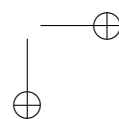
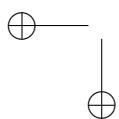
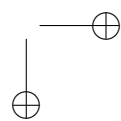
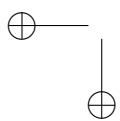
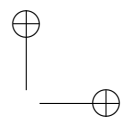
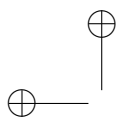
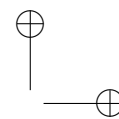
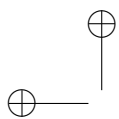


BULLINGER BOUND
& OTHER POEMS



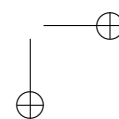
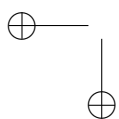


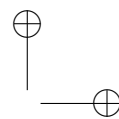
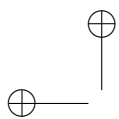


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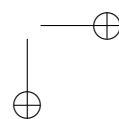
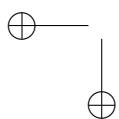
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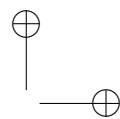
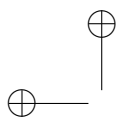
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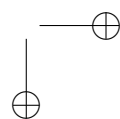
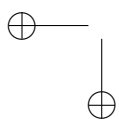


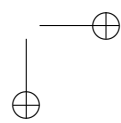
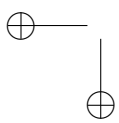
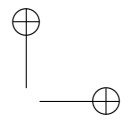
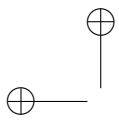
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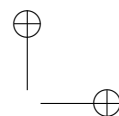
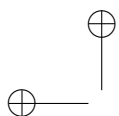




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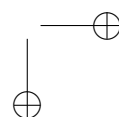
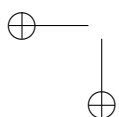


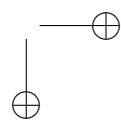
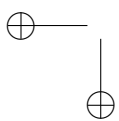
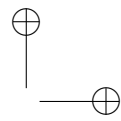
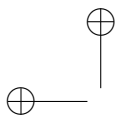


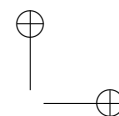
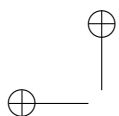
FOREWORD

The writer makes due and grateful acknowledgments to the editors of the *Yale Review*, the *New York Herald-Tribune*, and the *Saturday Review of Literature*, who first printed some of the verses in this volume.

With respect to the personalities described in part of the book, the author has endeavored to deal with them in such a manner that he might, like a better poet before him, quote Shakespeare's disclaimer: "Oldcastle died a martyr. And this is not the man."

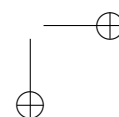
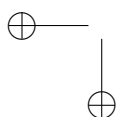


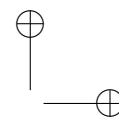
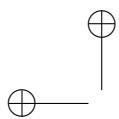




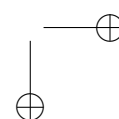
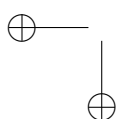
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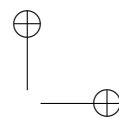
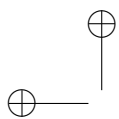
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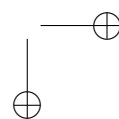
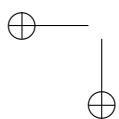


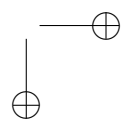
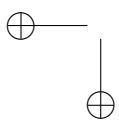
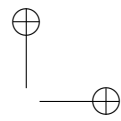
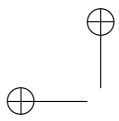
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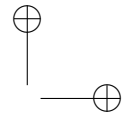
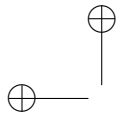




BULLINGER BOUND







CHORUS FROM A TRAGEDY

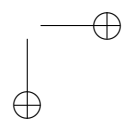
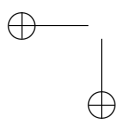
The world is no longer good.
Men's hearts no more are kind.
There is coldness in the mind,
Bitterness in the blood.
And I am not resigned.

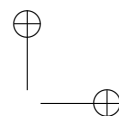
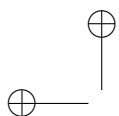
When they talk of burning things
That touch me to the heart,
They trammel music and art,
They wither Ariel's wings
Or tear his pinions apart,

Anatomizing, digesting,
Drying the sap that ran
Once in the brain of man
Riotous and unresting,
Guiltless of plot or plan.

There is no pulse in the vein.
And the staunch muscle has slacked.
A blight has devoured the bract.
Color dies to a stain.
Wisdom dwindles to fact.

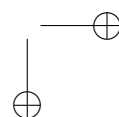
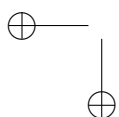
And I feel as dead as the ash
Of an unregarded fire.

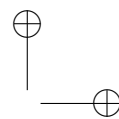
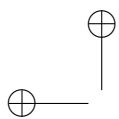




The elements of desire,
Lovely and wild and rash,
Separate and retire.

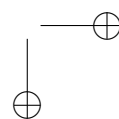
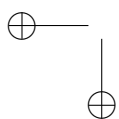
We shall not have things as they were,
Not as they were before.
If I had the heart to restore,
Would the chestnut thicken its burr?
Would the olive leaf once more?

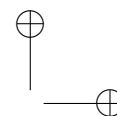
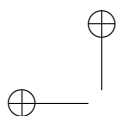




THE AMES BOYS

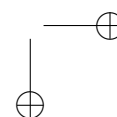
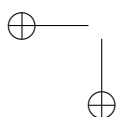
When ancient Greece bred such boys as these,
Their act was chanted by Simonides,
Who, whether to the wire or to the reed,
Made giant music of the giant deed.
Tell Sparta, overthrown by time and fate,
Though song has lapsed, the deed was full as great.

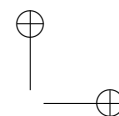
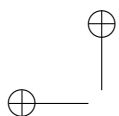




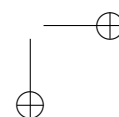
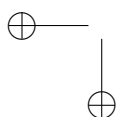
SOMETHING WATCHING

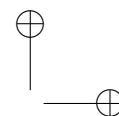
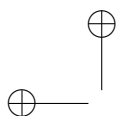
What am I that I should find my way with words?
Finding ways has always been difficult in the best countries.
And clearly we are entering one of the worst,
Or were in it always from our birth and our beginning.
I have listened to a number of clever men
And asked them questions and tried to understand
With my usual success. They on their part
Didn't seem as bewildered as I felt and feel.
Yet I am convinced that the rotund periods dripping
From So and So's pen, the confident definitions,
All his rational bright armor and gleaming panoply
Of hypothesis, cover incomprehension as vague
As my particular ignorance. Once out fishing
On a grey-lit lake in the dawn's chill travail I blundered
Through a thin channel between pine-pillared islands.
There on a rock a squadron of sheldrakes sleeping
Rested silent. I saw them over my shoulder,
Stopped rowing, let the boat slide with its own momentum,
Nearer, nearer. They woke, felt the unfamiliar
Perhaps the inimical, looking about uneasily.
But I was too quiet, too avid of the pattern
Of subdued color and their peace, too keen to absorb
Intimacy of wildness and escaped the dishonor
Of frightening them. I see them when I am alone,
Ghostly color subjugated by leaden light,
Their beauty and uneasiness that never reached





To the hateful orgasm of fear. As I drifted beyond
I saw them relax and preen themselves at their ease,
Sight not unpleasing, and lost them though not in memory.
On the mind's frontier men have fancied something unknown,
Suspected from an odd intimation of strangeness
In the environment, not seen, not heard, not smelt,
There nevertheless. We presently overlook it,
Convinced it is really familiar, forget our malaise,
And relax and preen ourselves. Does whatever it is
Congratulate itself that it didn't frighten us?





TIMES CHANGE

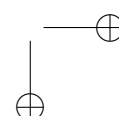
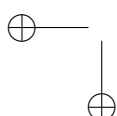
First there were poets (I like to imagine them)
Who sang at the Spring Equinox, chanted at harvest-time,
How the wheat became bread and the grape changed in
substance
By the year's chemistry.

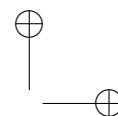
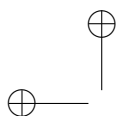
Then came the scholars, laborious philosophers,
Aware of relation, worried by proportion,
At stand because the circle had irrational properties,
Or because a verse captured them.

They wrote big books, categorically exhausting
Subjects they could not define scientifically,
Led on by rhetoric, suborned by logic
To treason against reason.

After them the deluge. Comes the professor,
Comes the sharp doctrinaire easily expounding,
Easily solving the Sphinx's enigma –
With what a solution!

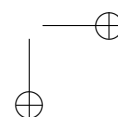
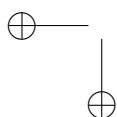
I for one grow weary of the graphs and the indices.
I hate like Horace the Persian apparatus.
Ex hypothesi, hypotheses only hypothesize.
Give me back the poets.

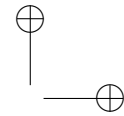
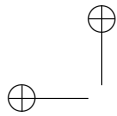




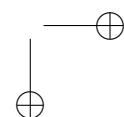
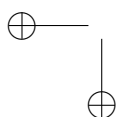
**THE WRECK OF THE
“WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE”**

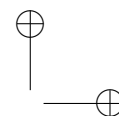
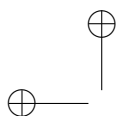
The “William Shakespeare” was a clipper-ship.
She was bound for Cipango and Serendip.
She was built to weather all Cape Stiffs
And discover unimaginable Teneriffes.
And I tell you it was a noble day
When they sang out forrard “Anchors a-weigh.”
We had not been very long at sea
When we ran into Pirates of the High Barbary.
You ought to have hearkened the tune they sang,
That loud-mouthed, foul-mouthed, lubberly gang.
Their ship was crank, they were pumping and bailing,
But they seemed to think they knew all about sailing.
So we must pay ’em, if you please,
Blackmail for daring to cross overseas,
Which same we utterly denied,
And we sank that lot with a solid broadside.
After that the sailing was plain,
Till up blew a South Sea hurricane,
That could catch a frigate and crack her spine,
A hurling whirling twister from the ‘Line.’
The way it blew was a shame and a sin
And we had to reef our royals in.
But the clipper lived up to her fair renown,
And that was how we ran our Easting down.



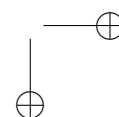
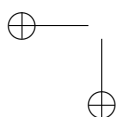


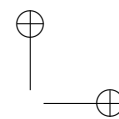
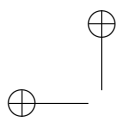
The hurricane dropped to a steady gale,
So we crowded on a press of sail.
And we were glad that a strong wind blew,
Even if we lost a jib or two.
We sailed through the rough, we sailed through the fine,
Outsailed the “Flying Dutchman” and the “Palatine,”
And we held on South till we swung away
From the ice-blink over Antarcticay.
Nor did we lead a life of ease,
Sheering off and jibing in the berg-deviled seas.
So it was natural, I opine,
To come about and head for the ‘Line.’
For the ship was battered and topsy-turvy,
And half of the crew were down with scurvy,
And the other half was sore perplexed.
And I don’t like to think of what happened next.
We must have been sailing in a dream almost,
For we ran all standing on the Guinea Coast.
Now the “William Shakespeare” is a stranded wreck
With a gang of witch-doctors dancing on her deck,
Making the deuce of a hideous row,
While a moonstruck sorceress teaches ’em how.
Though I think their ardor must diminish,
They look so pettish and bluish and thinnish;
And they move like corpses swinging on a gibbet,
And exhibit whatever they have to exhibit.
What your notions may be I do not know,
But it’s not my idea of much of a show.
That moonstruck sorceress she controls
Every fibre of their feckless souls.
And her words are frankincense and myrrh,
And good and bad only happen to her.
So the imbecile chorus whoops and yells
Her jargon of broken syllables,



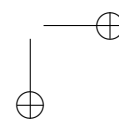
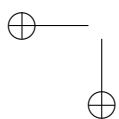


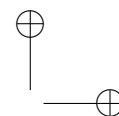
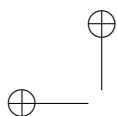
Not like Ophelia's, I confess,
Turning Hell to favor and to prettiness.
The shriek grows thinner day by day,
But that is something I must not say,
For a heathen Caboceer mutters to me:
"You keep your mouth shut, or beat you'll be."
Yet somehow I think the time is near
To square accounts with that Caboceer.
And though it be no part of our calling,
They tell me he's in for a bout of keel-hauling.
When he's attended to, we'll take on the job
Of the moonstruck sorceress and her moonstruck mob.
For I can't abide those whiners and wailers
All over a ship where there used to be sailors.
And it will not profit them the juju-charm,
When they're handed over to the Secular Arm,
Whose operation perhaps isn't clever
But what it does is for ever and ever.
The "William Shakespeare" may be hard and fast
But she'll get to sea again at last.
The sands have buried her, stern and bow,
But we'll work her off of that bar somehow,
It may be she looks like a total loss.
She's going to follow the albatross,
Which I believe has a gentler sound
Than tracking a slow-worm underground.
Her masts are down. I don't care a fig.
We'll work her out on a jury-rig.
O white as hoar-frost the track she ploughs,
With the big black porpoises breaching round her bows!
She'll make her fortune, whatever befall,
And glide through the calm and crash through the squall.
If the compass fail us, the stars shall teach.
And those damned witch-doctors can dance on the beach,





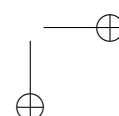
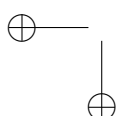
Making the deuce of a hideous row.
But we'll be hauling true tackle somehow,
Hauling true tackle, singing our song,
"Outbound for Teneriffe! Storm along!"

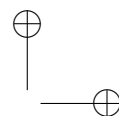
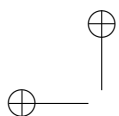




HARD LUCK STORY

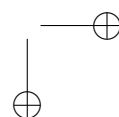
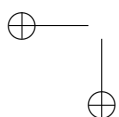
Nobody heeded him, least of all the poets.
And, it may be, that passion should not have been heeded,
A vacant negative thing, unnoticed and unneeded.
And perhaps his plea ought not to have been pleaded
And could not be conceded.
Yet he saw poetry, familiar with visions,
Shakings of the soul, precisions,
Unpredictable immensities,
And thought like hot glass drawn to thin intensities,
Shadows protecting
Things separate that touched, beyond the brains connecting.
This he had his share of.
This he was aware of.
And this in its queer way his fate took care of.
Yet nobody heeded. There was bitter profession,
Harsh stricture,
Open ignoring of the incompetent picture
He was said to have painted.
And perhaps weakness fainted,
Accepting depression.
And till too late no one made intercession.
He was an anatomist, too skillful at neglecting
What was obvious, for all his sharp dissecting,
Not altogether expecting
Shadows protecting.

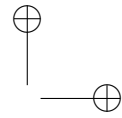
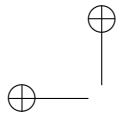




JOHN JAY CHAPMAN

Gleaming courage without fault,
When the night has come, must halt.
Knight of the single hand,
Star-touching, star-crossed,
Even in this land
It is not lost.

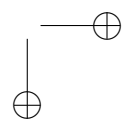
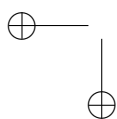


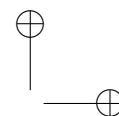
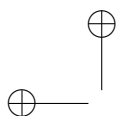


SINTRAM

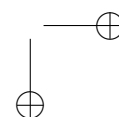
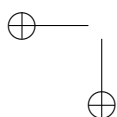
“Evil is not a problem but a fact” – *A. W. Ryder.*

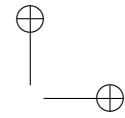
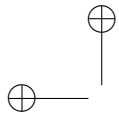
Sintram and his companions
Marched over crags and down canyons.
And all in vain he abided
By what the world had decided,
Though he had not enough suspected
The things that the world had rejected.
The companions were not attractive
Though shockingly vital and active.
And Sintram himself lacked much,
Vivacity, grace, verve, touch,
Experience, common sense,
In a word intelligence.
Sintram had early framed
A system of thought that aimed
To explain most things as well
As the next man's. But sad to tell,
Philosophical notions of Sintram,
The whole Cosmos conspired to splinter 'em.
And daily his soul was grieved,
Because of the things he believed.
For the thing he had counted upon
Encountered Fate head on.
And Fate always wins the decision
When there is such a collision.



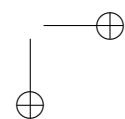
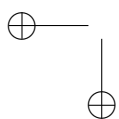


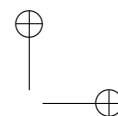
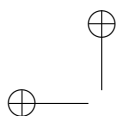
As for the companions they uttered
Suggestions with platitude buttered.
In fact what they had to say
Did not enliven the way.
And the hedgehog wrapped round the spear
Symbolically made it appear
That a vigorous pushing plan
Did little to help a man.
And in an eloquent style,
Tinctured with venom and bile,
The dread twain, Death and the Devil
Reduced all life to their level,
Suggesting in excellent taste
The negative worth of the chaste,
An adjective which they hinted
Was a coin that weakness had minted.
And Death said with heightening pallor
That there's little value in valor,
Which is like intelligence, only
Prolonging a contest lonely.
What use is it to contend
When the struggle has but one end?
How Sintram detested the führer
Provided by Albrecht Dürer.
What good are outward arms
Against the inner alarms? —
Or why keep the body clean
When the spirit's involved with obscene,
Indescribable, miscreant powers
That soil the soul at all hours,
Extending their jurisdiction
Over every desire and conviction?
All was delusion, confusion.
And Sintram saw no conclusion.





Books it appeared could not tell
And experience helped just as well.
The wind blew sharper and colder.
The Devil was at his shoulder.
And steep was the way down the Pit.
And he must continue in it,
Deprived of a trust overpast,
Reconciled to the darkness at last.
And yet as he grievously pondered
Of beauty departed or squandered,
Of excellence never achieved,
The shadow of fact he perceived,
Cast by a sun hid behind
Ramparts that darkened the mind,
The darkening ramparts that reared
Over all he abhorred or he feared.
And he thought: "That shadow of night
"Is real because of the light
"The light that is sunken, caught
"Under dream, under guess, under thought,
"That I only imagine ideally,
"But which is reality – really.
"No man, duly impressed,
"Ever spoke of the Devil in jest.
"And none has ever said 'Death'
"Without a catch in the breath.
"And yet on the dolorous way,
"They are things I can suffer and say."
Thus Sintram, foredoomed to the worms,
Met the pair on equal terms,
Their power and their principality
Brought down to earth by reality
That gives the taste and the tang,
Though nevermore sweet bird sang.





AN OLD IDEA

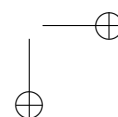
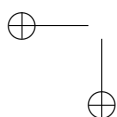
Poetry! Poetry! How I have wept for you!
Like Simonides, like Anacreon,
In that resembling them, the beauty-defeated,
And Virgil and Dante,

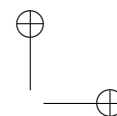
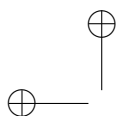
Wept blood from my eyelids, imagining cadences
Not to be captured or scribbled on paper,
Music departed, just guessed at, suspected,
Lost ere I listened.

And my brash competitors, turning over language,
Snatching at a phrase that dies as they touch it,
That goes out like a match in the gust eddying
At the door of the restaurant,

They saw a vision, dreamed too of thunderous
Manly expression, the nervous line passionate,
The image concentered, the exquisite syllables
Clashing melodious.

They heard it. I heard it. And behold the darkness
Folds around all of us the plumes of silence,
Soft darkness feathering a nest for us
Against the cold music.





SEMI-CENTENNIAL

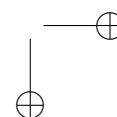
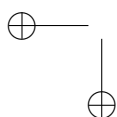
The times are whiffing back and forth
And we change with them lief or loth.
Yet the wild geese are honking north
And the trilliums flare in the undergrowth.

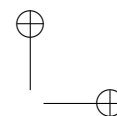
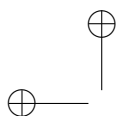
And what the poets have said or sung
However mad is still half-true.
And though I grow old who once was young,
I stand by that as I used to do.

The beard's gone grey in the fiftieth year,
The muscle's flaccid that was so staunch.
If you consider, it would appear
There's a development of paunch.

Yet what is so good as my beech-wood,
The silver shaft, and the thin green leaf?
Her beauty that is not understood
Still cleanses mirth and cleanses grief

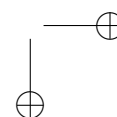
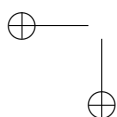
That come by changes. She can heal.
She quickens still with the same power
That blunts the spike of the solomon-seal
And sweetens the arbutus-flower.

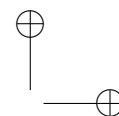
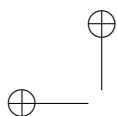




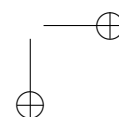
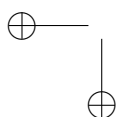
PLATONISM

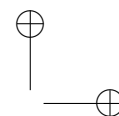
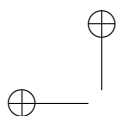
I resemble Plato only in one respect,
That I don't understand him. The fanciful manner
In which he explained the world, the type laid up
In Heaven, of which the actual is but a copy
And a poor one (Why a poor one?), still troubles me.
But in that imagined double aspect of things
(It made Aristotle angry and quite right too!)
I perceive a resemblance to thought or sentiment
(Call it what you like!) that gnaws my vitals at times.
Increasingly I am conscious of poetry
As something laid up in Heaven, whose emanation
Is only perceptible like atomic streaks
On a plate in a laboratory, hard to interpret,
A subject for inference. You guess at the speed,
Calculate the mass of the particle, in a way see,
But not as you wish to see into the burning,
Imagined yet more than actual source, which alone
Contains our satisfaction and our desire.
I have done quite a lot of snarling at my contemporaries,
Who for their part have not been backward at all
In a competition not wholly to anyone's liking.
I have even shown them in good set terms where they erred,
Demonstrated So and So's theory was quite as wrong
As his practice, winding up with a Q.E.D.
As spurious as his. And it all boiled down to this,
That his weltanschauung was not the one I was trained in,





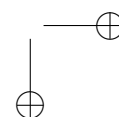
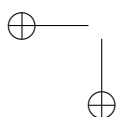
Or he wasn't trained in mine. My God, what a pity!
Whatever predilections I have or have had,
One sort of thing I shall not say any more:
"So and So's off the track. His first book had promise,
"The second marked an advance. But this last reveals
"His failure to see his arguments' implications."
Nice of me to point this out, to pour oil in his wounds
When he was raging around an insoluble problem
In his own soul and knew he had utterly failed
To solve it, better than I could possibly know.
They say the man is always his own best critic.
Was not poetry at his shoulder? Did he not know it,
The type of what we desire, laid up in Heaven?
Laid up in Heaven!

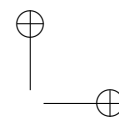
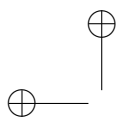




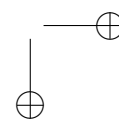
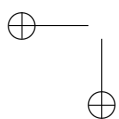
DANGEROUS ACQUAINTANCE

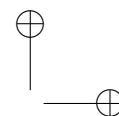
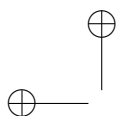
Sir William Batten, Sir William Penn,
And Sir John Minnes were Navy men.
They had chicken-livers and pasty faces
And their principal interest was their places.
Their intellects resembled a sheep's
And they were detested by Samuel Pepys,
Who set it down as one in the face of God
In the time of the second Charles by the grace of God.
Sir William Batten no doubt was shady.
His wife wasn't pleasant to Pepys's Lady.
Sir William Penn, though his son turned Quaker,
After all had taken Jamaica.
And Sir John Minnes, though he wasn't able,
Was excellent company at table.
There is a question which gives me the creeps:
Am I acquainted with Samuel Pepys?
That chap I beat in a lawsuit recently,
Is he handling my character rather indecently;
Hitting me off in phrases too fiery
For my satisfaction in some damned diary?
I can see his pen on the white page flickering:
"Bacon was there. Hence the usual bickering.
"It's perfectly clear that he thinks he's funny,
"But if he's amusing, then I'm Gene Tunney."
With the further addition nothing can soften,
"Why does he come to the club so often?"





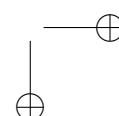
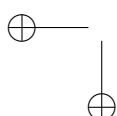
He's probably working while we are sleeping.
Ten to one Samuel Pepys is peeping.
Can you feel the edge of his scimitar?
He sees us not as we think we are.
We may be a good deal better perhaps.
We may, in fact, be excellent chaps.
He may not reach our heights and our deeps –
But he sees what he sees. What we sow he reaps.
And one cannot argue with Samuel Pepys.

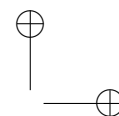
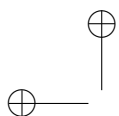




AUTUMN SACRIFICE

The yellow leaf that falls on the black river
Gives me a shiver,
Where color that has never been subdued
Plays Hell in solitude.
It is desperate as liquor and I drink of it
Who have not wit to think of it,
As I absorb the sumach by a profound
Primitive act, timeless and underground.
Somehow to Autumn have I sacrificed,
From my diner-seat, though the claret has been iced
By the Pennsylvania Railroad, that trop fin
Competitor of Brillat-Savarin.
The maple shakes off scarlet. The blood of Christ
Streams in the firmament. I have sacrificed
To Autumn. The red creeper streaking
The balanced glacial boulder was what I was seeking
And may be, a voice tells me in my mind,
What I shall find.





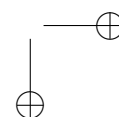
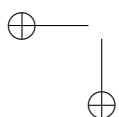
EPITAPH

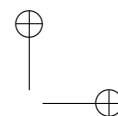
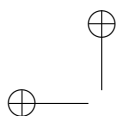
His mind was oppressed.
He was bitter and blind.
But I suggest
There was more behind!

Ambition volcanic
Naught could debase;
Stiff Puritanic
Pride of race;

Idealism,
Tough and tense,
Passed through the prism
Of common sense.

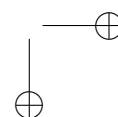
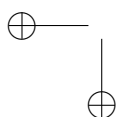
And for all his blindness
And his bitter tongue
He did me a kindness
When I was young.

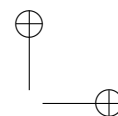
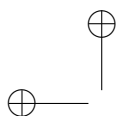




THE WAY DOWN

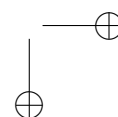
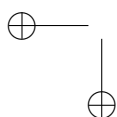
Climbing is terrible work,
But going down hill is worse.
There one encounters the curse.
Who has borne
The descent of the Matterhorn
So well as the heave and jerk
Of the upward struggle? And even the skier must know
That the height he left only those seconds ago,
That summit abandoned, now by dead sunfire stained,
Cannot be regained.
Under the moon in the valley's platinum glare,
He will remember that once he was there,
And weary and weak in the night and cold crackly-noised,
Will recall how once he stood poised.

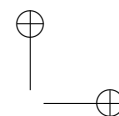
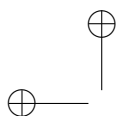




FLY-FISHING

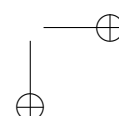
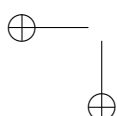
When the fly lashes out over Disappointment Pool
Or the big bend where the Queen's River turns –
You know that long canal-like stretch where cool
Darkness resides, though a blotch of white light burns
Between the shadows – there I distantly heat,
As the kingfisher on his errand darts,
As the black duck skitters downstream in a gust of fear,
As the heron like an ill-used guest departs,
What is ignored. I discover what is ignored,
What we have been in our way too willing to lose.
I knew the vibration once. I remember the chord.
I chose like others what might be unwise to choose.
The kingfisher checks, the duck settles, the heron flats down! –
The waters rush through my mind in the great town.

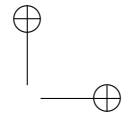
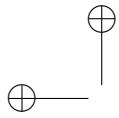




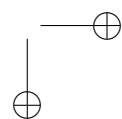
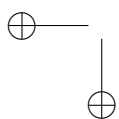
RICHARD STRONG

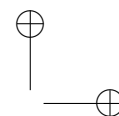
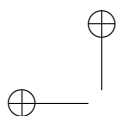
There's a foundation which gives fellowships
To the aspiring. It's connected with
The University. Four times a year
It chooses out incipient greatness, sends
The fortunate to labor where they will
At what they list. Surely it fills a place
In our complex world overstandardized.
I had been out of touch some seven years
With such things, when there reached me in the mail
A letter, with imposing forms and blanks
To fill out, with a project and a scheme,
And a reference from the applicant to myself.
The secretary wrote me that my views
Would be wholly confidential. What did I think
Of the applicant's character, intellect, enterprise,
And so on? What were the prospects of success
Of the project here inclosed? Incidentally
The applicant stated I was the one man
Competent to judge (see also the enclosed
Letter to the secretary). Now as it happens
I once wrote a romance about a land,
No matter where, where things, no matter what,
Took place. I tricked my story out with detail
Derived from books that came into my hand,
And so achieved, at least it is my hope,
Reality. Richard Strong, or so it seemed,





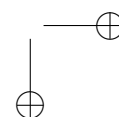
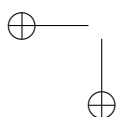
Had taken all that for corn. I was an expert
Fit to decide whether his burning spirit
Should be made flesh. I own it troubled me.
The question was an intricate one. Apparently
He knew much more about the thing than I
Had ever dreamed of, for all the glib clichés
I had worked into my work, my tongue in my cheek.
Also, I hadn't the least recollection
Of him or anything about him. Doubtless
He'd sat at my Gamaliel feet for weeks,
While I held forth on Johnson, Boswell, Goldsmith,
Keeping the class awake, as acrobats
Wake a crowd tired of lions. What I wrote
The secretary was a work of art,
Sublime, imaginative, let us say great.

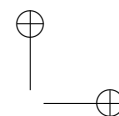
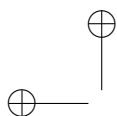




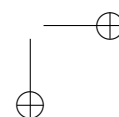
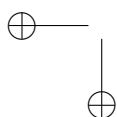
BERT ATCHISON

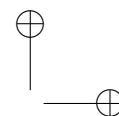
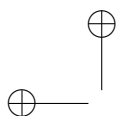
Bert Atchison was full of poetry
And dynamite. He had not been a week
In my classes before I knew that here was something
I might not find again. Mentally, physically,
Equal to the event as it arose.
And charm and friendliness were not left out.
He took things in his stride. The future lay
A smiling country before him, and still does,
Though the smile is different. He possessed the art
To realize ambitions. Most of us
Have this experience. Let us say we write
A book, labor at it, hack and hew, reform,
Insert, take out, sweat blood, and then at last
Finish what we had not intended, which bears
To the original dream such sad relation
As a chromo to the painting. Not so Bert.
It seemed his deed was better than his plan.
And at that he wasn't satisfied. He came
Out of the war covered with medals earned
In twenty-five tight places, made a fortune,
In two years by supreme ability,
And then retired, in a big way I mean.
The place he chose was a Sierra valley,
With a tremendous trout-stream, twenty miles
From anywhere. – You never saw such a place.
Huge hills overwhelmed with forest, limitless sense





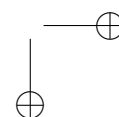
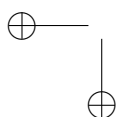
Of splendid unknown bigness. When you hunt
It feels like the beginning of the world.
Your foot's the first to tread from the birth of time
This vastness that's not hostile but invites
A man to mingle in it, become part,
Share, enter in. I am what has been called
"The Eternal Tenderfoot," but I never felt
At Bert's what has come over me alone
In other deserts vast, the competition
Of mysterious vitality not my own.
Instead I seemed to have made some spiritual
Leap over a gulf that divided, so as to be
An element of the complex, not an odd
Misfitted creature that must be cast out.
One became part of the trout that one was playing,
Essence of the deer one tracked. I came to know
It was Bert that made this difference, who harmonized
The universe and me. He made me feel
Like an augmented fifth in the major triad,
Essential like the other sounds. That's nice.
I was waiting for the horses to go down.
He had been up the hill that morning. I heard
His satisfactory bellow. Out of the wood
He came dragging by the nape a panther hide.
He had only fired one shot. The scimitar claws
Trailed on the ground. "When it's cured I'll send it down."
He knew I understood him, how performance
Outran desire. I galloped down the trail.
He seemed to melt into his forest. The trees
Took him. The future lies a smiling country
Before him.

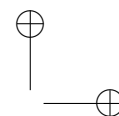
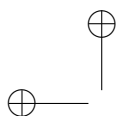




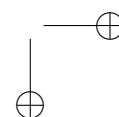
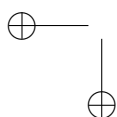
CRAIG CARRUTHERS

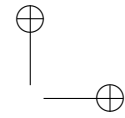
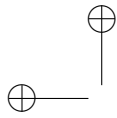
Craig was always enigmatic. You never knew
What he was thinking. I often wondered if
He did himself. He was a figure in
His fraternity. He'd a talent for debate,
Loved to elaborate, define, suggest
What he called ideas, which never by chance revealed
What he was like at all. They were just coins
He spent to pay his shot in the feast, not proof
Of any passion, or any prejudice,
Liking or loathing. I've the Boswell itch
To get at motives, read the history
Of thought in a man's mind, something too hard
For me or Boswell. But I was not surprised
When Craig took honors in psychology
And went to Europe. I found him in Vienna
Beside the great white throne of Freud. He talked
Of matters I did not understand. I think
Freud did not understand them either. Craig
Had a book under way, that should make clear
Many mysteries, and on the strength of that
Unpublished work received a call to Yale.
When I next saw him, I was horrified.
Something had happened to him. I have read
Somewhere of a man witch-blasted. I can't frame
Proper description. No external witch
Had wrought the horror. Men have a witch within,



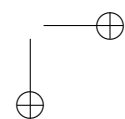
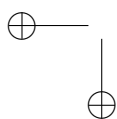


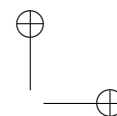
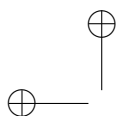
However, that can work terrible things,
Or so I am told and think. Craig had a mind
More powerful than yours or mine. It had grown
In power. And a disposition not to use it
Seemed to have grown too. The undergraduates
Were mad about him. For an electric hour
I watched a hundred juniors whose eyes popped
As he talked about inner immensities
In the jargon of his craft, while every second
I grew more conscious a damned soul in Hell
Was speaking from the platform, that the contrast
Between the flashing interest of bright boys
And a thing in Craig that would not flash again
Constituted agony in its exquisite essence.
I say I felt that. Also I said to myself:
“There you go again, seeing what isn’t there
“In order to prove your powers of observation.
“You Boswell, you know what he thinks?” We went to lunch
At the club. And after he asked me to his rooms.
They were in one of the new colleges,
Splendid beyond all whooping. The last word
In academic luxury, the style
Of Epicurus. Not for Diogenes!
He brought out whiskey. I don’t like to think
About that afternoon. I drank too much.
But Craig engulfed whole Amazons. Just to thirst
Seemed excellent to him. It was no will to quench
A physical fever. We grew very maudlin.
What I remember of the talk seems silly
Beyond most idiocy. But Craig at least
Was genuinely in a rage, at what,
Whether university or universe,
Under the circumstances I did not gather,
In spite of owlsh noddings of assent.



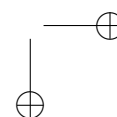
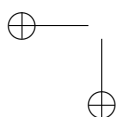


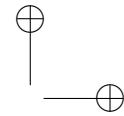
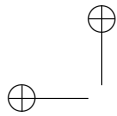
After three hours I got out. Fortunately
I found a man who wanted to play squash,
Ran myself dead, boiled myself in a shower,
Swam in the pool, and finally emerged
Hectic and shaky, but of a sound mind.
Craig at the Graduates' Club sat cold and sober.
I ventured humble remonstrance. His chill eye
Surveyed me: "I do that every afternoon.
"I must have some escape." On that he left me
With Brooks, the faculty Pollyanna, who'd blundered
Bright-eyed into our tête-à-tête. Said Brooks
Of the departed: "There goes a brilliant man.
"They say he drinks. I don't believe it. Do you?"
Presently he was married. I heard the girl
Was very nice. I guess she had to be.
Then the ménage went badly. College towns
Need some escape like Craig. This time they got it.
New Haven crawled with scabrous information
Upon the subject. The older set was seething
With 1880's fury. The young lions
Roared about individual liberty,
Nobody's business, and a changing code.
Jevons the football captain, when Craig collapsed
On the dais in that ghastly lecture-room
I, Osborn, (I am glad that they tore down
That wreck of Richardsonian Romanesque)
Carried him across the hall into Brooks' study.
The hundred who had viewed the hateful scene,
Pop-eyed as always, hushed the matter up
With youth's fine reticence that won't betray.
It was Brooks' gabbling gave away the game.
The department tried to save him. Three months' leave
For a nervous breakdown. A sanitarium
Somewhere in the Berkshires, full of similar corks,





Harbored the derelict. I went up to see him
In the autumn of October. The whole world
Was a deadly blaze of color. And that wild light
That seems to have strange darkness in its heart
Troubled me, troubled me. It always does,
Light trembling out of darkness, into darkness
Trembling once more. I can't express it, not death,
Damnation or finality, only the dark
In its essence expressed by light. When Craig appeared,
He seemed quite rugged. We fell into talk.
I went like Agag delicately in fear
Of dangerous ground. All ground is dangerous
With men in his condition. I might have known
And spared myself that visit, and spared him.
He was not incoherent, not that exactly,
But I could not follow his arguments, whose links
Were visible only to himself. He spoke
As if it were relief, although aware
I could not understand. Contemptuous
Of that and other things, he did not need
Sympathy, he was careful to explain,
Though as he said, he felt the natural man's
Desire of comprehension. "She spoiled the world,"
He said with a bitterness that made wormwood sweet
And gall sick saccharine. I thought he meant
His wife and looked astonishment. He caught
The misinterpretation up: "O no!
"Not that weak child! Poor Laura couldn't spoil
"A dinner-party even. Don't you know *Her*?
"You must have seen her often, though it's hard
"For you to see as I do." A blank look
Came in his eyes. His lips moved in an odd
Manner that made me think of a machine
Driven by anonymous sources of strange power.

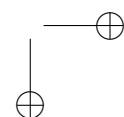
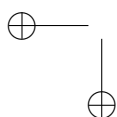


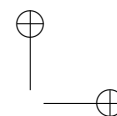
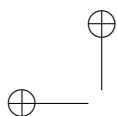


“She’s looking at you now,” he said, “I can’t
“Talk any more.” Together we walked back
To the sanitarium. And it is simple fact
I felt that something had been conjured up,
That kept us company. An attendant came
Rather hastily, I thought, from some recess,
And vanished with Craig down a long corridor.
The psychiatrist in charge was very kind
And, Oh, so understanding! Men run mad,
I’m told, who are understood too thoroughly.
He said that Craig had schizophrenia.
He’d come back after relief from alcohol
And strain: “He’ll hold his job down, never fear.
“I’ve had a hundred worse than he. He’ll lose
“His hallucinations in a month or so.
“Did he talk to you at all?”

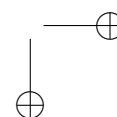
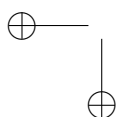
I said he did
But that I didn’t get the drift.

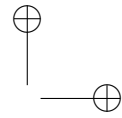
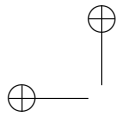
“Of course not!
“Nobody can. That’s why he’s here. This haunting,
“Possession, fixed idea, what you like,
“Is fundamentally simple. Part of him
“Destroys life for the rest. Queer that it takes
“A feminine form for him. When he refers to it
“It’s always ‘She.’” – Then as a man adapting
The conversation to intelligence
Not equal to his own, – “A parable
“May clear things up. The Greeks believed a Muse
“Lay with the poet ere a poem was born.
“Carruthers has a sort of counter-muse
“Practising birth-control, that won’t permit
“Creation. She’s grown actual, factual,
“Visible, at least audible, more real
“To him than I am.”





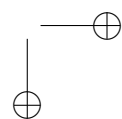
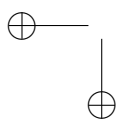
“Not improbable,”
I thought and took my leave. The bulletin
On Craig next day was excellent. I risked
No other encounter. Through the polychrome hills
My motor hummed all day. At cocktail-time
At Harry Brett’s it pleased me that Harry seemed
Not to be troubled by any counter-muse.
The psychiatrist was partly right. Craig held
His job down all next term. The undergraduates
Found him more thrilling than ever. Scandal waned,
Or rather a new scandal stole the brightness
From Craig’s. Some member of the corporation
Was the victim of a pay-dirt badger-game,
That led in the end to Reno. Nevertheless
Craig finished on the front page. The pistol-shot
In his office swept the corporation-member
Into the limbo of forgotten news,
Though he still gets talked about in Bones and Keys.
All that Craig left was a queer document:
“I think she’ll do it. Violent, untrained,
“I have no recourse against her, and must suffer
“This ending – if it be suffering to escape
“From her at last. Strange I could never find
“Her bright side. I infer that it was there
“For me to find. That’s why she took revenge
“In that strange way, making filthy all the Heavens
“Other men know, if only for a little.
“There is a real world. I have had glimpses
“Frequently of it, rather more of late
“Than usual. The contrast sharpens I suppose
“With what I am in. I saw Brooks light his pipe
“As he talked with the undergraduates in the gate.
“There was something sweet and clear in the event,
“An instant between times, as good to me

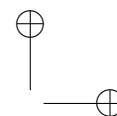
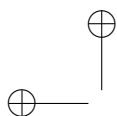




“As happy union with a happy girl.
“But I can’t hold such gust. There supervenes
“Her unnatural blind power. I could hold out
“A month, perhaps for years. Unbearable
“To think of! I have lots of energy –
“But she controls it. Now of her own will
“That control’s about to end. My will, if ever
“It had a real existence, is subdued
“By the tangible unreality. It is finished.
“They’ll say it was drink, or glands that didn’t perform
“Their obscure function. They’re behaviorists.
“They won’t like this behavior.”

Nobody did,
Not even Brooks who naturally was in
Practically at the death and seemed to feel
Distinguished by the circumstance. I don’t know
What it was all about. As I said at first
Craig was always enigmatic.



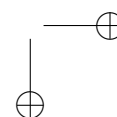
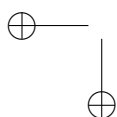


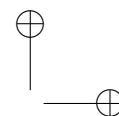
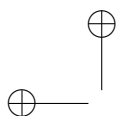
WELDON KIRK

I might as well admit I didn't like him,
A fact I thought important at the time.
He was pale, with too much body, too little strength,
And a sickly literary look. Grieved eyes
Seemed to crave sympathy that one withheld
With a deliberate instinctiveness.
And he wrote poetry. Twice I repulsed
Poor Weldon from the mystic gates desired
Of a Paradise called English 79.
But pertinacity beat me in the end,
And he attained to his felicity.
That class that year was full of actual talent,
A baker's dozen of golden lads and girls
That dazzle their instructor yet.

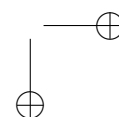
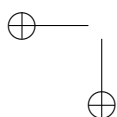
Not one

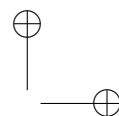
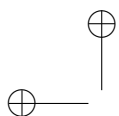
But loaded every rift with ore. Their names
Are not to the purpose, but you'd know them all.
Weldon an ugly spiritual duckling moved
Among them timidly. His undisciplined
Inchoate tripe amid their manuscripts
Was the one unexciting aspect of that course
For me, though he had an accidental gift
Of stumbling here and there on a touching phrase.
I can't describe his stuff, but it implied
All I disliked in him, the small town genius
Clinging desperately to belief in his own powers,



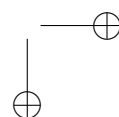
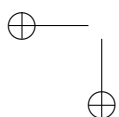


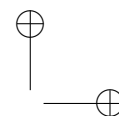
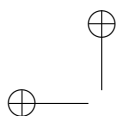
Because the brutal truth would do to death
The vanity one must foster to exist.
Criticism made him wince so, I gave up.
Lashing a horse upon a running sore
Is past my cruelty, and Weldon's soul
Was an open and intolerable wound.
The noble children graduated, passed
On to their actual triumphs. When the term
Came round again, behold came Weldon Kirk
And re-enlisted for the Fall campaign,
Guiltless of unit-hunting. I gave more heed
To his lucubrations, and began to see,
Better than merit, a force beyond the vanity
That ate him up. There was no doubt at all
Some feeling governed him, inexpressible
Connection with – O Hell! – Nature, mere love
Of the primitive for the primitive, the Guide's passion
For the moose running. Not expressed in words,
God knows, for he mingled the niminy-piminy
Phrasing of the 1890's with the chaos
Intellectual of the Imagist. But he himself
Had been among the mountains. A leaping steel-head,
Going up chalcedony cataracts in the Kern,
Had got him, done his business. His grieved eyes
Envisaged that beauty always, and could not turn
To lesser matters, though he had no voice
To utter the vision, of which he grew aware.
Perception fretted the inarticulate
Spirit like a garment. I liked Weldon Kirk
(I've a nice forgiving nature, have I not?)
After that term. He won the poetry prize,
In default of competition, with a verbose
Desiccated specimen of Wordsworthian tosh,
That hurt him since it could not touch the thing





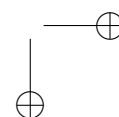
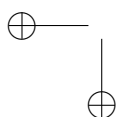
Visionary and delightful in his soul.
How grey his face was in the commencement crowd,
As they read his name out, like a man's for whom
Loved and impermanent beauty has been deflowered.
I think he runs a store on the Eel River
Where the green stream, down a mysterious gorge,
Thunders and the steel-head leaps as heights grow dark.

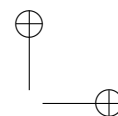
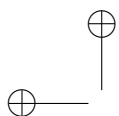




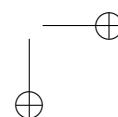
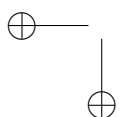
JIM WHELOCK

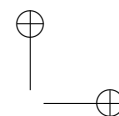
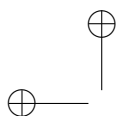
I am not a good after-dinner speaker,
But have gone through the motions for my sins,
And once in a Western City, just after the War,
Held forth at a club with appropriate remarks
As to the Toastmaster and the nameless crimes
That he'd committed. From that point I leaped
To a brisk account of war this side the sea,
Siege of Camp Upton, and the Riverside Drive,
Battle of Coronado, etcetera.
I touched on my adventures with humility
Such as becomes the veteran, home-returned,
But did retail a microscopic crash
In an aeroplane, where I got bloody nose.
The audience was benevolent. Three martinis
Go a long way with any business man.
And my little spiel went over pretty well.
There were cackles from George Carter, ruler of banks,
And Norman Grace the oil man clapped his hands,
Apparently much diverted. Amid the crowd
I saw Jim Wheelock. I'd instructed him
Some four years earlier, as to the laws of verse.
Jim was a monstrous athlete, with a strange
Passion for poetry, which he cultivated
In secret, like unnatural vice. He wrote
Queer elegiacs about queer experience,
All real though it taxed credulity,





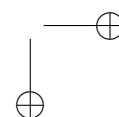
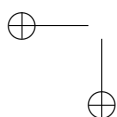
Himalayan mountaineering, fantastic voyages
On the coasts of Java. He'd seen Angkor Vat
And the Palace of Burrobodur. I still
Remember a wild stanza crammed with Buddhism
That a lama might have written, who dreams of a road
Climbing through rhododendrons beneath steel heights
Toward Lhasa, lion-crouched on the Milky Plain.
Jim gave me a great hand when my talk ended
And even came up to tell me how much he liked
That effort. Some days later I found out
That he had had two thousand hours in the air
And had shot down seven enemy planes in France.

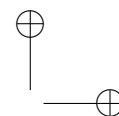
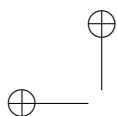




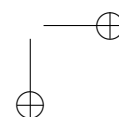
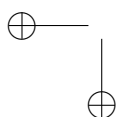
STEPHANIE ROSENBERG

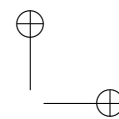
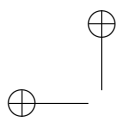
Stephanie Rosenberg had a full-blooded
Oriental look and nature. She was plump
As a Valley quail. You did not have to glance
Twice to discover how intelligent
She was, quick, sharp, and a great deal more profound
Than the Nordic nincompoops she had to play with.
When she listened to my lectures, I could see
Dissent or agreement lighten in her face,
Mainly dissent which I cannot condemn.
The papers that she wrote were all full-grown
Cultivated affairs. There was no vulgarity
In her mind, though she may have lacked such outward grace
As may be forced on the more fortunate.
And she never, never, never handed in
My own remarks with the academic bloom
Upon them rubbed away. She was original
And not a piker. Suddenly she went Society,
(She was rich) burst out in frocks that knocked the eye
Out of the Campus. Since Queen Esther put
Vashti out of business, I think no Jewess has
Cut quite so swank a dash. Jim Coddington,
Too big to be ignored, too dull to make
The Varsity, proved to be the explanation.
That's why her lips were the peculiar red
Fashionable that season. He gave her quite a rush
For some six weeks. He liked her motor-car,



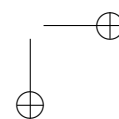
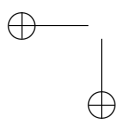


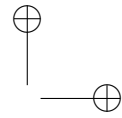
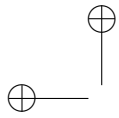
A sports Hispano-Suisa, at that time rare,
In the far Occident. Jim's intellect
Was of the type which almost from day to day
Diminishes, like a declining star
Dropping from magnitude to magnitude.
Hence he failed in an exam I gave, which proved
For him the end of academic things.
And just as he was dropped himself, he dropped her,
Having with amazement learned she was a Jewess.
Stephanie like a shot gave up mundanity,
Took honors in mathematics, made a speech
On Class-day a great deal better than the President's,
Who was a Nobel Prizeman physicist
Bemused by administration, and disappeared.
Some ten years later on "The Overland"
I encountered Mrs. Isadore Pappenheimer,
A mother in Israel – and Los Angeles.
She was stouter and was not completely satisfied
By four meek children who had not inherited
Her intellectual interests. Her husband came
From the smoking-car. The lady introduced us.
"Too many drunks travel on these trains," said he.
"Reason I left the smoker. There's a bum
"Having delirium tremens, seeing snakes.
"The steward and two guys are holding him down.
"They're going to put him off at the next station."
The brakes went on. We slid into Montello
And stopped. From the front of the train we heard strange
cries
Coming nearer – a group passed beneath the window,
Wrestling and fighting. A recognition scene
Ought not to be brought in with a jolt. Poor art,
And worse than that, psychologically considered.
Nevertheless it was Jim Coddington





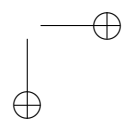
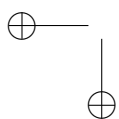
That raved at the grim brakemen, his silly face
Transfigured by despair, fury, and fear.
Stephanie turned away from the idiot scene
And said to her husband: "You were saying, Isadore?"

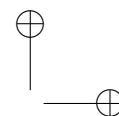
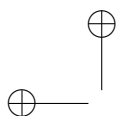




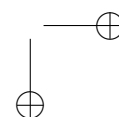
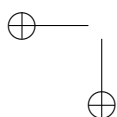
KNIGHT GERARD

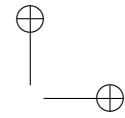
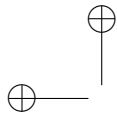
Percival Knight Gerard wore the first spats
I ever saw on the campus – also the last.
They were removed, not without violence,
By a committee wholly self-appointed
From neighboring fraternities, as he came home
From a tea at the Kappa Phi House. He endured
The indignity with grace and more good humor
Than might have been expected, turned the laugh
With real ability on his large, rough
Dirty-corduroyed persecutors, and gained prestige
From an equivocal episode. In my classes
He was always interesting. He had the queer
Penchant for memoirs which one sometimes notices
In the young, a passion for the elegant past.
Before he left for the East he had acquired
Encyclopedic knowelge of the life
Of the great world of England and of France
From Queen Anne to King George the Fifth. No court
Was too dull for him, no salon too obscure.
I do not comprehend that flair. It seems
At variance with youth somehow. No flame,
No gleam, no captivating vision, delusion
Nevertheless. Knight (he had dropped the Percival
Early in Freshman year) was popular
In a set unknown to the Barbarian,
Though itself not civilized, in Burlingame.



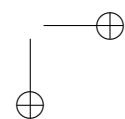
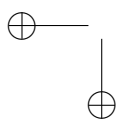


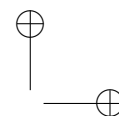
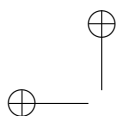
He was there a great deal for some six months, say,
But vanished from those delights and from our ken,
Almost with violence. He wrote to tell me,
From Harvard, that it was good to be alive,
But to be young was very Heaven. He added
That now at last he felt he had escaped
From the limitation that had limited,
The cramp immoderate that had cramped his form,
Which statement I did not wholly understand.
He spent four years at Harvard. Somehow I learned
He made the Porcellian, which was the sort of thing
One always learned about him. During some years
At intervals I heard of him, invariably
With the best people, oh, the very best,
Not merely wealthy and not merely prominent.
His wedding was the ultimate in splendor.
I went. St. Thomas's knocked out my eye.
I forget the lady's name, a startling filly
By Anaconda out of Business Machines.
Everything in the best of taste, plutocracy
Subdued by Emily Post, and almost human.
I saw Knight at the altar. Distinction breathed
From him. Kate Coolidge viewed him with approval
And murmured to me: "Bon chien chasse de race."
So that was that. Jim Harrison and I
Went fishing that September up the Eel,
A favorite haunt, where great pools onyxine
Are full of giant trout. The river is walled
With blue and purple rock. And one forgets
Weddings at St. Thomas's. We had to pass
Through the County Seat to get there, as ghastly a town
As these times make, garages and gas-stations,
Horrible shops, in a horrid world of bill-boards
Telling their tale of radio, gum, and oil.





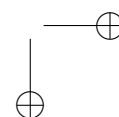
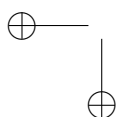
I remembered it was the town whence Knight Gerard
Registered when he came to college. It stank
Of everything you, he, or I would hate.
How good it was to get to camp at sunset
And see the river running in its groove
Of shining stone. Redwine our cook and guide
Proved curious and garrulous. When he found
We were from the university, he asked me
If I knew "Perc" Gerard. I said I did.
"I see in the paper he's married a rich girl
"Back East," said Redwine. He reached over to me
The rotogravure perversion of the couple
Leaving St. Thomas's. "Perc is rich, too.
"His father left him his undertaking business.
"He never took no interest in it, though.
"Seemed like he was ashamed of it, I guess.
"I heered he sold it when he went East. Some folks
"Round here they held it against him. 'Taint my business."

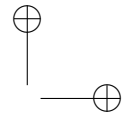
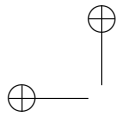




EDITH CARTWRIGHT

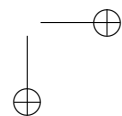
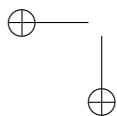
That class-room was all light and ventilation
Modern to engineering's ultimate point,
With a view of Rome and hygienic chairs
Of yellow wood, these with appropriate arms
Where virgin notebooks could be fecundated
By wisdom momentarily falling – from my lips.
I noticed her almost at once, a long
Gaunt girl, whose pince-nez with immoderate lens
Made her grey eyes unnaturally large.
“One more schoolmistress in the egg,” I thought.
Then one day when the feel of half-past three
Was heavy upon us, I drew some parallel, –
“Samson Agonistes” and “Prometheus Bound,”
Knowing not too much of either, and saw a flash
Of light in those quiet eyes. Up went her hand.
“Miss Cartwright?” “The comparison's unjust.
“Aeschylus has much more action.” With some address
I put aside the objection: “Why don't you write
“A paper on the point?” Which is what she did.
I read it, marvelling how the devil Bill Coke
Imbued his satellites with enthusiasm.
His articles describe the theatre
Of Taormina (Tauromenium)
And he established the just diameter
Of its diazoma, but evidently passed
Something on in the process, so that I stood

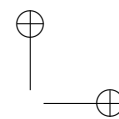
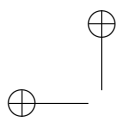




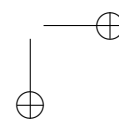
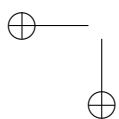
Refuted as to him and other matters
Of import. In the paper stormed a wild
Lyrical thing, or better tragical.
There was Orestes, there the furies, there
Beauty and horror. And I read and said,
“I will apologize to her,” and had
The grace to do so, and beyond that act
Of chivalry, conferred on her the A,
Desired of the Intellectual. So I escaped.

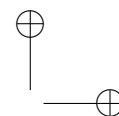
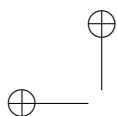
Five years passed. By the strange and kindly hand
Of Fate, I was liberated from that bondage,
Worked hard, and travelled, saw things I wished to see.
Met people whom I liked, in short enjoyed
Existence as it ought to be enjoyed.
Then something pleasant brought me back again.
In the suburban train she crossed my path
Once more. Her black silk gown was in the mode
That demireps affected ten years back.
Her lips were far too red. Her pallid cheek
Had the flush factitious, which the practitioner
With true experience studies to avoid.
We sat and talked. She was a schoolmistress,
In the egg no longer. “Sappho gone astray”
I thought. The Oresteia was a fire
That burned her soul out still. And she was teaching
Civics and English in Oroville. Bill Coke
Must give account of this at Judgment Day.
At eighteen she had known Apollo’s rape.
Ototoi, Oppollon hemos! No man will lie
Beside her in the bed. She knows too well
The greater grief and beauty to endure
What might be offered.
I can’t believe that just thick optical glass
Could give myopia that look of tragedy.





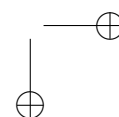
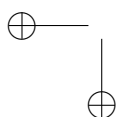
In the Ferry building she vanished in the crowd
That never heard of Aeschylus, nor cares
One whit for a chorus big with our life and fate.

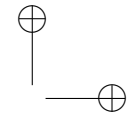
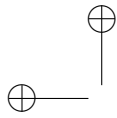




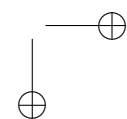
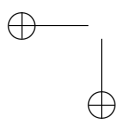
SISTER MARY ISABELLA

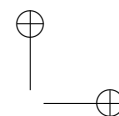
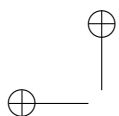
The first day of that term I came and saw
And did not conquer, save in the usual way,
The flappers and intellectuals who thronged
The room, it being a 'free elective' course
(Milton the matter of it), and therefore useful
To build the required tale of 'units' up.
But something struck me. In the rear of the room
Two black-robed sisters of the Holy Names
Sat silent, listening to my preliminary
Remarks, and presently enrolled themselves.
From time to time they came to see me. One
Was sixty-odd, with a white venerable face,
Narrow, severe, and jealous. The other nun
A man might venerate in the original sense,
As beautiful as need be, or even more
Than necessary. I was in some doubt
Whether the black robe gave to her loveliness
Or took away. At all events they came
Punctually to the lectures, or daring greatly
Visited me in my office, where we talked
Of literary matters in a style
That nobody could take exception to.
December came. Examinations raised
Their hateful heads. Papers for the term fell due.
And the careless undergraduate looked grim
When his professor passed him on the campus.



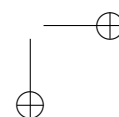
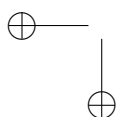


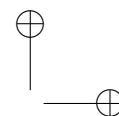
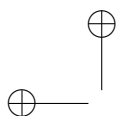
The sisters did not do so very well
In that examination. I reserved
My judgment till the thesis should come in.
To Sister Mary Eustacia I gave a B
For an appalling paper, inchoate, vast
As chaos, and no more articulate.
She was the old one. And I felt regret,
Though pleased by my own generosity.
But Sister Mary Isabella wrote
A paper which though imperfect had a strange
Quality. It was Milton's view of Christ
Described by a believing Catholic.
Somehow it touched me. It showed "she was Christ's bride
"And loved her husband." Crashaw and Francis Thompson
Rouse up the same ideas. I do not mean
That she had like abilities, but the spirit
Could not have been distinguished. I who believe
Too little was impressed by this excess
Of belief and said, "Hell, she shall have an A!"
January came, and the new term began.
I sat in my office, when there came a tap,
Resolute, at the door. The older nun
Entered, looked me in the eye, and said: "Is it true?"
Startled I looked up. White as her white gorget
Her face was. "What true, sister?" The answer hit
Like a bullet: "That I only got a B.
"Sister Mary Isabella got an A."
Furens quid possit femina! I stared
Blank at such wrath, such sense of injury
As God forbid that I should see again.
Stammering, I sought to calm her. In a tone
Moses might use to an Israelite caught dancing
Before the golden image of the calf
She blasted me: "Not in eternity





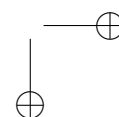
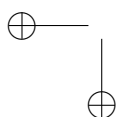
“Can that injustice be wiped out.” Perhaps
She might be right. But over-emphasis hurt,
When she added: “To be beaten by that young nun!”
Then I saw Browning’s “Spanish Cloister” plain
And recognized he knew a thing or two.
Out of the room she swept, leaving me flat
And muttering to myself: “Well, I’ll be damned!”
Sometimes I’ve wondered, if I were unjust.
You do your best, you make your errors, fail
To judge aright, read too much in or out.
You can’t be sure. I fancy I did well.
You’re reading this episode now. You’re judging me,
And probably not well, only with what
You’ve got to judge with. Whether right or wrong,
Thank God it makes small difference to me.

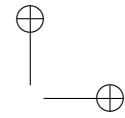
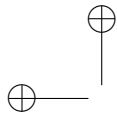




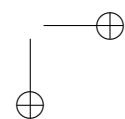
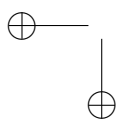
BULLINGER BOUND: A PHANTASY

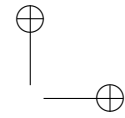
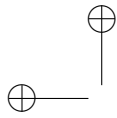
Bound on that Caucasus, where Regent Street
And Second Avenue meet
And the Rue de la Paix
Runs into Broadway
And poets hint
That they know Tristan better than you,
(Mein Irisch kind
Wo weilest du?)
Bullinger lay on the raw crag exposed,
His liver ankylosed,
Gnawed at by vultures,
The representatives of many cultures.
All night the surly Hounds
Of Heaven went their rounds.
All night he sought relief
From flatulence and grief,
And only heard the Witch of Endor
Speaking with the tongues of Auden and of Spender
And a whisper far away
That told him of improbable Day
Lewis, a melancholy mumbling
In harmony with his own intestinal rumbling.
Tireless he tossed,
A rag
Of agony on his crag,
Limitlessly lost.





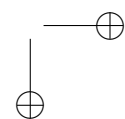
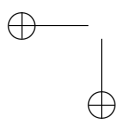
Forgotten melody that sears
The spirit through long years,
Approached, but would not enter in his ears.
“Come away, Love,” it said,
And faltered, and was dead.
And he knew that he was weeping idle tears.
And still the hounds baying
And the night-mares neighing
Kept inveighing
Against his weakness perpetually betraying
The beauty of original heights,
The dream of dead Spring nights,
Arbutus sprouted between leaf and leaf,
All sweetness in the past that now was grief.
So Bullinger considered his lost things,
His wasted Autumns, violated Springs,
The shattered Summers, and the desolate Winters,
Now dashed to splinters.
He heard the sad times howl
Like dogs, or wail like wind-tormented fowl,
Over the naked ocean blown
Toward their destruction, frightened and alone.
The long straight line
Of the tide-rip in the scheme
That had been so clear in his constructed dream
Of the way things should have been and seemed to seem,
Hurt like a silver wire thrust up his spine,
Some hateful surgery insane
Done on the basis of the brain,
And futile let us say
As the voice of Hemingway
Explaining that a bull-fight must afford
Considerable pleasure to the Lord.
Nothing was clear

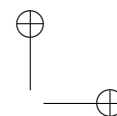
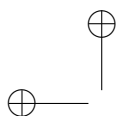




Like the tight formula of an engineer,
Like the great phrase
Exploded from the spirit, after days
Of tribulation, into the hemisphere
Of poetry, from the unconscious deep
“Where the ideas in their causes sleep.”
(See Plato and the Poets, if you can
You, treasonable to man!
You Leopold Blooms!
You deathshad moths that pullulate in glooms
Of blank caves, where the lizards have gone white
In the utterly uninteresting night!)
“Teach me to write,
“Just Spirit, from the abyss of light!
“I need the galaxy, the spectral belt
“Of nebulae that melt
“For ever into splendor. I need the grass
“Sprung from the genuine, and not these grey
“And trivial abortive buds that pass
“For flowers. And will there nevermore be day?”

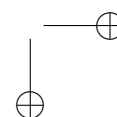
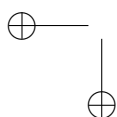
So Bullinger, that high spirit, tortured, blind,
Riveted to his mountain-top, confined,
Cribbed, cabined, limited, pecked by an atrabiliar
Vulturine familiar,
Cried out his trouble than which nothing sillier
Had vexed his Black Sea of interior gloom,
Argo of Greece, or tanker of Batum.
And quite unhygienically nailed
On the rough edge of the precipice unscaled,
He wailed and wailed and wailed
A wail that was a poor pastiche
Of Eliot and Cocteau, who unleash
Contemporary griefs and in their turn
Appear to be pastiches of whom it may concern.

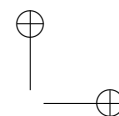
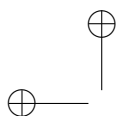




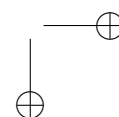
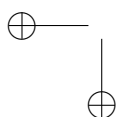
Over him in the skies
The vulture-formation flies,
Croaking: "Peck out his eyes!
"Anyhow give him the Pulitzer Prize!
"That may conceivably anaesthetize.
"Give him a Guggenheim fellowship,
"Or a ticket to Cockayne and Serendip!
"Give him a passport to Azerbaijan,
"And letters of introduction to Kublai Khan
"And Tamburlaine, who has been expecting this.
"For Tamburlaine, it would appear,
"Wants him as city-engineer
"To ride in triumph through Persepolis."

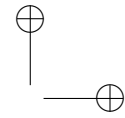
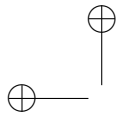
How drear in meagre magazines
The meagre poems drizzle!
Yet once Kings quickened wombs of Queens.
And once under the chisel
The marble meridian
Took on the Phidian,
Majesty visionary rather than hewn,
But that was not so late in the afternoon,
Before we noticed with complacent horror
That sodomy was good form in Gomorrah,
Before we yet had known that solitude
Where staircases descend the nude,
Before we knew that ink and paper
Could be devoted to their hateful jests,
Who must cut off the Muse's breasts
Before they rape her.
There was a time
When music cataracted into rhyme,
When waterfalls of dream
Curved their white arch,
Clean as a whistle, rapid as a crime,



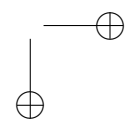
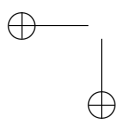


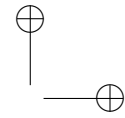
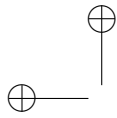
Down the brown stream
That was eternal Beauty on the march,
The ultimate scheme,
No calculus can solve,
Whatever mind endeavors to revolve
Irreducible unknowns
Dwelling between the waterweeds and stones,
There something thrilled
Where the trout-embryos milled.
There was the fire and pulse,
There
Were life and air
And change and unpredictable results,
Save that the seasons would return.
There would be withering of the fern,
Snows and the cold,
And anew the young thing issuing from the old.
And these things in some way pleased Aeschylus
And Shakespeare. Now they will not do
Apparently for us
Or you.
Yet a whisper in the mind insists,
The joke's not on those dramatists.
"Nay," Bullinger said, as the vulture scaly-necked
Returned with its emphatic
Rostral development to delights hepatic,
"Now I suspect
"The arrangements. I detect
"In this my pain
"Some meaning. Can there be order in my brain?"
"No! No! No!"
Cackled the vulture: "How could that be so?
"No, Bullinger, your brain is asymptotic
"To every truth. And your liver is sclerotic,



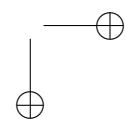
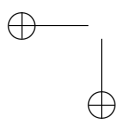


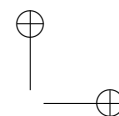
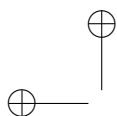
“That detestable
“Indigestible
“Comestible.
“That’s why you’re bound
“To everything unhopeful and unsound,
“Linked to fallacious legendary pain,
“Full, too, of phantasy you can’t explain,
“Mere motion in the mass
“Of utterly vagrant
“Matters that pass,
“Desires insane and flagrant,
“Savage and blind and crass.
“So you feel melodious odors and taste a fragrant
“Music dripping from intangible stars
“Or from the Western scimitars
“Of moons that chariot
“To triumph modern Christs, each one his own Iscariot.
“Jesus! That sounds
“Empty as anything of Ezra Pound’s.
“And torn by phantasy you lie
“Under the cliché-ridden sky,
“Though once a man could fructify
“A woman or a science, act
“With respect to an idea or a fact.
“Whereas now the stars stand bound,
“And under you the ground
“Grows hollow, a blank geometry of cavities,
“Where hollow men lament hollow depravities,
“And the wise deplore that poet’s sad harangue,
“Who with a simper
“Says the last judgment is not so much a bang
“As a whimper.
“‘We have sinned. We have sinned,’
“Says the Ghost of Gawaine, light upon the wind,



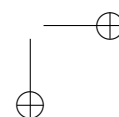
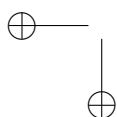


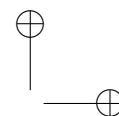
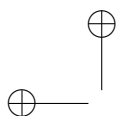
“‘Hollow, hollow, hollow, all delight.’
“Do you remember when that was not quite
“Descriptive? When one felt reliance
“As to a woman or a science,
“Though what the girl relied on, I may state
“Was indeterminate.”
“Aye,” answered Bullinger, who could not say
More on that theme than you can. As they may
The weak
Speak.
Also he felt
The biting rivet on his wrist,
The rigor of the iron belt.
Nor did he undervalue the technique
Of the vulturine anatomist.
As they may the weak speak,
Between the lost and the unreal anchored
In the Now that slips and slides,
While the sense grows obtuse and the brain is cankered
By a past full of grief, by a future that derides.
“Aye, but the mind is free.”
“You say so? Free from what?
“Free from cold anger? Free from hot
“Anxieties? From the tyranny
“Of I? From callous pressure of the mass?
“Imperatives of type and class?
“Look on that freedom well and count the chains
“And shackles in your brains.
“And hearken to the bird that cackles
“For ever of those chains and shackles.”
“For ever,” said Bullinger, “And that is long.
“Do I trust vainly to the song?
“Dream of the nymphs of Tempe? Dream
“Of the Horse-Spring and the headlong stream



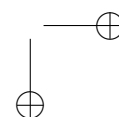
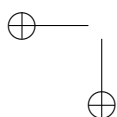


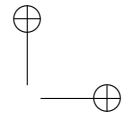
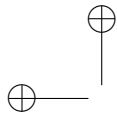
“Down Helicon? Dream?
“Only to chant at last in lucid notes
“What shall become of mink-coats
“When revolution’s in the air
“And automatics are the only wear.
“I am an aging solitary man
“Angry at life, at unforeseen defeat,
“When victory was apparent in the plan
“I planned, not unprepared for dust and heat.
“Were not dreams dreamed once? (See one Richard Church
“Left also in the lurch.
“They heeded not his melodies, or mine,
“The swine!)
“Were we delivered to music, who are not heeded
“And now slink
“Along the precipitous brink,
“Clearly not needed?
“We fancied we could hear
“Strange harmony, knew silvery discipline
“Within,
“Felt the huge measure pulsing,
“Orgasm of song convulsing
“The rhapsodist
“With the raging chorus on the Thracian peak.
“We saw the thyrsus in the fist
“Of the untamed lutanist,
“Heard Euripides on the mountain-side
“Lead the bassarids to play
“With the tigress and the leopardess
“The wild flock that maims the shepherdess.
“We have fallen away.
“And we wander, strayed or stolen,
“With our own poison swollen,
“And a eunuch leads the choruses,



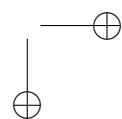
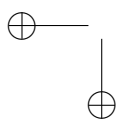


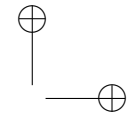
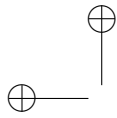
“Leads the choruses astray
“Down the unintelligible abysm,
“Where other eunuchs talk about surrealism.”
Said a voice to Bullinger: “Did you ever sing
“Whether of Troy or the New England Spring?
“June water-meadows sown
“With the small orchids? Did your fancy pace
“With the epic, or did you intone
“The sacred lyric in a secret place?
“Were you not always stereotyped,
“Afraid to dance, whatever children piped?
“How were you bound? Who bound you on what rock?
“What deity troubled himself to mock?
“Tell me where
“Is contemporary fancy bred.
“It does not take deep thinking to declare:
“Evidently in the head,
“Where past all doubt
“Great projects to no purpose are thought out.
“This may perhaps unlock
“The riddle of your relation to the rock.
“Look on the free that wander on the plain.”
Then Bullinger rolled on his crag for pain
And saw their triumphs, saw the blind
Lighting the road to darkness for mankind,
And heard a song as grating as his own
From them who were not shackled to the stone.
Also he heard
Rotation of the word
Turned upside-down in chaos. Flamed the new sign
Of a trinity vermiform,
Where Joyce and André Gide and Gertrude Stein
Skied on the whirlwind and telemarked the storm.
“At higher than the market price”



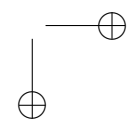
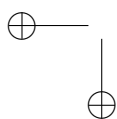


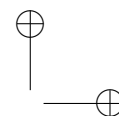
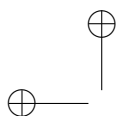
Bullinger dubiously reflected,
“They bought the egg of the cockatrice
“And it proves sterile, as might be expected.
“That is a shell that will not crack
“But I hear rumor at the back
“Of intellectual beyonds.”
Then all the multitude,
Learned or lewd,
Shouted
Till trembled Heaven greasy-clouted:
“Loose Bullinger,
“Loose Bullinger,
“Loose Bullinger from his bonds!
“Loose Bullinger! Loose all the Bullingers!
“Brown grow all cockle-burrs!
“Flourish all spurses on the cliffs of fire!
“Rescue him from this woe!
“Give him the end of every man’s desire,
“A neat Chanel placket! O Lord, let him go!
“When nightshade is in flower,
“Carry him to Cotytto’s bower.
“Let him drink deep,
“And after sing him asleep
“Under independent poison-ivy fronds!
“Loose Bullinger,
“Loose Bullinger,
“Loose Bullinger from his bonds!
“Who knows but he
“May do the arts as great an injury
“As any? If he will
“He may with practice kill
“Beauty in the name of thought as well as we.
“What better man
“To find a catch in the carol of the great Grand Khan?



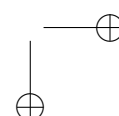
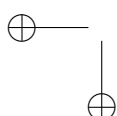


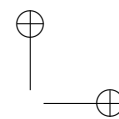
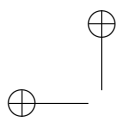
“He can negate
“Whatever has been great
“And neck with Hecat’, possibly copulate.
“Though who deserves
“Such relaxation of tense nerves?
“Still he’s a coward who desponds.
“Loose Bullinger,
“Loose Bullinger,
“Loose Bullinger from his bonds!”
And Bullinger shook while shook the Empyrean
To the croak of capon-eagles Aeschylean.
Afar he heard lamenting, as it were
A female Bullinger,
Despairing, underpowered,
With pale, cold-storage liver half-devoured,
Gyved on a trivial stone. He heard her speak
Pittsburghese stained by thought she thought was Greek.
And falteringly the girl said “No
“It can never be so.”
Then Bullinger on his rock strove to turn
That he might see who suffered a like woe.
And all around were Bullingers to burn,
Crying Promethean griefs, dying by inches.
And Bullinger observed with some concern
Vultures that on the whole resembled finches,
Their ineffectual beaks worn thin
By fruitless pecking at impenetrable skin –
And his own proper bird
Had the absurd
Air of a thing that with compunction
Improperly performed its function.
Promethean myth,
Produced for Bullinger and Co.,
To be correlated with





Infinitesimal woe –
In a converging series
To approach
A limit that wearies
The brain sunk deep in dark where light does not encroach!
Promethean myth
Instinct with original fire,
The entrails and the pith
Of human desire,
That can speak
Whether from Elburz Peak
Or from the hummock
Where the mole crawls on his stomach.
Elburz or molehill, Bullinger must stare,
As he may, from either at the starry glare,
Hung aloft in what a night,
Night he can neither fathom nor ignore,
Bound as he was before,
Hobbled to knavery
And gross extremities
Of liberty and slavery,
Cowardice and bravery,
Insight and prejudice,
Shackled to contemplation
Of the “coalsack” or the constellation,
Riveted to his own incomprehension
Linked to a silence of unknown intention,
To shadow chained,
And by the light constrained.
For there is no music if Bullinger be not bound,
Only grotesque and trivial sound,
Melody betrayed,
The dying echo of a masquerade,
Twittering as hearty





As epicene gabble at a cocktail-party,
And blank banalities that wince and tire,
Unless Bullinger has paid
The price of fire.

