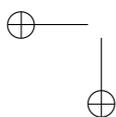


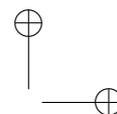
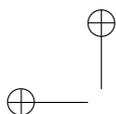
Elizabeth of England

Is burdened down with glory,
But there's something to be added to her sad, small story:
For her eyes are blue and her ways are simple;
She owns a yacht and a nice deep dimple;
The handsomest of regiments has tapped her for a mascot;
She's invited to the races when they're running them at
Ascot;
And yearly on her birthday, while flags unfurl,
She's presented by Papa with a big matched pearl.
Her lines are laid in modified clover
And she's just seventeen
Or a little bit over.

Ah, there, Betty!

I've this to say:
A diadem is petty,
You can take it away.
But the cross of a queen
I would gladly bear,
To be nearly eighteen
With a wave in my hair.



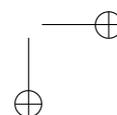
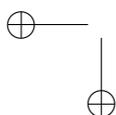


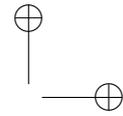
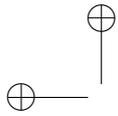
THEY ALSO SERVE WHO ONLY SIT

In every generation
 While elders talk and pray,
Some child has saved a nation,
 Some tot has won the day.
On burning decks they linger
 Or act the Spartan tyke
Or plug with chubby finger
 That hole within the dike.
But nowadays let voices praise
 With vigor and with power
Those thrifty juveniles who keep
(While off to cinemas we creep)
A watch upon our infants' sleep
 For fifty cents an hour.

Come drink to them in bitters
 Or toast their fame in stout –
The adolescent Sitters
 Who Sit while we go out.

With toil they do not fret them
 Nor unattended roam.
You have to go and get them,
 At midnight see them home.
Upon their front teeth glisten
 The golden dental brace



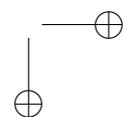
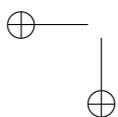


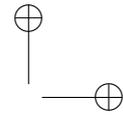
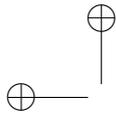
While to the Voice they listen
With rapt, enchanted face.
They cast their looks on comic books,
They like a fire that's lit,
A largish bowl of candy
And Benny Goodman handy,
But still with me it's dandy
So long as they will Sit.

They're hep to jive and jitters,
Wear down the telephone,
But ah, the darling Sitters
Are all the help we own.

For Queens are in the kitchen
Counting up the points,
And Kings, perforce, must pitch in
To turn the rationed joints,
And maids are boiler fitters
And every nurse a Wac,
But look – here come the Sitters
To earn their childish jack.
No nursery rage can they assuage,
No cradle can they rock,
But on our sofas they can Sit
And turn the nearest dial and knit
And ease our conscience while we flit
To movies down the block.

Let craven cooks be quitters
And all the faithless crew,
The green, the teen-age Sitters
Will see the crisis through.





THE HOLY CITY

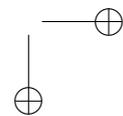
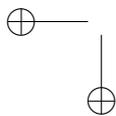
JERUSALEM – *Bugles which formerly heralded the Sabbath have been replaced by bells and town criers so that there will be no possibility of confusion with air-raid sirens. Palestine's first rationing measure went into effect yesterday.* – News item from the *New York Times*.

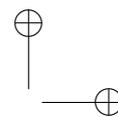
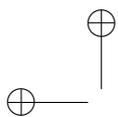
In Palestine, in Palestine,
The flocks unsheltered sleep,
Though night-long still
On every hill
A watch the shepherds keep.

And people walk with living fear
Lest, singing while it fell,
Should shine upon some midnight clear
The star that is a shell.

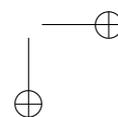
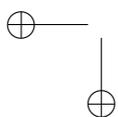
The bells ring out in Palestine,
Where there's a sentry stationed,
And still the oil and still the wine
Are blessed before they're rationed,

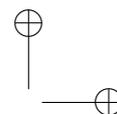
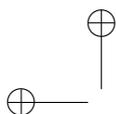
And criers chant the Sabbath for
The faithful and the stranger,
But now the bugles blow no more
Except the song of danger.





Lower your gates, Jerusalem.
Make mute the sacred horn,
While dark comes down
Upon that town
Wherein the Light was born.



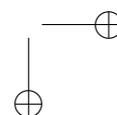
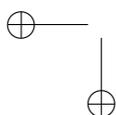


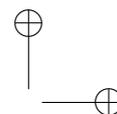
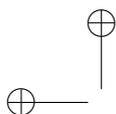
HORRORS OF WAR

Upon this meek civilian head
 There fall few blows I can't put up with.
I slice my own unbuttered bread
 And creamless coffee fill my cup with.
To market in my rationed shoes
 I trudge on patient metatarsals,
Select the reds, tear out the blues,
 And homeward stagger with my parcels.
'Tis not the want of morning bacon,
 'Tis not the storage cupboard bare
Which cause my life at times to take on
 This aspect of despair.

*It's amateur dietitians
Telling me how to make meat loaf out of peanut butter.*

Should yet the government desire,
 I'll cast off wool and go in dimity,
My last, my lone, my ultimate tire
 Yield up with honest equanimity.
Each warden's rule, however slight,
 Finds my co-operation certain.
Obedient, at the fall of night
 I shade my lamp and draw my curtain.
Sweetly I pay the allotted fee
 (Per printed forms that thick and thin come)
On what I often laughingly
 Refer to as my income.



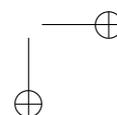
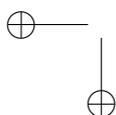


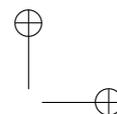
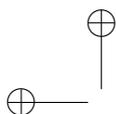
What depresses me is having to fill out all those little serial numbers

On all those little coupons.

For write this down in deathless crayon,
 These things are not the things that rankle:
The stocking made of vilest rayon
 Ignobly twisting round the ankle,
Suburban gardeners planning farms on
 The plots they scarce can turn a rake in,
The silly clocks without alarms on,
 The kitchen by the cook forsaken,
The butcher haughty in his den
 Dispensing curious chops, and thinner,
And never any extra men
 To ask for dinner.

Let the bomb burst, I shall not fear.
Let foemen march, I'll guard my city.
But none shall force this outraged ear
To listen to another radio crooner warbling another alleged
patriotic ditty.



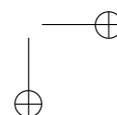
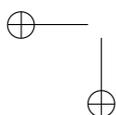


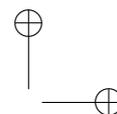
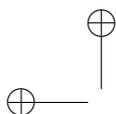
ELEVEN O'CLOCK NEWS SUMMARY

*Fold up the papers now. It is hushed, it is late;
Now the quick day unwinds.
Yawning, empty the ashtrays into the grate.
Close the Venetian blinds.
Then turn, by custom, the dial a wave length lower.
This is the hour (directly upon the hour)
Briefly to hear
With half-attentive and habitual ear
Important news bulletins.*

Our armies are valiant.
They have taken another ridge,
Another town, a fort, a strip, a salient.
They have held a bridge
(With heavy casualties). Our planes today,
According to a recent communiqué,
Struck (though the loss was high) at a vital border.
*Remember to leave a note for the dairy order
And to set the thermostat at sixty-two.*
We have captured an island at merely a moderate cost.
One of our submarines is overdue
And must be presumed lost.

In forests, in muddy fields, while winter fades,
Our troops are smashing through the Barricades,
They Push, they Storm, they Forge Ahead, they die

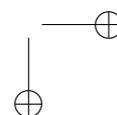
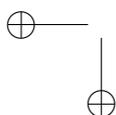


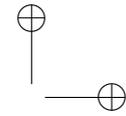
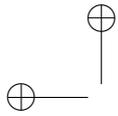


And lie on litters or unburied lie.
Static is bad tonight.
There – twiddle the knob a little to the right.

Here in the nation
Obedient curfews sound their midnight wails.
This is America's leading independent station.
Read the paper tomorrow for further details –
Details of death on the beaches, in the heat, in the cold,
Of death in gliders, in tanks, at a city's gate,
Death of young men who fancied they might grow old
But could not wait
(Being given, of course, no choice).

Well, snap the switch, turn off the announcer's voice,
Plump up the pillows on the green divan,
For day unwinds like a thread
And it is time now for a punctual man,
Drowsy, a little absent, warmed and fed,
To dim the light, turn down the blanketed bed,
And sleep, if he can.





WITHOUT A CLOAK

Hate has a fashionable cut.

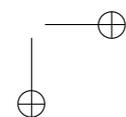
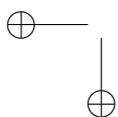
It is the garment man agrees on,
Snug, colorful, the proper weight
For comfort in an icy season.

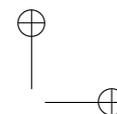
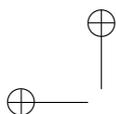
And it is weatherproof, they say –
Becoming, also, to the spirit.
I fetched Hate homeward yesterday,
But there it hangs. I cannot wear it.

It is a dress that suits me ill,
However much the mode sustains me.
At once too ample and too small,
It trips, bewilders, and confines me.

And in my blood do fevers flow,
Corruptive, where the fabric presses,
Till I must pluck it off as though
It were the burning shirt of Nessus.

Proud walk the people folded warm
In Hate. They need not pray for spring.
But threadbare do I face the storm
Or hug my hearthstone, shivering.





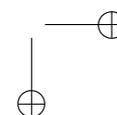
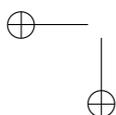
**MEMORANDUM FOR
THE SECOND OF FEBRUARY**

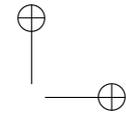
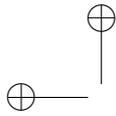
Be cautious, groundhog. Though the seasons alter
And winter for a moment turns her face,
Safe and unstirring in your native shelter,
Linger a little space.

Stay, oracle, a while beneath the meadow,
With root and reptile curled,
Lest you should start at this unnatural shadow
Which lies across the world,
And, fearing it as if it were your own,
Return to the dark stone.

Too early it is for prophecies and warnings,
For promises, too soon.
Savage and sharp remain the bitter mornings.
Still shines a bloody ring around the moon.

Be wary, I say, and let your sleep endure,
Till the great Spring is sure.





REPORT ON THE TOWN

ANSWER TO THE QUERY OF A FRIEND, NOW OVERSEAS, WHO
WRITES, "TELL ME, WHAT IS NEW YORK LIKE THESE DAYS?"

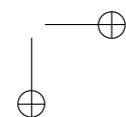
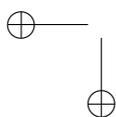
You would find it familiar, I think (and maybe good) –
Familiar beyond belief.
Buildings stand tall here – tall as they ever stood.
The coats of the ladies are brief.

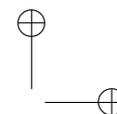
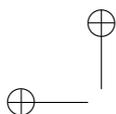
The winter was cold, we'd assure you, as if it mattered;
It broke a record or so.
And people skied in the Park, and the taxis skittered
Over the crusted snow.

But the offices all were warm and we saw no breadlines.
The night clubs had their fling
Till the curfew made for a while industrious headlines.
And now it is nearly spring.

You know, of course, how spring creeps into the city,
Perceptible to the blood if not the eye.
The wind feels fresh on the cheek and a trifle gritty;
The girls walk slower by.

They walk so now, or flock like the pigeons flocking
(The usual pigeons around the usual door),
Their legs are trim, uncrinkled each rayon stocking,
Their hats are flowered as before.



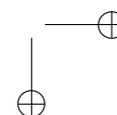
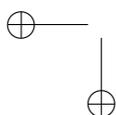


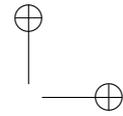
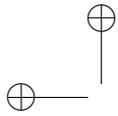
(But they go alone to eat at the Dairy Lunches.
At night they wash their hair
Or write long letters. Or, waiting on station benches
In the electric glare,

They watch a clanging gate that closes or opens.
They are always saying hello or else farewell,
Murmuring, "I have been waiting. . ." or "Remember, what-
ever happens. . .")
Still, there's not much to tell.

It's hard to get tickets for shows. Each fabulous counter
Yet draws the fabulous throng.
The buses grind. Prometheus leaps at the Center.
The casualty lists grow long.

We queue up for cigarettes in the afternoons,
Or stand in restaurants, fidgeting, to be served
(There are jokes in the papers about it and funny cartoons),
But nobody's starved
In spite of two "meatless days." We complain of taxes.
But no bomb falls; unshattered sit house and court.
They're changing the windows again, I think, at Saks's.
The coats this year are short.





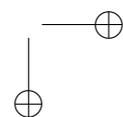
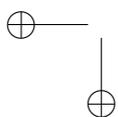
HAMBURG

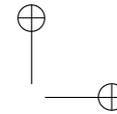
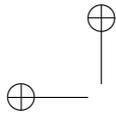
These are the wounds of war, prescribed and legal;
The eye for the broken eye, the tooth for a tooth,
The just though merciless blow. We need not haggle
Over such evident truth.

Here, for the sower of winds, is the whirlwind-reaping.
Here flowers the seed which fell in Rotterdam.
Regard, then, only a battle's furious shaping,
Bid the shrill mind be calm.

This city than Polish cities was not prouder.
In Coventry's dust as sound the innocent slept,
And Gretchen for her children weeps no louder
Than Rachel wept.

Know that the cause is good, the deed well-labeled.
Expedience and not hate laid low this town.
(But who among us to his rest, untroubled,
Henceforward can lie down?)





HOMICIDE MAKES THE HEADLINES

Call for the heaviest type, the widest streamer,
Blow up the photograph, however blurred,
Across three columns. With enormous clamor
Trumpet the word.

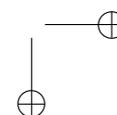
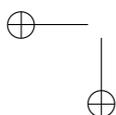
This man, you see, was a respectable fellow,
Was rich enough (at least to please the press),
Belonged to clubs, was crowned as by a halo
With a good address,

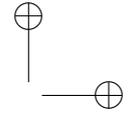
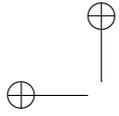
And now is met with violence. The assassin
Has left behind no clear, essential clue
(Though the D.A., who's brought his shiniest brass in,
Says an arrest is due).

Banner it blackly. For the chap was slain,
But not on Okinawa or Borneo
With other thousands. This, the facts are plain,
Was strictly a private show.

The circumstances, too, are most unusual.
He was not storming a beach or leading a raid,
Nor fell in mortar fire nor felt the casual
Shock of the flung grenade,

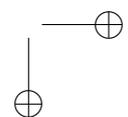
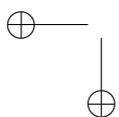
But lay at his own door (see page eleven
For diagrams, details, a picture spread),
Newsworthier than the listings daily given
Of those, in battle, dead.

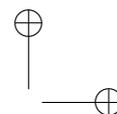
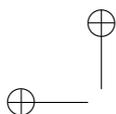




Yes, scream it out before the tale grows older,
That all may read it while the subways run,
May read at table, in buses, over some shoulder
On the 5:51,

And wag their tongues in loud astonishment
At death become a singular event.





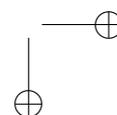
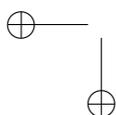
COMPOSITION FOR COMB AND TIN WHISTLE

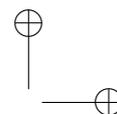
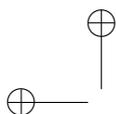
Oh, they were wrong who called us the men of straw,
The hollow people, hollow of heart and head.
Their arguments, though telling, contain a flaw.
The blueprints were misread.
We are not straw, I think, and not yet plastic
But something flexible, something purely elastic,
Something to the times and the world's estate
Shrewdly appropriate.

We are the rubber men
Whose minds reach, twist, stretch, and return again,
Pull out, puff up, encompass any view,
And shrink once more to size, as good as new;
Able at noon to praise Established Truth
By all the mouthing prophets recommended,
And with as rich a fervor lose our faith
Before the evening's ended.

*Heigh-de-ho,
Heel and toe,
Bounce like rubber
And off we go.*

*Black is white,
Wide is narrow,
Learn tonight
And unlearn tomorrow.*





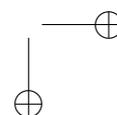
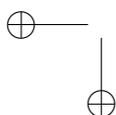
*Have to be nimble,
Have to adjust.
God is a fable,
In God we trust.*

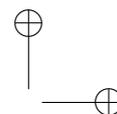
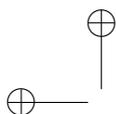
*Heigh-de-ho,
Heel and toe.
Yesterday's Gospel
Isn't so.*

Follow the doctors, follow with compliance
When what was once our good becomes our lack.
Follow the green light to the nearest science.
(The shuttle waits to fetch us forth and back.)
Breakfast on roughage, pant with exercise,
And keep the windows open on their sills.
Wrong! Shun the greens. Be sedentary, be wise,
Rely on vitamin pills
And close the casement for the twinging sinus,
Since what is plus today, tomorrow's minus.

Today's agreements are tomorrow's quarrels.
Yesterday's sinner is the current saint.
Damn the gray Puritans. No, wreath them laurels.
Do it without complaint.
Unlike the spotted leopard, who, they say,
Forbears to turn his coat,
Daily we find a new, sensational way
To think, make love, rear up our progeny, vote,
Relieve the common cold, hold off the hearse,
Or save the Universe.

This land is bright. It is the opposite.
Long live Free Enterprise; now, down with it.
Too hard, Versailles. 'Twas harshness fed the war.





Versailles was soft and rotten at the core.
Hail holy Freud – no, that was yesterday’s creed.
Marx is the man to idolize and pummel.
No, wait – hail someone of the Tory breed.
No, no, hail Beardsley Ruml.

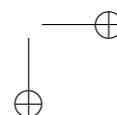
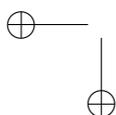
Tra-la-la
And a pas de deux.
True is false,
False is true.

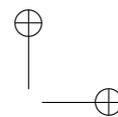
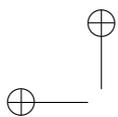
Bow to Neville
And touch his tunic.
Swear he’s the devil.
Spit on Munich.

Cheer for Poland,
No, cheer the Russ.
Cheer for no land
Excepting us.

Violets are red
Roses are blue.
It’s better to take
The rubber view.

Change the old order – change it like a tie
Between the luncheon and the cocktail hour.
Here’s a new notion. Let the old one die.
Knowledge is power,
And we have known a thousand colored facts
And all disputed. But we knew them once.
Now he who loves his country can relax.
He is a patriot who was a dunce,
And dunce will likely prove again next season.

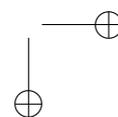
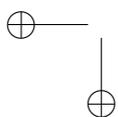


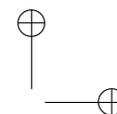
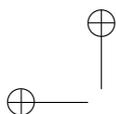


Today's nobility is tomorrow's treason.
But no ideas to proper men are hurdles,
Since we extend both ways, like pre-war girdles.

*Hey nonny nonny,
Lords and minions.
Swing your partner
And shift opinions.*

*Down the center
And off we go.
Foe is friend,
Friend is foe. And yesterday's Gospel
Isn't so.*





V-DAY

Savor the hour as it comes. Preserve it in amber.

Instruct the mind to cherish its sound and its shape.

Cut out the newspaper clippings. Forever remember
The horns and the ticker tape,

The flags, the parades, the radio talking and talking,
Ceaselessly crying the tale on the noisy air
(But omitting for once the commercials), the sirens shrieking,
The bulletins in Times Square,

The women kneeling in churches, the people's laughter,
The speeches, the rumors, the tumult loud in the street.
Remember it shrewdly so you can say hereafter,
"That moment was safe and sweet.

"Safe was the day and the world was safe for living,
For Democracy, Liberty, all of the coin-bright names.
Were not the bomb bays empty, the tanks unmoving,
The cities no more in flames?

"That was an island in time, secure and candid,
When we seemed to walk in freedom as in the sun,
With a promise kept, with the dangers of battle ended,
And the fearful perils of peace not yet begun."

