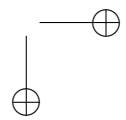
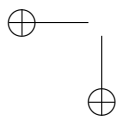
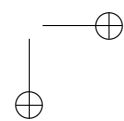
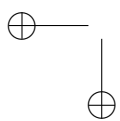
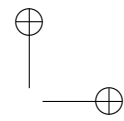
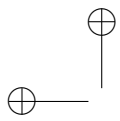
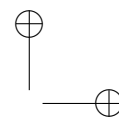


NIGHTS WITH ARMOUR
LIGHTEARTED LIGHT VERSE



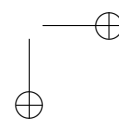
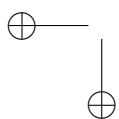


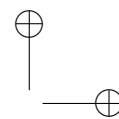
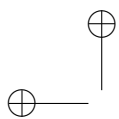


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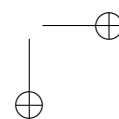
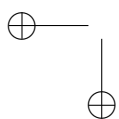
Richard Armour

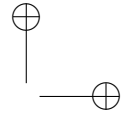
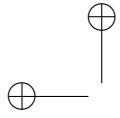
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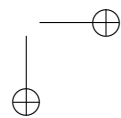
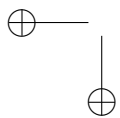
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First Published, 1958

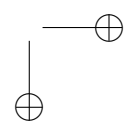
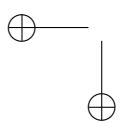
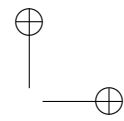
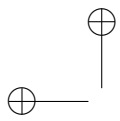


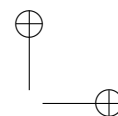
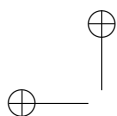


FOR E.K., J.R.

As from a debt-,
Or to a cred-
itor,
This is ded-
icated to Ed,
My ded-
icated Ed-
itor.







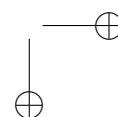
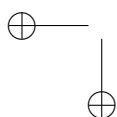
PREFACE

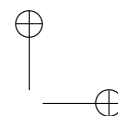
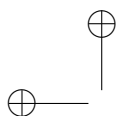
This book is intended for reading in bed, preferably before going to sleep. Since it contains only light verse, it can be rested on the chest or bosom, as the case may be, without impediment to breathing. To those who simultaneously eat and read in bed, wishing to make full use of their time, it is suggested that an unbuttered cracker will make an excellent bookmark, not only indicating the point at which to resume reading but providing sustenance, if necessary, before undertaking the next poem. A buttered cracker or a thin slice of cheese will also make a good bookmark, but the mark is likely to be permanent.

The author confesses that in his own home there is something of a crux about reading in bed. Indeed at one time the situation became so intolerable that some sort of action had to be taken. The form of action the author chose, rather than murder, which would have got into all the papers, was writing a poem, which got into a magazine. The poem, entitled "Bed and Boredom," went something, in fact exactly, like this:

When the day is done and its toil is through,
Reading in bed's what I love to do.
So I fluff my pillow till up I'm propped
And open my book, but there I'm stopped.

For my wife, who lies in the bed to my right,
Is the kind of sleeper that's known as light,
Which means, as she tells me by tossing and turning,
She can't go to sleep when my light is burning.





I've tried a spotlight with narrow beam,
With cloth and with paper I've shielded the gleam.
But still, though the glimmer is far and faint,
Comes the squeak of reproof, the sigh of complaint.

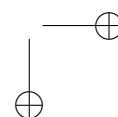
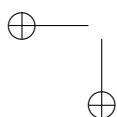
Reading in bed's what I dearly love
And what I am wistfully dreaming of.
But my wife is insistent, my wife is emphatic:
I can read in bed – if I sleep in the attic.

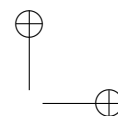
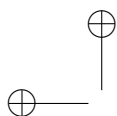
Imagine the exhilaration of the author when he received in the mail, shortly after the publication of this poem, a rejoinder in verse from a lady reader of discrimination, perspicuity, and, he likes to think, great beauty. The lines from this correspondent follow, and it is hoped the reader does also:

Now I am a dame of a different breed
And my bed is a place where I love to read,
But my trouble is that I cannot keep
From closing my eyes and going to sleep.
Nor am I the type that takes sleep lightly –
I die quite dead for ten hours nightly,
Which leaves small time for a Churchill history
Or even an Agatha Christie mystery.
I sleep quite flat, nor shift, nor stirring,
Nor hear my husband's motor purring,
And while I am far from a well-read charmer,
I'll bet that you wish I were Mrs. Armour.

This was written on personal but unperfumed stationery, which gave a street address but no telephone number. The possibility that this sort of thing may arrive in the morning mail gives a verse writer a tremendous incentive to get out of bed shortly after dawn and start watching for the postman.

The poems in this volume, the reader will doubtless note with satisfaction, are short. Most of them run to no more than

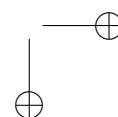
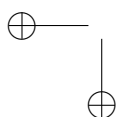


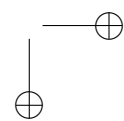
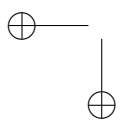
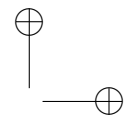
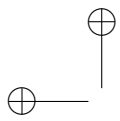


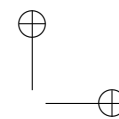
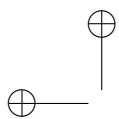
eight or ten lines, and some of them barely walk. Because of their brevity, they can be recommended to persons who go to sleep as soon as their head hits the pillow. Even in that short interval it is possible to read a couplet or two, and if the reader fails to get through such a piece he will have missed comparatively little. On the other hand, persons who are afflicted with insomnia will also find the brevity of the poems useful, since they can vary things a little by counting poems instead of sheep. This is something that cannot be done with a volume containing only "Paradise Lost" or "The Ring and the Book."

Another advantage of this as a book for reading in bed is that it contains no mythological allusions which the reader might have to go downstairs or all the way to the public library to look up. If the author occasionally employs alliteration, onomatopoeia, and the like, it is because he remembers the Depression and hates to see anyone out of work.

For those interested in statistics, there are enough poems in this volume to last about four months if one is read each night, and they are priced at approximately two for a nickel. By reading each poem several times, one can cut down the unit cost materially. Unfortunately the author will never know whether those who say "I read your book over and over" really liked it or were trying to save money.







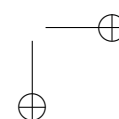
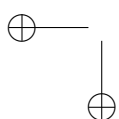
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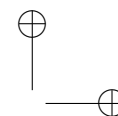
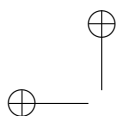
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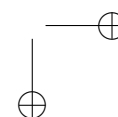
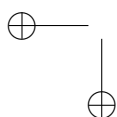


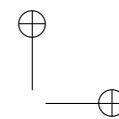
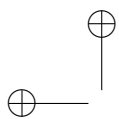


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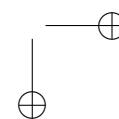
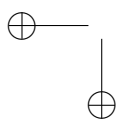
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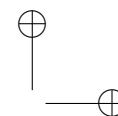
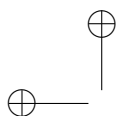
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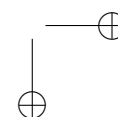
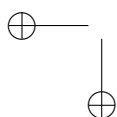


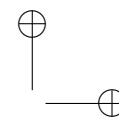
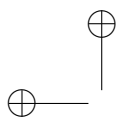


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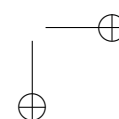
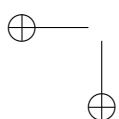
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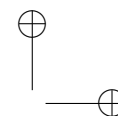
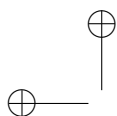
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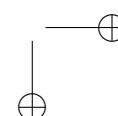
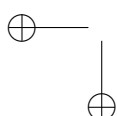
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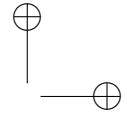
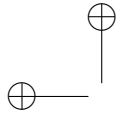
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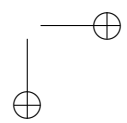
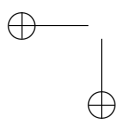


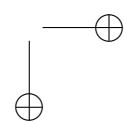
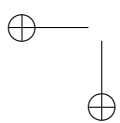
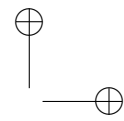
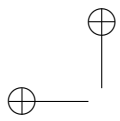
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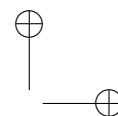
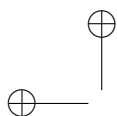




WIFE LINES



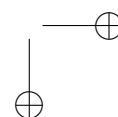
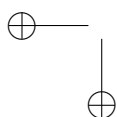


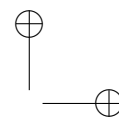
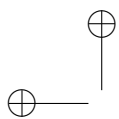


PARDON ME IF I DON'T LAUGH

Certain jokes about women I'm sick of hearing.
I run, if I can, when I think one's nearing.
I mean jokes about women who buy crazy hats
Or talk on the phone till they drive men bats
Or take so long dressing and still look a sight
Or hand-signal left when they're turning right
Or think they've a bargain that's simply divine
When a \$3.00 item is \$2.99.

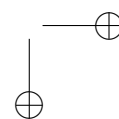
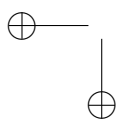
It's not that I've heard all these jokes before
That makes them so much of a pain and a bore.
It's just that I've lived maybe longer than you
And found these aren't jokes after all. They're true.

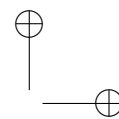
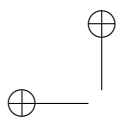




BIG HELP

Not every morning of my life,
But now and then, to help my wife,
I make my bed, which when
She's thanked me for my thoughtfulness
And viewed the lumpy, bumpy mess
She makes again.

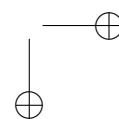
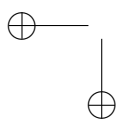


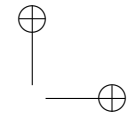
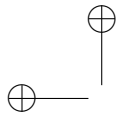


PRIVATE BOUT

It's bad enough to quarrel, dear,
It's bad enough to fuss,
But let's not let the neighbors hear,
Let's keep it all to us.

Let's wait until our friends have gone,
And also our relations.
If we must quarrel, let our home
Be closed for altercations.





IDEAL WOMAN

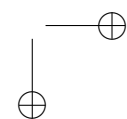
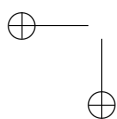
The American male, reports anthropologist Margaret Mead, wants his woman to be “dependent, shy, tender, responsive, and mildly frightened.” NEWS ITEM

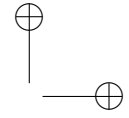
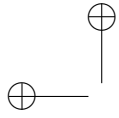
Says anthropologist Margaret Mead,
A woman we all would be wise to heed,
“A man wants his woman dependent and tender,
A woman who’ll go wheresoever he’ll send her,
A woman responsive and (this can be verified)
Fragile and pale and a little bit terrified.”

This eminent student of South Sea Islanders,
Eskimos, Zulus, and Scottish Highlanders,
Knows that it’s seldom a fellow will care
For a woman, no matter how buxom and fair,
Who makes him feel smallish or weak while romancing,
Who sneers at his jokes, or who leads when they’re dancing.

So clinging vines, cling, make a man seem a tower,
Be soft and be helpless, and frequently cower,
Look up at him, even if two inches taller,
And loosen his tie and unbutton his collar,
Yet do all the cooking, the cleaning, the shopping,
From sunup to sundown without ever stopping.

In short, if you’d please Mr. Average Spouse,
Be as strong as a moose and as meek as a mouse.



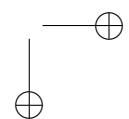
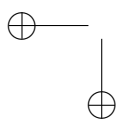


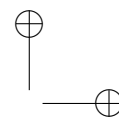
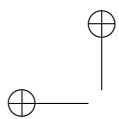
MADNESS IN HER METHOD

My wife insists that she and I
Keep separate accounts
Of what we spend and what put by,
Both large and small amounts.

At keeping track of tricky sums
She's devilishly smart,
And sees that, whatsoever comes,
Our cash is kept apart.

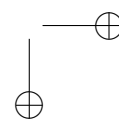
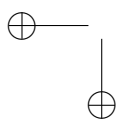
Each month (there's nothing she prefers)
The checks and stubs she scours,
To make quite sure that hers is hers
And what is mine is ours.

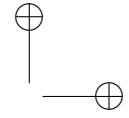
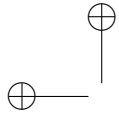




GOING CONCERN

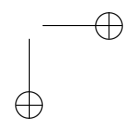
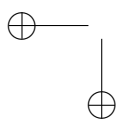
Suppose my wife and I are sitting.
I'm reading, maybe, and she's knitting.
I'm nicely settled, hate to stir;
The same, no doubt, is true of her.
Comes now a ring upon the phone,
Or Spots wants out, to dig a bone,
Or Junior calls, demands a drink,
Or water's dripping in the sink.
A thoughtful soul, I drop my book
And give my wife a tender look.
"I'll go, my dear. Sit still," I say,
But not until she's on her way.

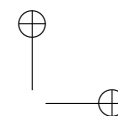
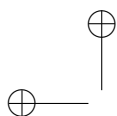




ACCESSORIES TO THE FACT

This is the bracelet that went with the ring
That went with the costume-jewelry thing
That went with the purse that went with the gloves
That went with the coat she so dearly loves
That went with the stole of mutation mink
That went with the hat that would drive you to drink
That went with the hose that went with the shoes
That went with the buckle she couldn't refuse
That went with the buttons that went with the belt
That went with the cluster of flowers of felt
That went with the perfume that went with the blouse
That went with the sweet little suit for my spouse
That my jack bought.





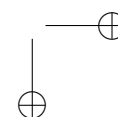
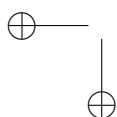
THE LONG PULL

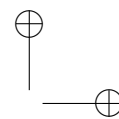
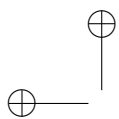
Women may live longer than men, but, according to the Chicago Dental Society, men keep their teeth longer. NEWS ITEM

Members of the weaker sex
Are hearty still when men are wrecks,
And although husbands all their lives
Make yearly payments, it's their wives
Who have the toughness, the endurance
To reap the profits of insurance.

But men, despite the way they tend
To reach a somewhat quicker end,
Are still, when years have played their hob,
Equipped to eat corn on the cob.
Yes, men, whom we'll not wholly write off,
Can chew as much as they can bite off.

Indeed, despite their many dolors,
They keep incisors, eyeteeth, molars,
And chomp away on this and that
When women only chew the fat.

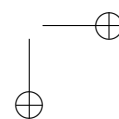
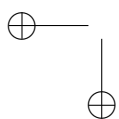


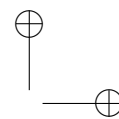
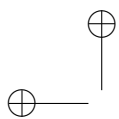


INCOMPLETE DISHWASHER

Husbands wash the glasses,
Wash the silverware,
Give each dish some passes,
Have some strength to spare.

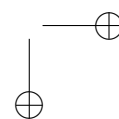
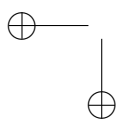
Husbands get to blackened
Pots, or very near,
Then, with ardor slackened,
Husbands disappear.

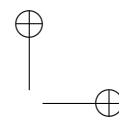
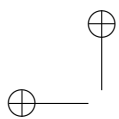




CONSOLATION FOR A COOK

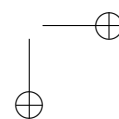
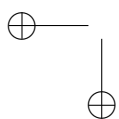
Don't worry, sweet, if I should say
I much prefer the taste the way
My mother cooked some dish or other.
My father said it of his mother.
My father's father likewise said it
About his own and gave her credit
For wizardry beyond the rest
She may or may not have possessed.
And it may comfort you to know
That in a dozen years or so,
Although it cuts her like a knife,
Your son will say it to his wife.

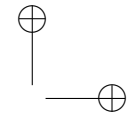
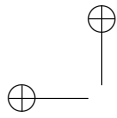




FACE VALUE

When women say, "I look a sight,"
Or "I'm a mess," or "I'm a fright,"
As oftentimes they will,
It isn't very wise, you'll see,
To indicate that you agree,
Or even to keep still.





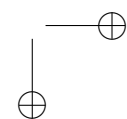
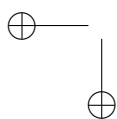
GREAT EXPECTATIONS

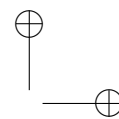
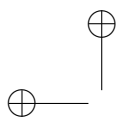
British authorities condemn the story of Cinderella because her capture of Prince Charming makes modern girls expect the same. NEWS ITEM

The modern girl who reads the story
Of Cinderella dreams of glory,
Of fairy wands and golden coaches
And silken gowns and sparkling brooches.
She sees herself, in scenes entrancing,
With tall, dark, handsome strangers dancing,
And wedding, in the end, Prince Charming.
All this the British find alarming.

Poor thing, they say, she's much misled,
With foolish fancies in her head.
She's bound to wake – then what confusion,
What stark and dismal disillusion.

I say to all, including British,
Don't be too worried, scornful, skittish.
If girls are doomed in later years
To marry brutes who box their ears
Or lazy louts, no-good and craven,
Who go around all day unshaven,
Then let them have this little boon,
For midnight's coming all too soon.



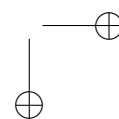
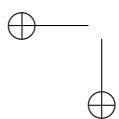


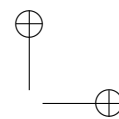
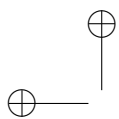
HUSBANDS ARE LIKE THAT

A husband works in subtle ways,
You really should behold one.
When wifey wants a dress or hat,
He says he loves the old one.

And when she speaks of dining out
As back when first he met her,
He says he doesn't mind, of course,
But likes her cooking better.

A husband is a cagey sort,
A smooth and clever article,
But I, for one, have yet to see
A wife who's fooled a particle.

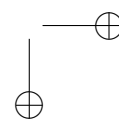
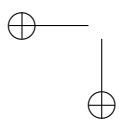


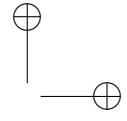
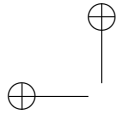


LOVE FEAST

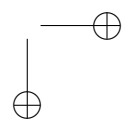
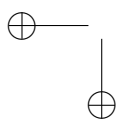
I once knew many charming girls,
To many gave my heart.
When dining, as I did, on love,
I ordered à la carte.

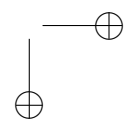
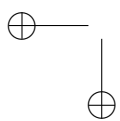
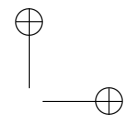
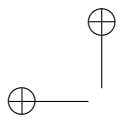
But now I'm wed, and to my wife
Alone my heart devote.
I dine on love, but I'm content
To take the table d'hôte.

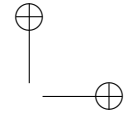
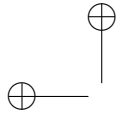




GROWING PAINS

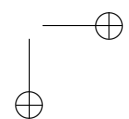
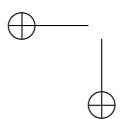


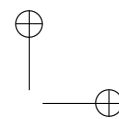
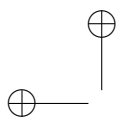




AWKWARD AGE

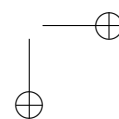
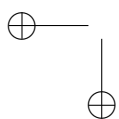
Our children are just at the awkward age,
Which is, as you probably know,
The age that begins at about one year
And lasts until twenty or so.

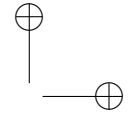
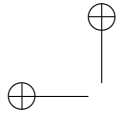




OFF AND ON

Little boys wear halos,
Shiny and unscratchable,
Very much like angels'
Save that they're detachable.

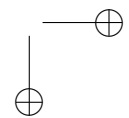
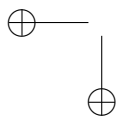


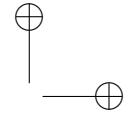
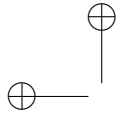


SEAT OF THE TROUBLE

Sliding down banisters,
Shinnying poles,
Boys rip their trousers,
Wear them to holes.

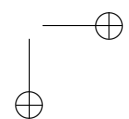
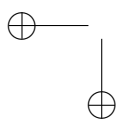
Climbing up tree trunks,
Hanging from bars,
Boys need seat covers
More than cars.

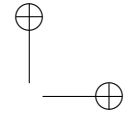
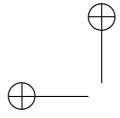




A PARENT ON SUNDAY

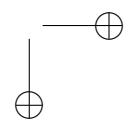
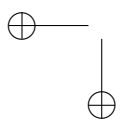
I've felt, about mid-sermon time,
A sudden little lurch.
My child has gone to sleep and I'm
A pillow of the church.

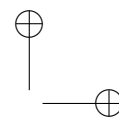
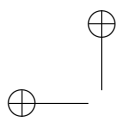




ON CALL

When parents call for children, they
Anticipate a slight delay.
When children, though, call for adults,
I've noticed they expect results.



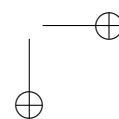
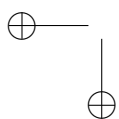


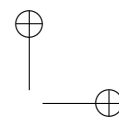
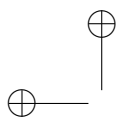
INNOCENT BYSTANDER

My little daughter loves to stand
Beside me when I shave,
And, conscious of my gallery,
I'm careful to behave.

She loves to see the lather foam,
To hear the razor scrape.
She loves the way I screw my face
In each unlovely shape.

She's spellbound by the gear I spread
Upon the bathroom shelf,
But most of all she waits around
In hopes I'll cut myself.



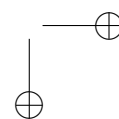
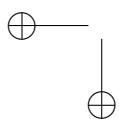


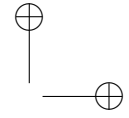
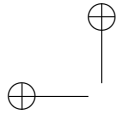
ADOLESCENT

A mind? Yes, he
Has one of those.
It comes, however,
And it goes.

And if, when it
Is called upon,
It mostly happens
To be gone,

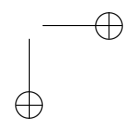
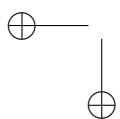
Don't fret, don't shout,
Don't curse the lack.
Just wait a while –
It will be back.

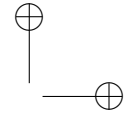
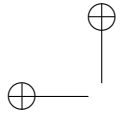




STUDY HABITS

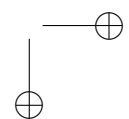
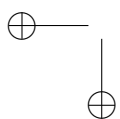
Peanut butter thickly spread
On crispy crackers and on bread,
Potato chips and chunks of cheese,
Chocolates and cake – it's these
With which our teen-age daughter crams
For exams.

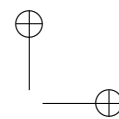
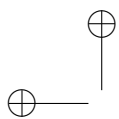




**FOND FAREWELL OF A
TEEN-AGE SNACK SNAGGER**

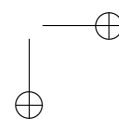
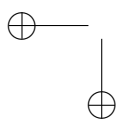
See you later,
Refrigerator.

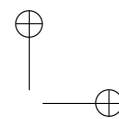
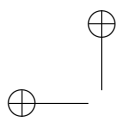




CUTTING REMARKS

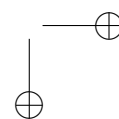
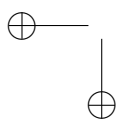
Teen-age boys have zany haircuts,
Absurd, exotic, really rare cuts:
The duck tail, and the suavely sheikish,
The Presley sideburns, slightly freakish,
The butch, the flat top, and the crew cut,
Whatever is the fad or new cut.
Although *inside* the teen-age skull
There oftentimes may be a lull,
To compensate for such passivity
Outside the skull there's great activity.

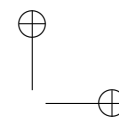
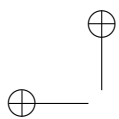




THE SPORT SHIRT

The sport shirt, worn by sporty lads,
And gay with figures, stripes, and plaids,
 Attracts the passing starrer.
It comes in many brilliant hues
And often (this is hardly news)
 Is brighter than the wearer.

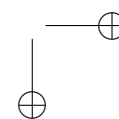
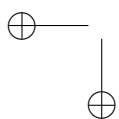


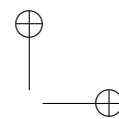
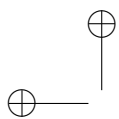


**INSTRUCTIONS FOR CHAPERONS
AT A TEEN-AGE PARTY**

Provide transportation,
No matter from where,
And lend your best records
And seem not to care.

Help hang decorations,
Assist with the cooking,
And keep your eyes open
Without ever looking.

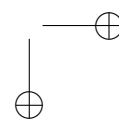
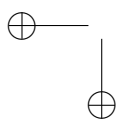


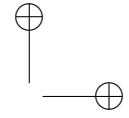
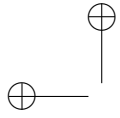


REAL GONE

There's this about
The teen-age crowd:
They like their music
Good and loud.

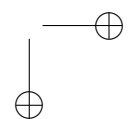
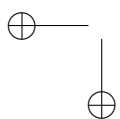
And I'm not hep,
I lack the knack.
It sends me, but
I don't come back.

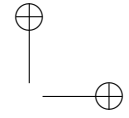
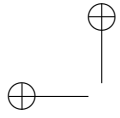




FAST BUCK

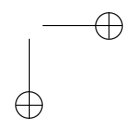
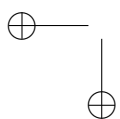
My teen-age son is in a dash,
He hits me up, and quick, for cash.
He asks, he's off, he's never slow.
With him it's always touch and go.

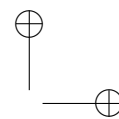
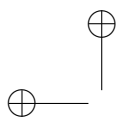




STEADY DOES IT

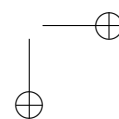
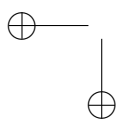
When boys and girls start going steady,
Their parents' look is drawn.
They know that it's a case of going,
Going, going, gone.

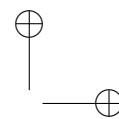
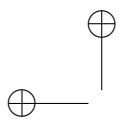




CAMPUS HERO

He's a four-letter man
At college, we hear.
That's the number of times
He writes home each year.

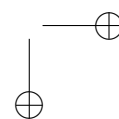
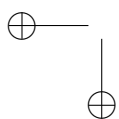


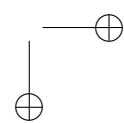
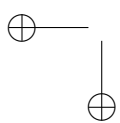
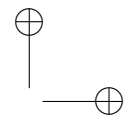
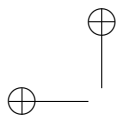


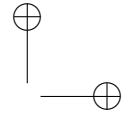
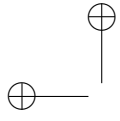
NOW YOU KNOW, SON

My father's father told my father
The proper things to do.
My father told them then to me;
I tell them now to you.

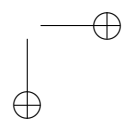
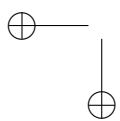
My father's father, father, I,
Now you, know right from wrong.
We may not always do it, but
We pass the word along.

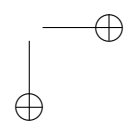
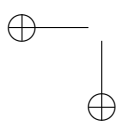
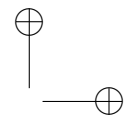
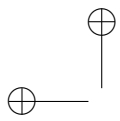


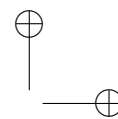
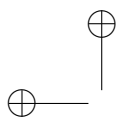




GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS







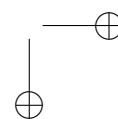
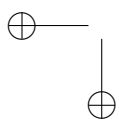
LADDER OF SUCCESS

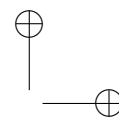
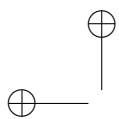
When I was starting out, and young,
My foot was on the bottom rung,
And then, by standing on my toes
And straining hard, one step I rose.

Amazed at how I'd got ahead,
I thought myself quite talented,
And, full of courage, took a flier,
And there I was, up one rung higher.

Sometimes the chap above me stepped
Upon my hands; I nearly wept.
But using muscles, mind, and will,
I kept on climbing, climbing still.

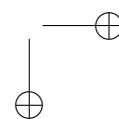
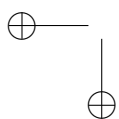
Now that I'm almost up the ladder
I should, no doubt, be feeling gladder.
It is quite fine, the view and such,
If just it didn't shake so much.

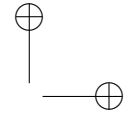
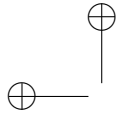




SONG BURDENED

At people who hum while I work
I direct my most agonized frown.
It isn't the tune they can't carry,
It's the one they can't seem to put down.

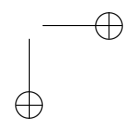
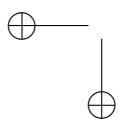


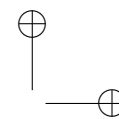
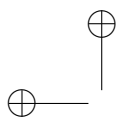


NOTE ON STENOGRAPHERS

Stenographers must have both will
And also won't, one sees.
They need at times to show their skill,
At other times, their knees.

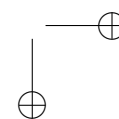
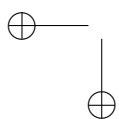
To get ahead, be better paid,
They have to play the gallery,
While hoping the advances made
Will just be those in salary.

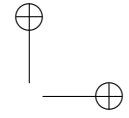
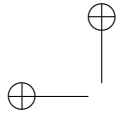




PAPER CLIP

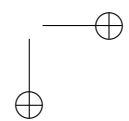
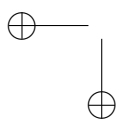
Pick up a paper clip – you'll find
A second paper clip entwined.
The way they cling to one another,
You'd think they were a child and mother,
Or strolling lovers, arm in arm,
Or clutching cowards, fearing harm.
Although a clip may cut a caper
And fail to clip a piece of paper,
One thing it holds with faithful grip
And that's another paper clip.

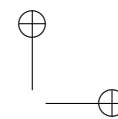
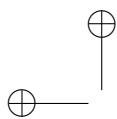




BLOTTER

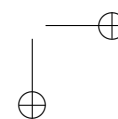
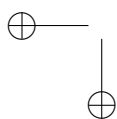
Looking for one, low and high,
Gives the ink a chance to dry.

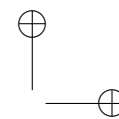
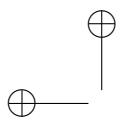




COMMENT ON COWS

Cows
Do nothing but browse
And drowse
And now and then moo.
That's all they do.
Yet even while grazing
They aren't lazing.
Even while snacking
They aren't slacking.
If not illustrious,
They are inner industrious,
Making milk with all their might
With every bite,
Cream too,
With every chew.
I'd like it fine
Could I combine
In such measure
Business with pleasure.





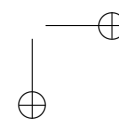
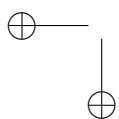
NOTES ON OFFICE INERTIA

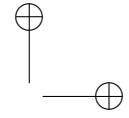
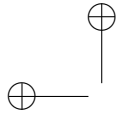
I. DESK JOB

My desk is always neat and clean;
No item out of place is seen
Nor dust in corners lurking.
I tidy up my desk each day
Ten times at least – it is the way
I keep myself from working.

II. OBSERVATION OF AN OFFICE WORKER

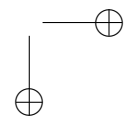
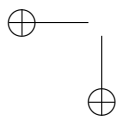
Insomnia, a dreaded blight,
Might well become a boon
If it could be transferred from night
To afternoon.

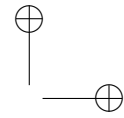
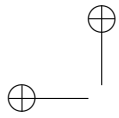




MIXTURE

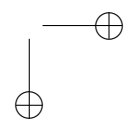
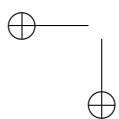
Mixing pleasure and business
Is something I've found to be fun
When mixed in the proper proportions
Of 99 parts to 1.

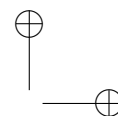
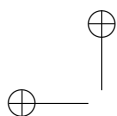




ACCUSTOMED AS THEY ARE

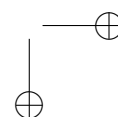
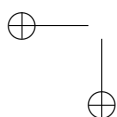
The speaker who speaks with the voice of a mouse
And utterly fails to reach half of the house,
Perhaps because dumber, perhaps because prouder,
Drones on until someone at last shouts out, "Louder!"
But the speaker who speaks with the voice of a moose
And could make himself heard clear from cab to caboose,
Is sure to call out, with a thunderous boom:
"CAN YOU HEAR ME, YOU FOLKS IN THE BACK OF THE
ROOM?"

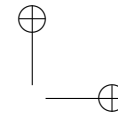
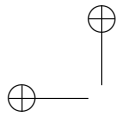




**THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO SEE
BEFORE I DIE**

I've watched them make pencils
And stencils
And utensils.
I've been through steel mills
And wheel mills
And rubber-heel mills,
Through canneries
And tanneries.
I think forges
Are gorgeous.
I've seen them blow glass up,
Seen molasses molass up,
Seen honey made
And money made.
There is nothing I would pass up.
But what I most long to view,
Yes, what I am strong to view,
Is makers of dog food
And cat food and hog food
And cocktail snack things
And crunch and crack things,
In some way clever,
With calipers or whatever,
Researching the right size
For Bite Size.





JUST THE TYPE

General Electric scientists have invented an automatic typewriter. All it does now, however, is jot down temperature readings. NEWS ITEM

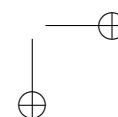
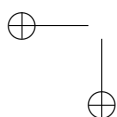
As yet it doesn't really write,
It only jots down Fahrenheit
And tells how hot and tells how cold.
It doesn't yet do all it's told.

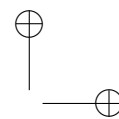
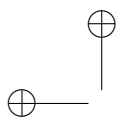
Still, it's improving by degrees,
And may yet do more things than these.
We have no doubt one of these days
It will write novels, poems, plays.

Then writers needn't sit and stare
And write, erase, and tear their hair.
They needn't fear approaching deadlines
And unpaid rent and maybe breadlines.

They'll merely set the thing to WRITE
And go to bed and sleep all night,
Then wake up with a rested look
And go downstairs to read their book.

Yes, when they're finished at G.E.,
A writer's life at last will be
The life of ease and placid brow
That many people think it now.

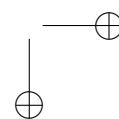
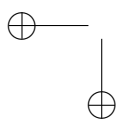


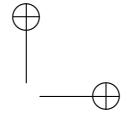
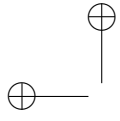


TAKING IT EASY

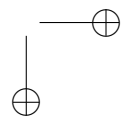
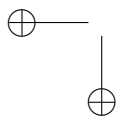
When the day of complete
Automation comes,
We'll put up our feet
And twiddle our thumbs.

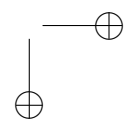
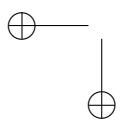
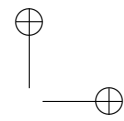
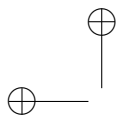
But, far from serene,
We'll say it's just middling,
And want a machine
To take over the twiddling.

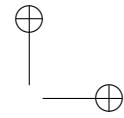
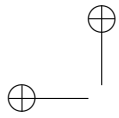




THE BROW SLIGHTLY HIGHER







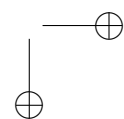
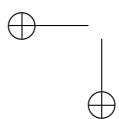
PORTRAIT OF LORD BYRON

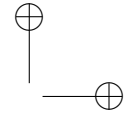
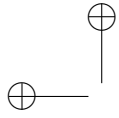
Lord Byron's hair was curly,
His profile like a god's,
And plainer men grew surly
To face such frightful odds.

At balls, when Byron entered,
He always caused a stir.
Each lady hoped he centered
His gallant gaze on her.

His limp brought sighs of pity,
He dieted till gaunt.
A manly man, though pretty,
He swam the Hellespont.

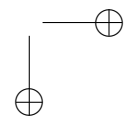
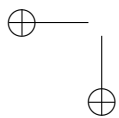
His eyes were slightly frantic,
His sorrows hardly hid.
He looked the Great Romantic,
What's more, he knew he did.

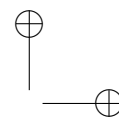
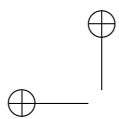




A NIGHTMARE OF UNDIGESTED READING OF THE POETS

When I have fears that I may cease to bleed
Upon the thorns of life, I am a weed
(Yet fortune helps the brave deserve the fair)
Whose name is writ in water everywhere
Nor any drop to drink. Grow old along
With me, for I can give thee but a song
Sung by an idiot boy. Not so unkind
As man's ingratitude to man, my mind
A kingdom is: I've loved thee, Cinema,
Not wisely but too well. I also saw,
When I was one and twenty, Shelley plain,
Far from the madding crowd's ignoble stain
On the white radiance of eternity.
Tripping the light fantastic o'er the lea,
Much have I traveled in the realms of cold
And wrapped my threadbare cloak about, though old
And with a ravelled sleeve of care that sleep,
Perchance to dream, and sorrow's crown too deep
For tears, might mend. If winter comes, can spring
Be far behind a young man's fancy? Sing
Cuccu! Cuccu! Poor Tom's a-cold and June's
Still far, and measured out with coffee spoons.



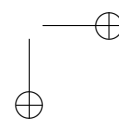
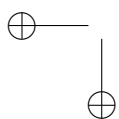


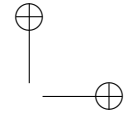
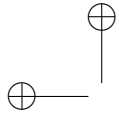
OLD STORY

*Autograph hunters were active in Europe as early as the
fourteenth century.* NEWS ITEM

Just how was greatness measured
Six hundred years ago?
Whose autograph was treasured
And whose was rated low?

What troubadours, two-bit wits,
And others took the eye
Of medieval nitwits
Who passed old Chaucer by?





THE POETS REVISITED

I. LONGFELLOW

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Things unpaid for, bought on time.

II. HENLEY

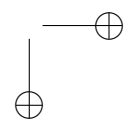
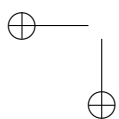
Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
I have not stumbled in a hole.

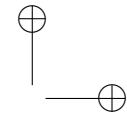
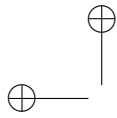
III. TENNYSON

Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown.
Come into the garden, Maud –
Don't bring a chaperon.

IV. BROWNING

Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, in which, it's worth a mention,
One gets an old-age pension.



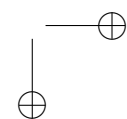
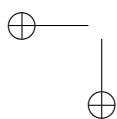


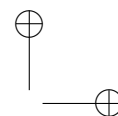
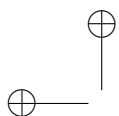
POPE, WORDSWORTH, AND NATURE

Pope liked his nature methodized,
His trees all trimmed and even-sized,
His hedges clipped, his vines well trained;
When things weren't proper, Pope was pained.
He liked his paths to make designs
And follow certain laid-out lines,
With somewhere, never far to seek,
The statue of a goddess (Greek).

But Wordsworth liked his nature wild,
Untamed, untutored, undefiled.
He liked his trees to spread and sprawl,
An uncut hedge or none at all.
He liked a path beside a brook –
A path a deer or cow once took –
With unexpected dip and bend
And nothing man-made at the end.

At Twickenham one cannot see
Wordsworth living happily,
Or, lacking statue, grot, and fount,
Pope at ease at Rydal Mount.

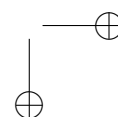
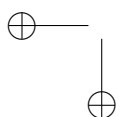


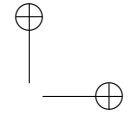
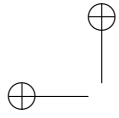


TRAVELING COMPANIONS

“Who’s Who,” the Bible, and the checkbook always travel with me anywhere I go. STATEMENT OF A BIOGRAPHEE IN AN ADVERTISEMENT OF “WHO’S WHO IN AMERICA.”

The Bible soothes the harried soul,
The checkbook plays an equal role.
Who’s Who, however, of the three,
Most bolsters the biographee,
Who keeps it by him every minute,
Reminding him that he is in it.



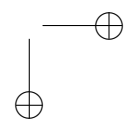
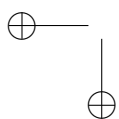


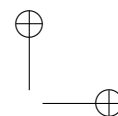
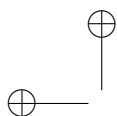
ART IS LONG

In art museums there are those, the wary,
With eager eyes and wildly beating heart,
Who seem to search for some contemporary
Or medieval masterpiece of art

They pass the Titians by, they pass El Greco,
They do not pause before the Flemish School.
Their footsteps make the polished flooring echo
To where the guard patrols the vestibule.

They hurry by Renoir without reaction,
Toulouse-Lautrec they querulously quit,
And only stop and sigh with satisfaction
When they have reached their goal, a place to sit.



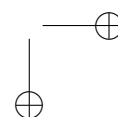
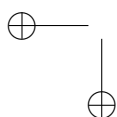


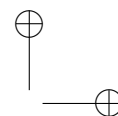
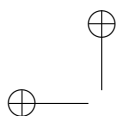
STRANGE GLOW

A strange glow in the sky, pursued by policemen in their patrol cars, was found to be the sunrise. NEWS ITEM

Policemen, with their sirens turning,
Speed off to see whatever's burning,
Step on the gas, go faster, faster,
To be the first at the disaster.
Proceeding east, careening badly,
They call for reinforcements madly.
It might (they're summoning all cars)
Be arsonists or men from Mars.

Time was, when people rose at five
And saw the heavens all alive,
Familiar to the point of yawning
With all the fiery hues of dawning.
But now, except for milkman, farmer,
The sunrise is a three-alarmmer,
And some, when dark of evening stops
And day commences, call the cops.





MOTHER TONGUE

No language barrier. No dictionary required. ADVERTISEMENT
OF THE BRITISH TRAVEL ASSOCIATION.

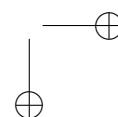
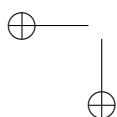
Oh, to be in England,
If only 'arf a mo',
Where, when they speak of wireless,
They mean a radio,

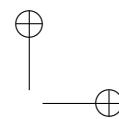
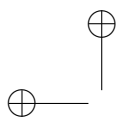
Where private schools are public
And public schools are snobby
And insurance is assurance
And a cop is called a bobby,

Where a traffic hub's a circus
And up is down the street
And a sweater is a jumper
And candy is a sweet,

Where a cracker is a biscuit
And a trifle is dessert
And bloody is a cuss word
And an ad is an advert,

Where gasoline is petrol
And a stone is fourteen pound
And motorcars have bonnets
And you take the Underground.

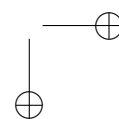
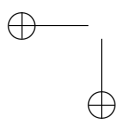


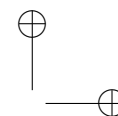
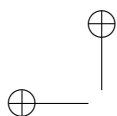


Where, holding up your trousers,
It's braces that you use,
And a truck is called a lorry
And boots are really shoes,

Where a druggist is a chemist
And the movies are the flicks
And you queue up on the pavement
For a stall at three and six. . . .

There is no language barrier
The tourist needs to dread
As long as he knows English
From A to Z (no, zed).



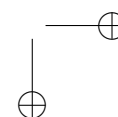
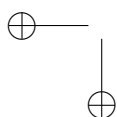


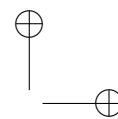
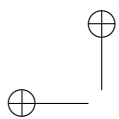
UN-AMERICANISM

Dr. Mathews, compiler of a Dictionary of Americanisms, says that "ain't" is found at least as far back as Shakespeare. NEWS ITEM

The origin is far and faint
Of such a lowbrow word as "ain't,"
Unlike such terms as "riboflavin"
It goes back to the Bard of Avon
And maybe farther back – who knows? –
In English speech and English prose.

At least, as called to our attention,
It's no American invention,
No lately come, uncultured stray flower,
But something strictly ante-Mayflower.
Our lingo's not so bad as painted,
And that's a kind of comfort, ain't it?



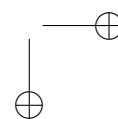
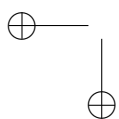


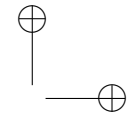
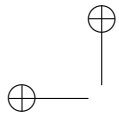
CHALLENGE

Man Challenges Robot to Chess Game. NEWSPAPER HEAD-
LINE

Deep in a game will soon be seen,
Across the board, man and machine.
The man, with brain of blood and tissue,
Against cold steel will test the issue;
The soundless human mind will match
The whirring wheel, the cog and catch.

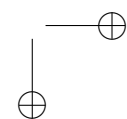
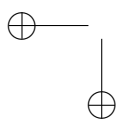
The dare is taken, die is tossed,
And if by man the game is lost,
We may expect a match between
The winner and a new machine
While man will watch, his ego dented,
The better brains his brain invented.

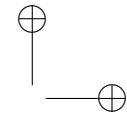
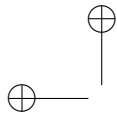




THE SPLIT INFINITIVE

The split infinitive not only splits
Infinitives but people. Plainly it's
Responsible for making a division
Into three sorts: he who, with fine derision,
Looks down his nose at vulgar splitters; he
Who, knowing better, splits defiantly
And scorns the pedant and perfectionist;
And he, the very bottom of the list,
And yet by far the happiest, who lives
In ignorance of split infinitives.





PUNCTUATION REMARKS

“Even the commas are entertaining.” CLEVELAND AMORY, IN
A BLURB DESCRIBING NATHANIEL BENCHLEY’S BIOGRAPHY
OF ROBERT BENCHLEY.

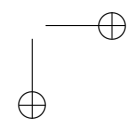
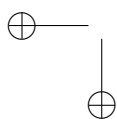
Admiringly we must admit
This is the apogee of wit,
When commas (though it’s not made plain
Just how it’s done) can entertain.

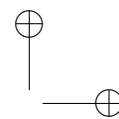
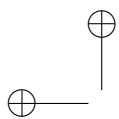
It might perhaps be how absurd
They look, head bent behind a word
And tail tucked like a scolded dog’s,
These punctuation polliwogs.

But let us not neglect, while grinning
At clowning commas, squirming, chinning,
The semicolons, holding poses
Like seals, with balls upon their noses,

And dashes – dashing, lean, and narrow,
For bow-parentheses an arrow,
And lynx-eyed colons, coldly peering,
And quotes, cheerleaders jumping, cheering,

And question marks, small shepherd crooks
That bring a rustic touch to books,
Each balanced on a small black ball. . . .
What fun! Why read the words at all?

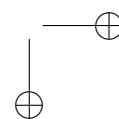
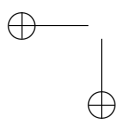


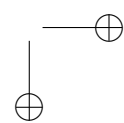
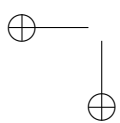
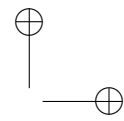
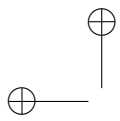


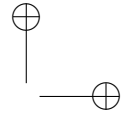
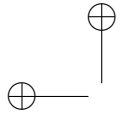
LET THIS BE A LESSON

I'd like to speak French and I'd like to speak Spanish,
I'd like to reduce, make my fanny less fannish,
I'd like to be up on affairs international
And on the Great Books be familiar and rational,
I'd like to learn how to refurbish my flat,
I'd like to improve myself, this way and that.

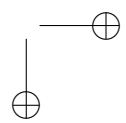
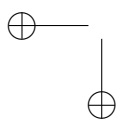
And so I'm a sucker for all sorts of courses:
On flower arrangement and breeding of horses,
On folk dancing, diet, and ancient religions,
On how to relax, and on caring for pigeons. . . .
Whenever a course for my betterment's beckoned
I've signed for ten lessons, and stopped at the second.

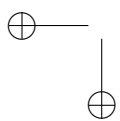
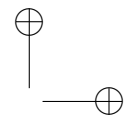
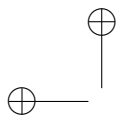


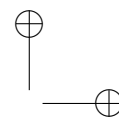
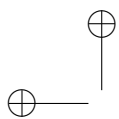




THE FOLKS AT HOME







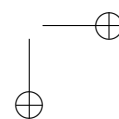
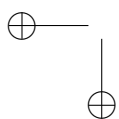
KING OF STRING

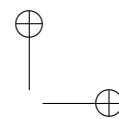
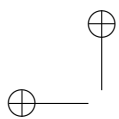
One thing to which I cling
Like anything
Is string.

I save short pieces, long pieces,
Weak pieces, strong pieces,
Coarse stuff and fine stuff,
Cord stuff and twine stuff.

I pick it up, scoop it up,
Twist it up, loop it up,
Make balls of it, skeins of it,
Long, knotted chains of it.

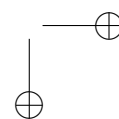
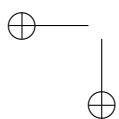
Yes, string is my dish,
And frankly I wish,
When it's time to unwind it,
I could find it.

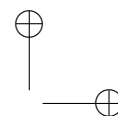
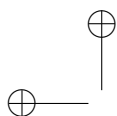




BRIEF OBSERVATION ON WASHING WINDOWS

The side there's a spot on
Is the side that I'm not on.

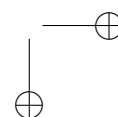
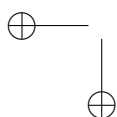


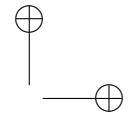
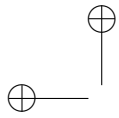


CLOSE SQUEAK

We have a creaky, squeaky floor
I've often reason to deplore.
No use to tiptoe, creep, or crawl,
The slightest move is heard by all.
The cautious step, the guarded tread
Will rouse the sleeper in his bed,
And be one howsoever wary
Will wake the dog and the canary.

So burglars, if you come to burgle,
I'll know you, without sneeze or gurgle.
And guests, if you get up at night,
You might as well turn on the light.
As one who's diligently tried
The mincing step, the shuffling slide,
I say, before you raise a foot,
Prepare for squeaks, or else stay put.

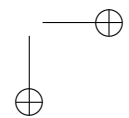
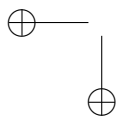


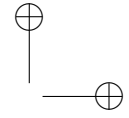
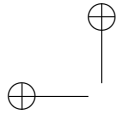


WHAT HOE!

New Power Hoe Eases Gardening. NEWSPAPER HEADLINE

Some day, if I am thus equipped,
I fear, from force of habit,
I'll lean upon my hoe to rest,
Whereon, a button being pressed,
I'll bound off like a rabbit.

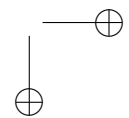
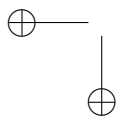


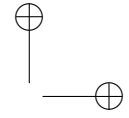
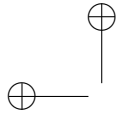


**KEEPING
(AND I DO MEAN KEEPING)
HOUSE**

Behold the closet closely crammed,
The chest of drawers packed,
The hallway, porch, and attic jammed,
Garage and cellar stacked.

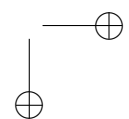
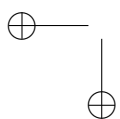
The rust makes brown, the dust makes gray,
The moth, contented, chews
The things too good to throw away,
Not good enough to use.

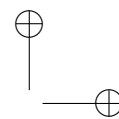
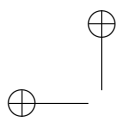




MAKING YOUR MARK

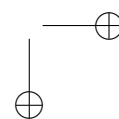
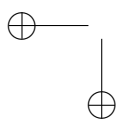
You cannot buy, you cannot lease
As durable and crisp a crease
As that your trousers soon acquire
When hung on hangers made of wire.

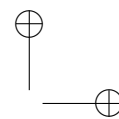
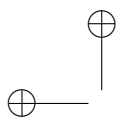




ENDS AND ME

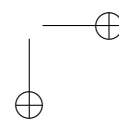
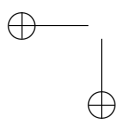
When wrapping a package, I do my best
Yet often go down to defeat.
One end is east and the other is west,
And never the twine shall meet.

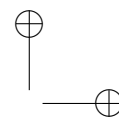
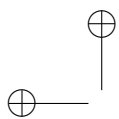




CONTOUR CHAIR

How strange, the way it swoops and swerves
And spreads about and sprawls and curves.
So wide in here, so deep in there,
It's such a funny, odd-shaped chair.
One points, one laughs, and one admits
With some embarrassment – it fits.



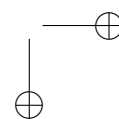
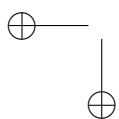


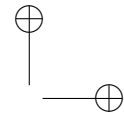
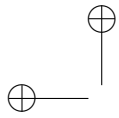
SHAGGY-DOG STORY

He has to be trained,
He has to be fed,
He has to be washed,
He has to be led.

He has to be combed
And worked on with shears,
He has to have cockleburs
Plucked from his ears.

“Look out for the dog,”
The sign on our door,
Isn't meant as a warning,
It's meant as a chore.



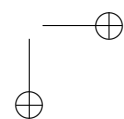
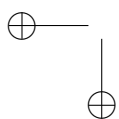


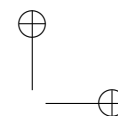
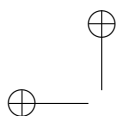
ON NAMING A DOG

You think it's hard to name a child?
Then try to name a dog.
Compared to this, to name a child's
Like falling off a log.

One holds for Tip, one holds for Rags,
One says it must be Rover.
One swears it really should be Spots
Because of spots all over.

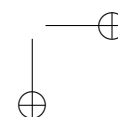
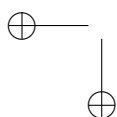
When naming dogs, no one agrees
Upon the same appellatives,
And unlike children, it's not wise
To name them after relatives.

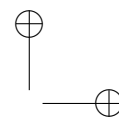
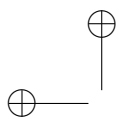




SUMMARY OF SUMMER

The very height of summer bliss,
To me at least, I'd say is this:
To lounge about for hour on hour
Within a leafy, fruit-filled bower
And read a book or let it lie
Beneath a sleepy, half-closed eye,
And slowly sip a cooling drink
And listen to the clink-a-clink
Of ice, and bite a juicy peach
And stretch as far as I can reach
And hear the rustle of the trees
And murmur of the busy bees
And smell the perfume of a rose
And wriggle carefree, shoeless toes
And scratch an itch and yawn a yawn
And watch while someone mows the lawn.





MOTHS

Moths feed
On tweed

And splurge
On serge.

They dote
On coat,

Decant
The pant,

Digest
The vest,

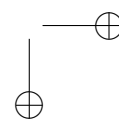
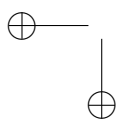
Make shirt
Dessert. . . .

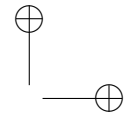
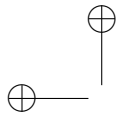
And though
They go,

I'm told,
For old,

Would rather,
I gather,

Chew
What's new.



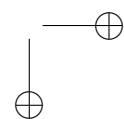
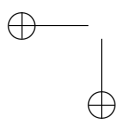


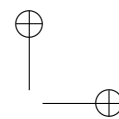
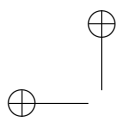
**CATS MAY HAVE NINE LIVES,
BUT I HAVE ONLY ONE**

Cats like me, be they known or strange,
Especially the ones with mange.
They love to leap into my lap
And settle for a nice long nap,
And when at last they leave my chair
They're generous indeed with hair.

Cats like me, those at least with paws
Equipped with extra-pointed claws.
They never miss a single chance
To frolic with my Sunday pants,
And do their best to make my serge
Look just like tweeds, or on the verge.

Cats *like* me, that is very clear,
And probably they think it's queer
That when they've shown themselves so fond,
I don't respond.

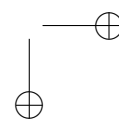
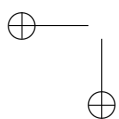


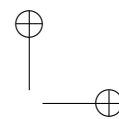
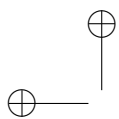


GETTING LEFT

The Joneses next door are away on a trip.
They left us their key and instructions.
How long since the day they drove blithely away
I'll leave to your grimmest deductions.

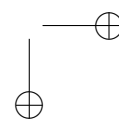
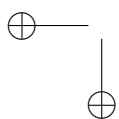
The Joneses, I've said, are away on a trip.
It's a fact that we're keenly aware of.
We also would roam, but we're tied here at home
By the things we've been left to take care of.

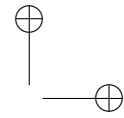
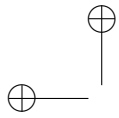




DEAR DEPARTED

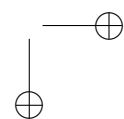
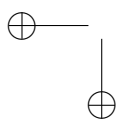
I have a nice address book,
I've had it quite a spell.
It's full of streets and cities
Where people used to dwell.

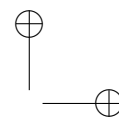
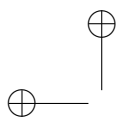




ACCORDING TO SCHEDULE

Back once again from their winter-long rests
Are the ants and the flies and all manner of pests.
They've had their vacation, and now, with fresh powers,
They're ready for work when we try to take ours.



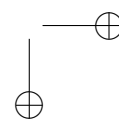
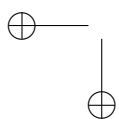


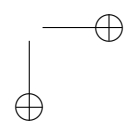
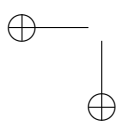
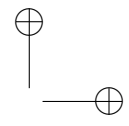
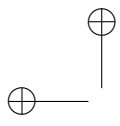
NO ELEPHANT, I

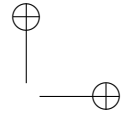
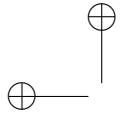
An elephant never forgets,
But then, is an elephant told
To stop for a pound of butter,
The kind with the label of gold,

Drop in, on the way, at the cleaner's
And see if the clothes are ready,
Get the films that were left at the drugstore,
And phone Mary Lou and Freddy?

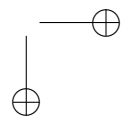
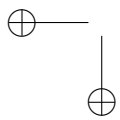
An elephant never forgets,
From Jan. to the end of December,
But oh, what a very little
An elephant has to remember!

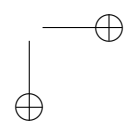
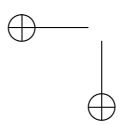
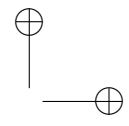
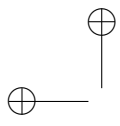


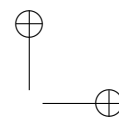
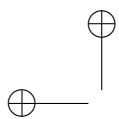




THE ROVING EYE

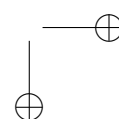
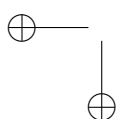


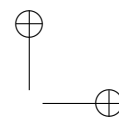
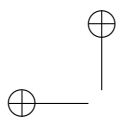




GOOD LOOKING

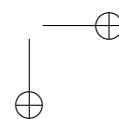
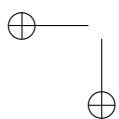
Girls in skin-tight knee-length pants
Seldom get a second glance.
Why? Because there's something wrong?
No, the first look lasts too long.

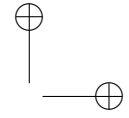
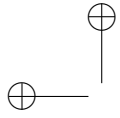




GUESSING GAME

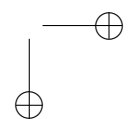
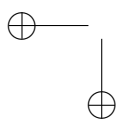
It's hard to know what to deduce
From girls who wear their sweaters loose.

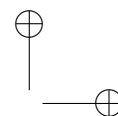
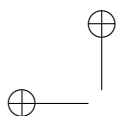




THE MODEL

She's engaged in a business that's plainly unlawful:
Making dresses look good that on others look awful.





NO CHANGE

Raymond Loewy, industrial designer who has redesigned everything from telephones to automobiles, thinks women are "pretty good just the way they are." NEWS ITEM

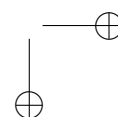
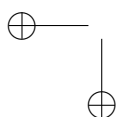
Now almost everything, we find,
Has been remodeled, redesigned.
New shapes, new colors catch the eye, boy,
In automobile, phone, and highboy.

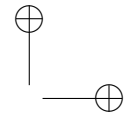
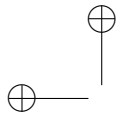
But, happily, though men may jape,
They don't redo the female shape,
Nor do they wax enthusiastic
For substitutes made out of plastic.

Unlike most things around the home,
They don't daub women up with chrome
Or streamline till no lines are showing
And all's the same, both coming, going.

It's good to know, with all this twaddle
About the latest, newest model,
And things reshaped, without compunction,
To cause the form to fit the function,

That women, unlike phone and car,
Are pretty good the way they are.

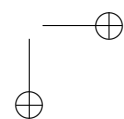
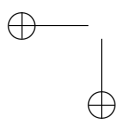


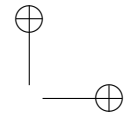
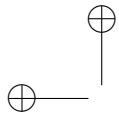


**APPEARANCES ARE DECEIVING,
ESPECIALLY MINE**

I am the sort that's known as wiry.
I am not very quickly tirey.
My strength is great for one so slender;
I bounce right back from any bender.
Though small and slight, I have endurance
And pass all tests for life insurance.

And yet, amidst a crowd of females,
I envy those unwiry he-males
With chiseled chin and massive shoulders
And biceps big and hard as boulders
And barrel chest that's blackly hairy,
Whom I shall be around to bury.

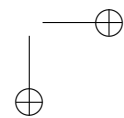
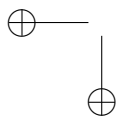


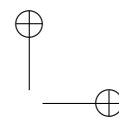
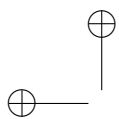


HAIR APPARENT

A woman is classed, with meticulous care,
By nothing so much as the shade of her hair.
There's the platinum blonde, and the strawberry too,
The redhead, with titian or copperish hue,
The light brown, the dark brown, and also the medium,
As well as the black – to list more would cause tedium.

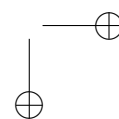
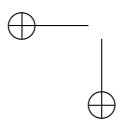
A man though, *re* hair, is just jetsam and flotsam,
He comes in two classes: he has or has not some.

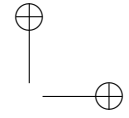
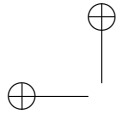




DAY AT THE BEACH

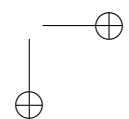
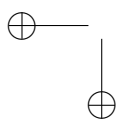
Should I, perhaps, seem somewhat glum
From looking near and far,
It's not the shape of things to come
But shape of things that are.

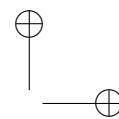
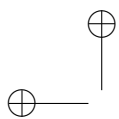




RIGHT DOWN MY ALLEY

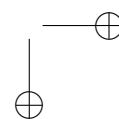
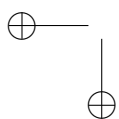
Women bowlers I extol,
I watch them quite a lot.
I like them for the frames they bowl
And for the frames they've got.

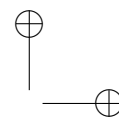
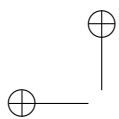




**ADVICE TO THOSE WHO WRITE
THE ADS FOR AIRLINES**

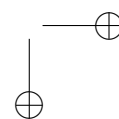
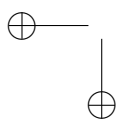
I'm bored with the length and the wingspan,
And horsepower gives me no pleasure.
The why and the wherefore
Of speed I don't care for. . .
But what does the stewardess measure?

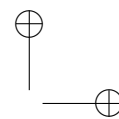
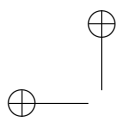




OBSERVATION OF A HARVESTER

As anyone notes
Who's a halfway knower,
It isn't the oats
That are wild, it's the sower.

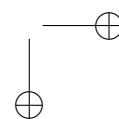
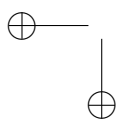


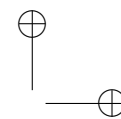
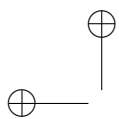


FOR BETTER, FOR WORSE

White's a sign of purity,
So doubtless it is right
That at the time of altar-heading
At almost any proper wedding
The bride is dressed in white.

White's a sign of purity,
Of innocence, and lack
Of sinfulness and moral skidding
And having done the Devil's bidding.
(The groom is dressed in black.)



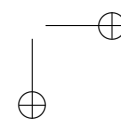
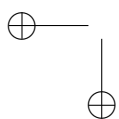


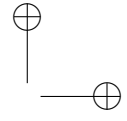
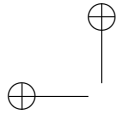
NEW AND IMPROVED METHODS

When I was young and cars were young,
It thrilled me to the marrow
To drive my girl from place to place,
Her face so very near my face.
(The seats, those days, were narrow.)

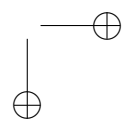
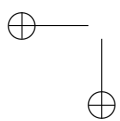
No automatic shifting then,
By hand the gears were speeded
From second into high. Ah me!
By chance I sometimes touched her knee
And blushed as much as she did.

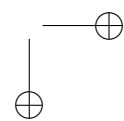
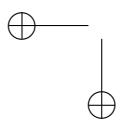
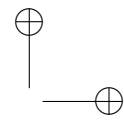
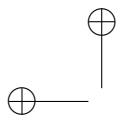
With seats so wide, and with no need
To push and pull a lever,
How I would get along today,
If I were young, I could not say.
I think I would, however.

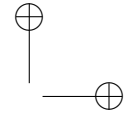
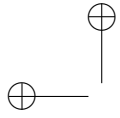




THE BODY POLITIC



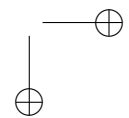
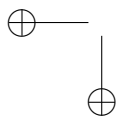


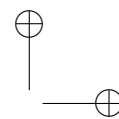
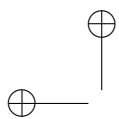


DEBATE

Convinced by Con,
Persuaded by Pro,
The pendulum mind
Swings to and fro,

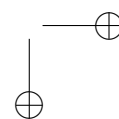
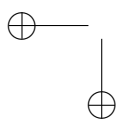
Till cleared is the hall
And closed is the door,
When it comes to rest
Where it was before.

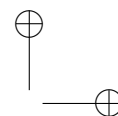
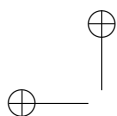




THE NEUTRALIST

The neutralist stands on the side lines,
Which for his sake we hope are wide lines,
And cheers both sides with equal measure.
(Impartiality's his treasure.)
He cannot tell the wrong from right,
Black always looks the same as white,
And free and slave and gay and grim
Are very much the same to him.
So there he stands, all happy-sad,
And waves his banner, which is plaid.

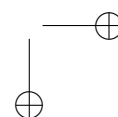
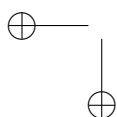


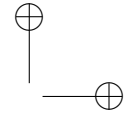
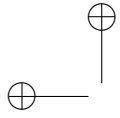


ON THE NOSE

Tourists Tweak Truman Nose on His Statue in the Capitol.
NEWSPAPER HEADLINE

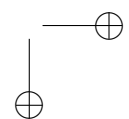
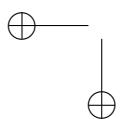
Tourists, passing, can't resist
A little tweak, a little twist.
Sightseers are inclined to straggle
And lag a bit, for one last waggle.
But varied treatments gets the nose
From kindly friends and bitter foes:
Affectionate and tender pats
From True Deal-loving Democrats,
But from the GOP such whacks
As may in time cause chips and cracks.
And meanwhile Harry, carved in stone,
Must take the tweaks without a moan,
Must suffer on in marble silence,
Absorbing all these acts of violence.
Sad fate, to stand there cold and dumb
With nose that only others thumb.

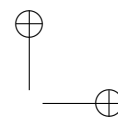
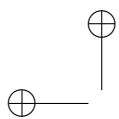




CONSERVATIVES

Conservatives, the ones I know,
Would like to keep the status quo,
Conserving all things, while they live,
Save persons less conservative.



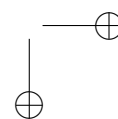
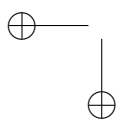


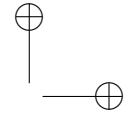
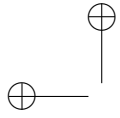
DOLLARS AND CENSUS

Although the national debt is growing, your own share of it is getting smaller because the debt is not rising as rapidly as the population. NEWS ITEM

What matter if the debt we cuss
Still mounts, and none will pare it,
So long as there are more of us
To share it?

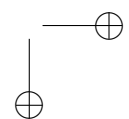
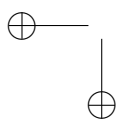
Although the debt may grow each year,
Each day, each hour, each second,
Let us remain in best of cheer
And fecund.

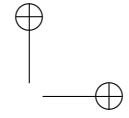
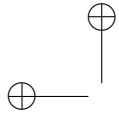




WILLING WORKERS

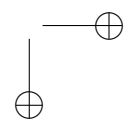
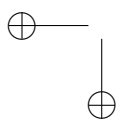
People with an axe to grind,
Much as we deplore them,
Are no worse than those we find
Turning grindstones for them.

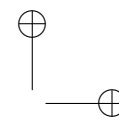
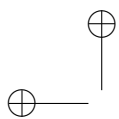




LUX
(OR ANY OTHER KIND OF SOFT SOAP)
ET VERITAS

O, Truth, which should at least be found
In lofty places, I am bound
To wonder just a little when
High officeholders, honest men,
Deny, when interviewed at eight,
A vicious rumor, calmly state,
“I’ll not resign,” and then at nine –
Or half an hour before – resign.



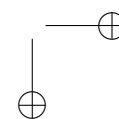
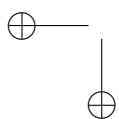


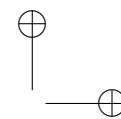
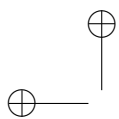
BUST

*Russian mountain climbers will try to plant a bust of Lenin
on top of Mt. Everest.* NEWS ITEM

To climb a mountain's not enough
For those with Party ardor.
They try to make it really tough,
They hope to make it harder.

And so they lug along a bust
Of Lenin. Well, so be it.
At least the thing will be, I trust,
Where very few will see it.



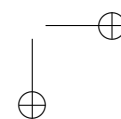
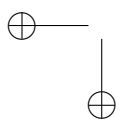


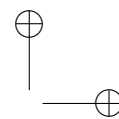
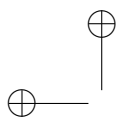
NEW HIGH

Government Rhetoric at New Confusion Peak. NEWSPAPER
HEADLINE

Thoughts were never half so hobbledy,
And gook has seldom been so gobbledy.
Each sentence rolls across the pages
And comes to rest by easy stages.

No inexpensive thing, no bargain
Is goofy governmental jargon
Which one is hired for writing, and
Two more are paid to understand.



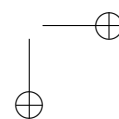
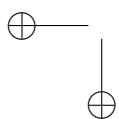


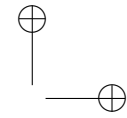
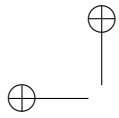
GONE TO POT

The French Overseas Ministry has officially listed an Ivory Coast Senator as dead – eaten by cannibal constituents. NEWS ITEM

Unlike our land, where a Senator,
 However wrong his reasoning,
Is a seasoned statesman thanks to years
 And not to added seasoning,

On the Ivory Coast, a Senator
 Who is plump of body and limb
Doesn't serve, like us, his constituents,
 His constituents serve him.





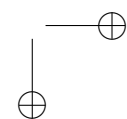
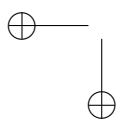
CLAM BREAK

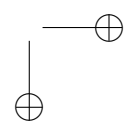
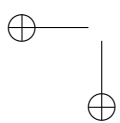
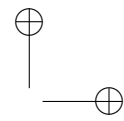
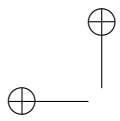
*Sea gulls use a perch on the Secretariat Building of the UN
for breaking clams. NEWS ITEM*

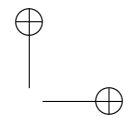
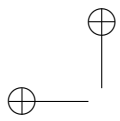
In from the sea the sea gulls fly,
If lucky, with a full supply
Of clams to dine on.
From lofty perches, nearly spent,
They scan below the gray cement
They get a line on.

Like bombers from an offshore carrier
They drop their clams, the more the merrier,
A crash resulting.
Then, swooping earthward, dip their wings
Close by the shattered, battered things,
And rise exulting.

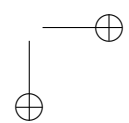
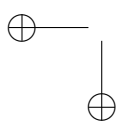
Inside the Secretariat, no joy
Like this for persons who employ
All means they know of
To reach the meat from front or back
Of problems that they cannot crack
And can't let go of.

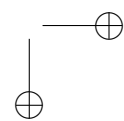
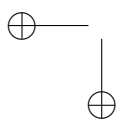
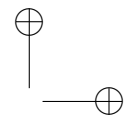
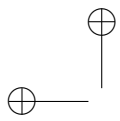


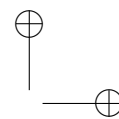
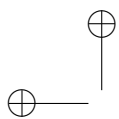




EXTRA-VERSE

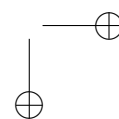
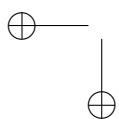


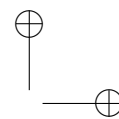
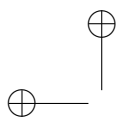




NEW YORK IS WHERE

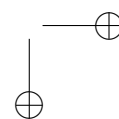
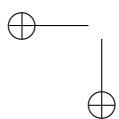
New York is where those people live
Who sleep upon a cot and give
Their beds as well as their elixir
Along with ice, of course, and mixer
And hours when they would rather read
Or rest, if they should have the need,
To those who think New York is nice
To visit once a year, or twice,
But not a place in which to live
And sleep upon a cot and give
Their beds as well as their elixir
Along with ice, of course, and mixer
And hours when they would rather read
Or rest, if they should have the need,
To those who think New York is nice
To visit once a year, or twice.

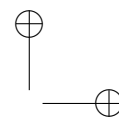
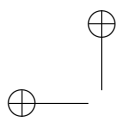




LET'S NOT JOIN THE LADIES

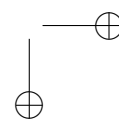
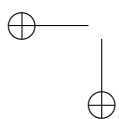
After jokes told off-color,
Those on seem much duller.

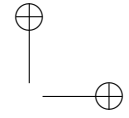
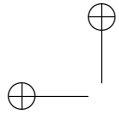




ICED DRINK

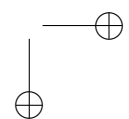
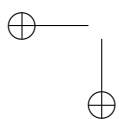
How cunningly the ice holds back
And lingers underneath
And lets you raise and tilt the glass,
Then smacks you in the teeth.

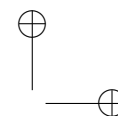
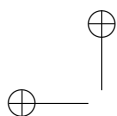




LOCAL BOY

In my home town I'm still a boy –
A fact I should, but don't, enjoy.
For as I lose my teeth and hair,
I'd like to gain respect. But there
I'm still a callow, half-grown pup. . .
Though I grow old, I can't grow up.





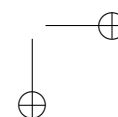
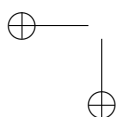
THE LOVE LIFE (AND DEATH) OF A MOOSE

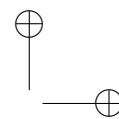
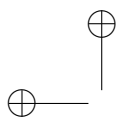
Up in Newfoundland some 30 moose, mistaking Diesel train horns for mating calls, have been lured to death on the tracks.
NEWS ITEM

Imagine this beast of the frozen Northeast
With its annual amorous craze on,
Seduced by the toot of a choo-choo en route
Into making a fatal liaison.

Conceive of its sighs as it straddles the ties,
Unaware of the killer it's dating.
The honk of the train has gone straight to its brain,
And its mind is completely on mating.

Appalling? Of course, but just think how much worse
It would be, and no words shall we weasel,
Should an engine tear loose from its tracks when a moose
Makes what sounds like the call of a Diesel.

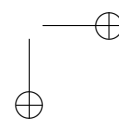
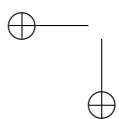


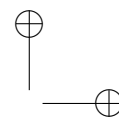
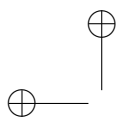


ACCIDENT POLICY

At accidents you'll always find
A person of commanding kind
Who, while the others stand and stare,
Cries out, "Step back and give him air."

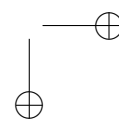
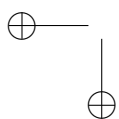
He has the poise, the nerve, the knack,
And, when the crowd has fallen back,
As helpful people always do,
He also has a close-up view.

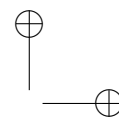
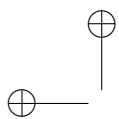




LINES ON LINES

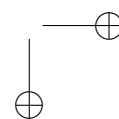
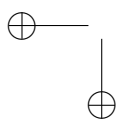
The older I get, the less I pine for
Things that I have to stand in line for.

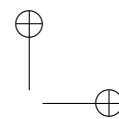
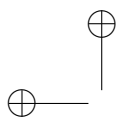




**WOULD YOU MIND
TAKING YOUR ELBOW OUT OF MY EAR?**

“Come on,” they said, “let’s double up
And all go in our car.”
Now we are in, and you should see
How doubled up we are.

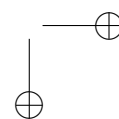
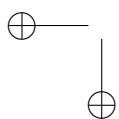


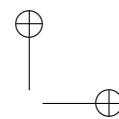
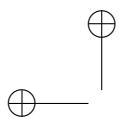


NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE, ALMOST

They scoffed at me, they called me fool,
They tapped their heads and sneered.
But still, despite their tauntings cruel,
I tried, I persevered.

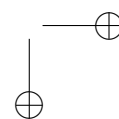
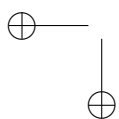
I said I'd show the skeptic band,
I'd do the thing for spite.
They said I couldn't do it, and
I proved that they were right.

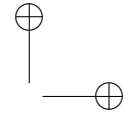
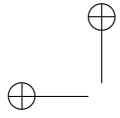




GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

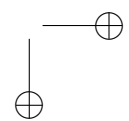
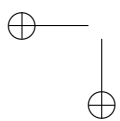
Good sportsmanship we hail, we sing,
It's always pleasant when you spot it.
There's only one unhappy thing:
You have to lose to prove you've got it.

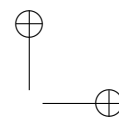
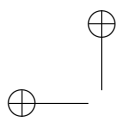




**SHORT DEFINITION
OF MOST SPORTS**

Exercise
In disguise.

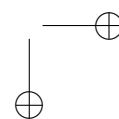
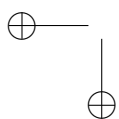


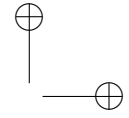
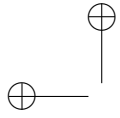


ALL EARS

Out of the juiceless, the utterly useless,
 Across-the-room faintly heard small talk,
Out of the mumble, the meaningless jumble
 Of giggles and laughter and tall talk,

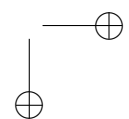
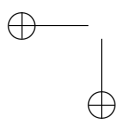
Out of the chatter, the purposeless patter
 That seems without reason or aim,
Comes one little word that's as easily heard
 As a gong or a siren – my name.

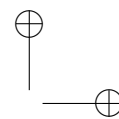
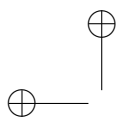




UP TO A POINT

With pointed remarks I often agree,
Provided they haven't been pointed at me.

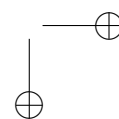
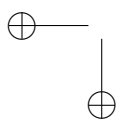


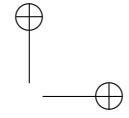
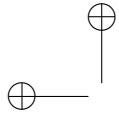


SECRET WEAPON

When people ask me, "Can you keep
A secret?" after probings deep
Within my soul, I say I can,
And I'm a very honest man.

My lack of qualms, you see, is owing to
The fact I *can*, though I'm not going to.





CONSIDERED OPINION

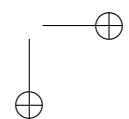
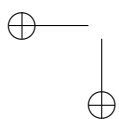
What do I think about So-and-so?

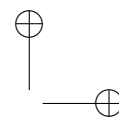
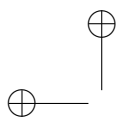
I should answer, when asked, like a shot.

If I spar, if I lag as if held by a tether,

It's only because I am wondering whether

He's a friend of the asker or not.

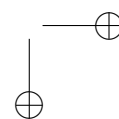
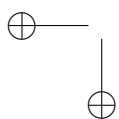


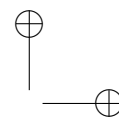
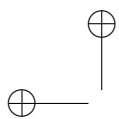


TICKET TAKEN

I find around me, thick as thickets,
All sorts of people selling tickets
For benefits, bizarre bazaars,
For chances (long) on shiny cars,
For things I do not care to go to
But which, I swear, I can't say no to.

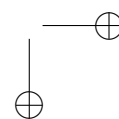
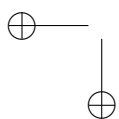
The ticket sellers swarm about me,
Break down my will, completely rout me,
And sometimes – this is worst of all –
Before some raffle, play, or ball,
Give me ten tickets, shush my pleas,
And brightly say, “Now you sell these!”

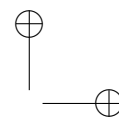
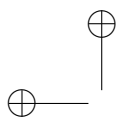




LONG TIME NO M.D.

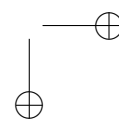
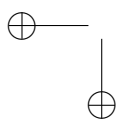
In doctors' waiting rooms one waits
For such a lengthy spell
That there is time to read, to write,
To get a drink, to eat a bite,
To talk to others of one's plight,
To take a nap, to think of flight,
And maybe to get well.

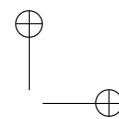
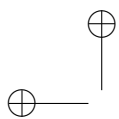




ON SEEING AN X-RAY PICTURE OF MYSELF

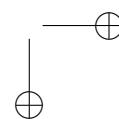
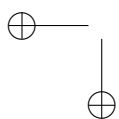
Although I've really never been
Entranced with my exterior,
I must admit I'm glad for skin,
My inside's so much eerier.

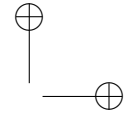
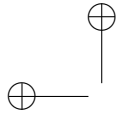




AH, SWEET MYSTERY!

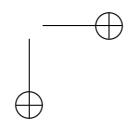
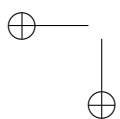
The writer of whodunits strews
Along the way important clues
And sly allusions
Designed to be a help to each
And every one of us to reach
The wrong conclusions.

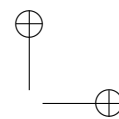
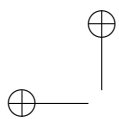




NIGHT THOUGHTS

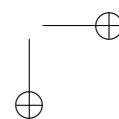
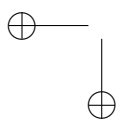
The dream that filled me so with rapture
Try as I may, I can't recapture.
The nightmare, though, that left me screaming
I promptly go right back to dreaming.

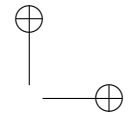
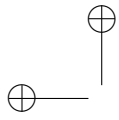




DAY AFTER DAY

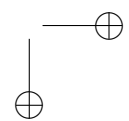
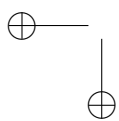
Midnight and morning,
Never a letup;
Wanting to stay up,
Hating to get up.

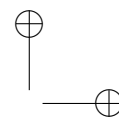
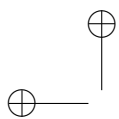




NIP AND TUCKERED

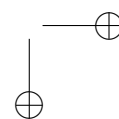
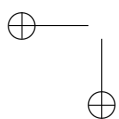
They say he hits the bottle, and, alack,
The way he looks, the bottle must hit back.

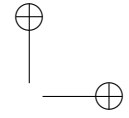
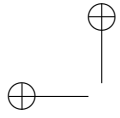




TWENTY-FIVE WORDS OR LESS

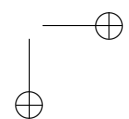
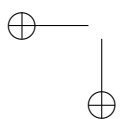
Breathes there a man with soul so dead
Who never to himself hath said,
 On having sent a letter
Or slogged to a contest which
He did not win and thus grow rich,
 "I still think mine was better"?

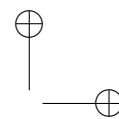
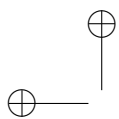




CASH IN HAND

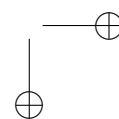
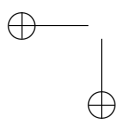
Cold cash they call it, and they're right,
For though we try to hold it tight
With feverish and frenzied clutch,
It leaves before it's warmed up much.

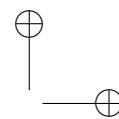
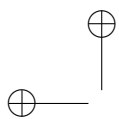




IN THE BEGINNING

As I've learned at the cost of many a buck
Since my days as a starry-eyed lad,
There is such a thing as "beginner's luck,"
And more often than not, it's bad.

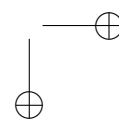
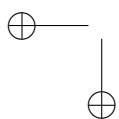


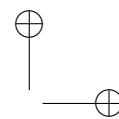
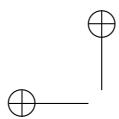


CHAIR CHOICE

Youth seeks out the easy chair,
Gains it with a leap,
Throws a leg across the arm,
Sinks in cushions deep.

Age seeks out the straight, hard chair,
Perches like a cup.
Age must think, on sitting down,
Of the getting up.





NEARING THE FINISH

As I often remark when I'm low as can be,
It's a terrible rat race I'm in,
And what is still worse, I'm beginning to see,
The rats are quite likely to win.

