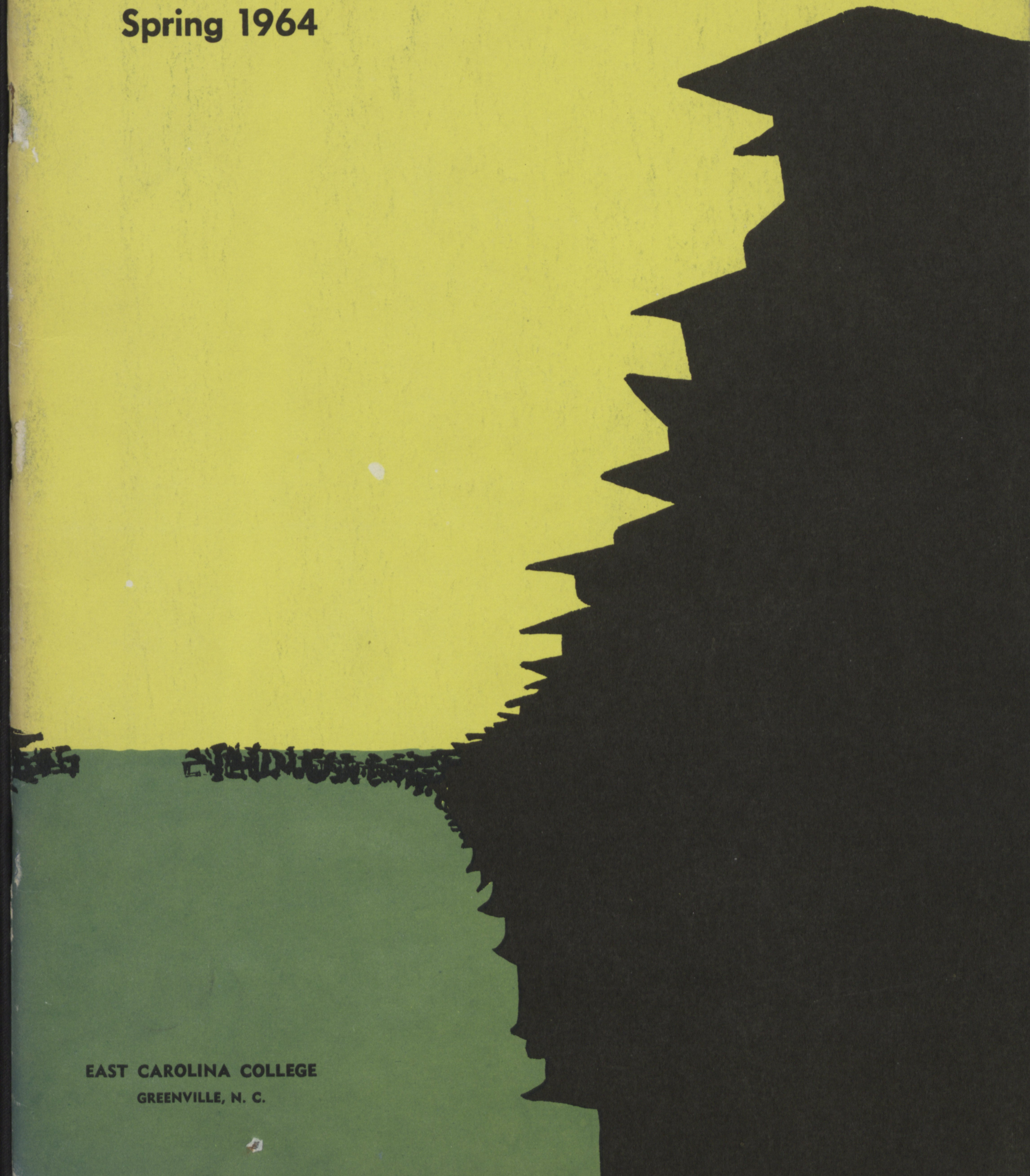
REBEL

Spring 1964



EAST CAROLINA COLLEGE
GREENVILLE, N. C.

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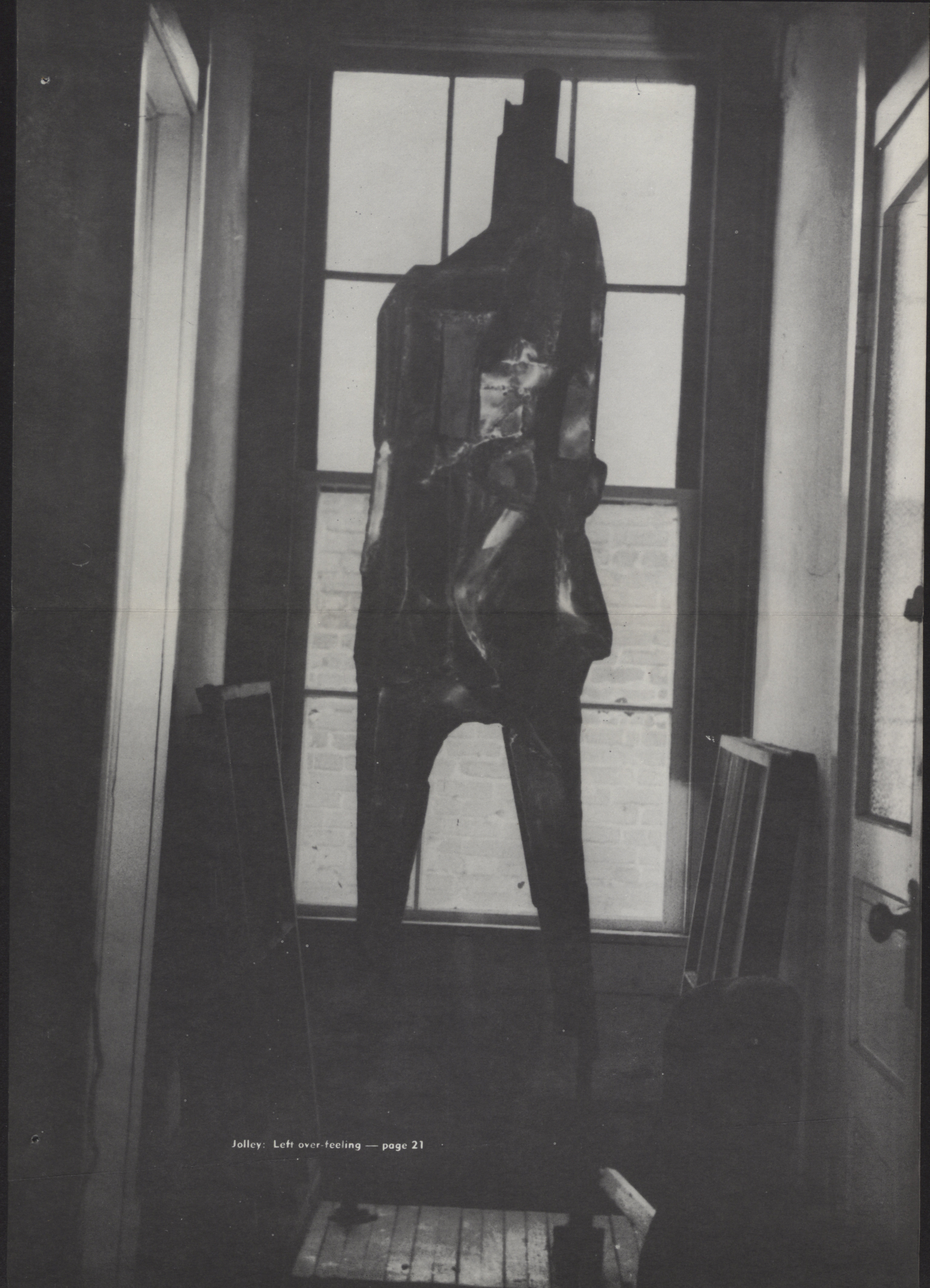

Jolley: Left over-feeling — page 21

EDITORIAL

Actually this should not be entitled "editorial"; "epilogue", perhaps—epilogue to my four years on the magazine or "prologue"—prologue to the coming year, but not "editorial." In fact I have never felt editorials merited space in the magazine. A literary magazine should be concerned with the exhibition of its literature. If the literature expresses its significance, then there is no need for an apologetic or diverting editorial.

The editorial is just a public exhibition of a Hobby-Horse. The rider seldom dismounts to examine his Horse for he assumes it is a thoroughbred when all too often it is apparent that he sits astraddle a much used saw horse. Significant Hobby-Horse riding remains as unnoticed as the whismy of a silly grinning Felix the Cat, whose unnecessary appearances in the magazine have gone unmentioned by our readers.

Felix the Cat is blatantly on the cover of this, the Spring issue of the REBEL Literary Magazine to proclaim that our literature cannot be compromised.

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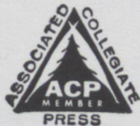

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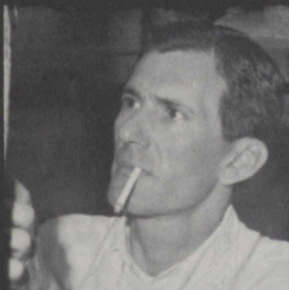

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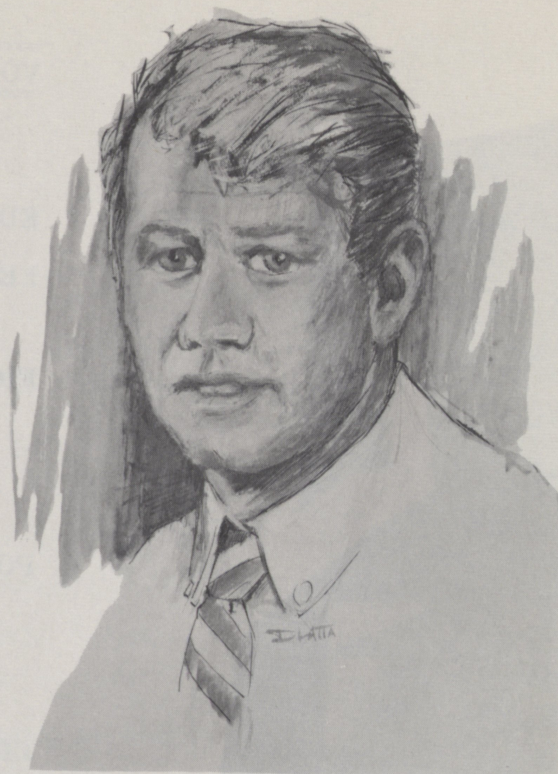
Robert Kennedy has acquired a considerable reputation as the driving force in investigating and frequently indicting Teamster Boss James Hoffa; he is hated in the South for the pressure he has exerted for civil rights; he is one of the ablest politicians in the Democratic Party; and he is a moral man. He has written two books, The Enemy Within *and* Just Friends and Gentle Enemies, *the former dealing with labor unions and the latter describing his world trip he made for his brother in 1961.*

This interview took place in the office of the Attorney General through the efforts of Mr. Henry Oglesby, secretary to the Honorable Herbert C. Bonner, member of the House of Representatives from the First District.



Interview with

Attorney General ROBERT F. KENNEDY

Interviewer: **In the treatment of crime and violence by the movies, television and some popular literature, it appears that the tendency is to condone violation of law by emphasizing a psychological complexity of motives. Do you feel that the removal of clear-cut distinctions from questions of public morality has visibly contributed to any compromise or breakdown in our national moral fiber?**

Mr. Kennedy: Well, I think probably television and some television programs have an adverse effect, but overall they do not. And I don't think that there is a great breakdown of the moral fiber in the United States. Each generation is apt to emphasize this because there are new problems that come along to deal with. Generally the country is doing well. The young people are ready to make a contribution if they are given an opportunity to do so. The activities of the Peace Corps abroad attest to this. There are many young people around the country who are doing things that are positive. There is some lack of courage, but we have had such problems in every stage in our history. I am thinking of Daniel Webster who wrote the letter to the bank

asking it to refresh his retainer while he was a leading Senator in the United States.

Interviewer: **From what non-fiction book do you feel you have learned most about the South? Who is your favorite Southern writer of fiction, and why?**

Mr. Kennedy: Bruce Catton and his books on the Civil War. As to Southern fiction writers, I don't know if I think about people as to what part of the country they are from. I don't think of anybody as a Northern or Southern writer. Perhaps Tennessee Williams, but other than one or two like him I don't identify anyone as particularly Southern.

Interviewer: **We have here a copy of an act to regulate visiting speakers at State-supported institutions which was enacted into law by the 1963 State Legislature of North Carolina. Would you care to make any comments regarding it?**

Mr. Kennedy: I don't think it would be wise for me to comment on a state law, but generally it's good for young people, particularly, to hear speakers on any and all subjects. I think college students are mature enough to make a judgment for themselves.

An individual should be identified for what he is. For example a communist should be identified as a member of the Communist party. If he isn't, I think that that poses some difficult problems. But as long as everybody knows the subject matter and the background of the particular individual who is going to speak I don't see that there's any great danger or problem about it, particularly for college students. They are mature enough to make their own judgments.

If a college student is going to become a communist just because he is persuaded by the first communist he hears, I don't think that the college is very good or that the individual is very sound, anyway. I think that college students, generally, should be able to hear, listen, talk with people no matter what they might advocate, propose, or promote —they can make their own judgment. I don't think it shows much confidence in your students if you have it otherwise.

Interviewer: **Should the suppression of pornographic literature be handled by some law enforcement agency of the federal government other than and in addition to the Postal authorities?**

Mr. Kennedy: Well, I think the Post Office Department is probably best. The Department of Justice enforces the law barring interstate transmission of pornographic literature, so we have certain responsibilities. But I think that between the Postal Department and the Department of Justice we probably handle it as satisfactorily as it can be. It is a very difficult area, because it involves censorship. It may be legitimate censorship, but it's censorship. So it poses a problem.

Interviewer: **Do you think racial disturbance has been intensified by the coverage of mass media? Has the completeness of coverage by news media in troubled spots, such as New Orleans and others, overdramatized the situation and contributed to the complexity of the problem? Would you care to compare the coverage of incidents connected with integration in the North and in the South?**

Mr. Kennedy: I think that racial disturbances probably have been intensified by the fact that they've received a good deal of attention in public. I think that's probably natural. Frequently the demonstration or the disturbance grows and spreads because of the attention it gets in the newspaper. And then that, in turn, increases the newspaper coverage, and that, in turn, increases the demonstration or the intensity of the demonstration. It is difficult in a free society such as ours to avoid this.

There sometimes has been a lack of responsibility by some news media, and sometimes by those running the demonstration. But generally, I would say it is difficult to avoid and not the major problem that we have to face.

When I think back on the demonstrations, they weren't initiated or originated because of the fact that they were going to be covered by the news media. It's had an effect on them, perhaps, but that's not the basic problem.

Frequently the papers in the North play up the incidents in the South, and that was true particularly up until September of '63 when they began to realize that there were problems in Northern communities as well. Southern communities give a good deal of attention to those incidents in the North, and sometimes I think that the stories in connection with the incidents are distorted by both areas of the country.

Interviewer: **Do you feel that the maximum of violence in resisting integration has passed in the South, or in other words, that the South has already moved into a later phase in which acceptance is regarded as inevitable?**

Mr. Kennedy: Well, I think we could still have some violence in the South. I think that there is more acceptance of the necessity of obeying court orders and the law in some areas than there was before, but there's still a good deal of opposition—in some parts of the North as well. I don't think that it's unique with the South. There has been progress made in both areas, generally, but I think that there are still some difficult problems.

Interviewer: **What geographical areas in the South will be the last in which integration is effectively accomplished?**

Mr. Kennedy: I think the area that's most difficult and where there's most opposition is Mississippi.

Interviewer: **Do you think that the integration movement has lost some of the support, or sympathy, it has had from moderates because of the militancy of some of the integration leadership policies?**

Mr. Kennedy: Well, again I think it varies from area to area whether the integration movement has lost support and sympathy from moderates. Probably in some areas it has and some areas it has not. Any time you have disruption such as is going on in the fight for equal rights, you are going to have things that are done that are unpleasant. People are going to disturb people. But I think generally in the country there is sympathy with the ideal that those involved are attempting to meet and to find solutions. And I think that the demonstrations have undoubtedly focused more attention on the problem than it otherwise would have received. For instance, the interest in obtaining the passage of the Civil Rights legislation probably wouldn't be present if some of the demonstrations hadn't taken place over the past three years.

Interviewer: **The Department of Justice frequently acts as a friend of the court in cases in which the government is interested. How actively do they participate in segregation cases, and could you elaborate?**

Mr. Kennedy: Well, it varies. In some cases we become involved and some cases we do not. It varies in particular cases.

Interviewer: **It has been suggested in connection with the Bobby Baker case that the constitution be amended so as to prevent a public officer from using the Fifth Amendment to prevent incriminating himself for things which grow out of the conduct of his public office. Do you think this should be done?**

Mr. Kennedy: I think it's very disturbing for a public official or public officer to take the Fifth Amendment to prevent incriminating himself, but I think that he should have the same protection as other citizens. I wouldn't have anybody, obviously, working for the United States Government who took the Fifth Amendment in connection with his public responsibilities. But I think that as an individual he should have the same protection as anyone else. I wouldn't amend the Constitution, in other words, to deal just with public officials.

Interviewer: **How do you think wire tapping and similar methods of investigation can best be used by federal law enforcement officers without doing damage to First Amendment freedoms?**

Mr. Kennedy: I don't think that wire tapping should be used. Wire tapping can be used by the Department of Justice in national security cases, but I think otherwise it should not be used. And I don't think the law is adequate to deal with the problem. Because Section 605 of the Federal Communications Act is complicated, it is difficult to get any prosecutions for indiscriminate wire tapping. We've suggested legislation to clarify the law. It would make wire tapping illegal, except for law enforcement officials acting against a few clearly specified crimes, such as espionage and kidnapping. And even this limited wire tapping could be done only under court order. But unless this measure should be passed, generally, as the law stands at the present time, I don't think wire tapping should be used except in national security cases. That has been the policy that has existed in the Department of Justice since 1940.

I don't know what you had in mind by "similar methods of investigation." But I think it would be wrong to break into somebody's house and put a machine in there to listen to a conversation.

BIMINI

A Recollection by Peter Hellman

The Florida coast passed below—a spatter of white roofs on a green base, cut off at the ocean by a stripe of beach whiter than the roofs. Fifty miles into the South Atlantic, on the inner fringe of the Bahamas, lay the island of Bimini, where I was going to fish for bonefish. The receding shoreline slowly lost shape and depth, its texture turned grainy and bright color sapped by a haze deepening with the distance, until there remained only a hairline smudge on an otherwise flawless joining of sea and sky.

A brown stewardess in a white blouse propped her rear against the arm rest of a forward aisle seat and anchored her feet under the seat across the aisle. An arm gesturing with a cigarette was the only visible portion of the man in that seat, and as it motioned, the girl laughed often. She came back once toward my seat, looking over her shoulder and laughing while the arm made a finishing gesture. She bent and asked what I would like to drink, a large grin across her face not directed at me. I was dressed in shorts and favorite polo shirt, looked no older than I was, and rated no deference, real or pretended. I spent the trip looking carefully for any large fish that might be close to the surface, as I do on railroad bridges above rivers and bays.

The island of Bimini first appeared just on the inside of the horizon at the head of an irregular network of wisps and patches of coral and earth which poked above the surface for spaces of several acres, gave out covers of greenery, then trailed off gently back into the sea. Bimini is actually a cluster of two islands set in a lime-colored, then abruptly blue sea. North Bimini, a green island banded in white, is the center of all activity. Its roofs were smaller and better ordered than those on the mainland. South Bimini, used only for its airstrip, was green without a mark.

The island's border of alternating ribbons of sand and coral reflected and intensified the morning sunlight, so that as we banked to the east, and the plane of the earth was thrust up before us at a hard angle, a shining white diagonal crossed my round window and separated the crisp and fluid greens of island and sea.

The plane was old, and when the landing flaps went down the wings began to vibrate so violently that a bird might have been beating them. A heavy growth of trees pressed closely on each side of the landing strip. We landed with a large bounce and several small ones. The close foliage rushed by for a moment until the holes in the runway slowed us down. We stopped in front of a small wooden house painted white. A sign said BIMINI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. When the other people had gotten off, I took my three fishing rods, tackle box and small suitcase, and walked down the steps to Bimini. I followed the others into the little white house. A black man in a white uniform sat at a big desk with nothing on it. He welcomed us to Bimini.

We went around to the back of the little house and got into an old bus. A colored boy my own age drove the bus without wearing shoes. The

road was dirt, and there were only the wide tread marks of the bus on it. The land was not bleak, but it was not the image of the tropical island I had expected to see—lush with ferns, coiling vines, and palms. We jounced past three goats standing in a row staring at us. The landscape looked like Virginia in a summer month with good rain.

The road ended in a turning circle, bounded on the outside by a pair of concentric circular ruts, and grown over in the middle with grass and a few flowers. On the periphery of the circle the ground sloped gently lower, beginning the basin of a luminous blue lagoon, enclosed on the opposite side by the docks and white shingled buildings of Alicetown.

A ferry boat with straight back wooden seats and a canopy that made it look like the top half of an old touring car took us across the lagoon. The boy who drove the bus also piloted the ferry. He wore a white cap with an embroidered blue anchor, but still no shoes. I took a seat along the railing. I looked over the side and saw a group of tiny fish cavorting around a mooring post, looking as if they had escaped from an aquarium. There were some with stripes and some solid colored, and some that were phosphorescent. Many roamed in little bands, while others preferred to wander by themselves. Tiny fish chased tinier fish around the pole. They moved in very quick straight-line bursts. The phosphorescent fish resembled comets. Different colors and shapes mingled freely. They acted like children running around a Maypole.

The engine cranked and the fish fled. The boat moved across the lagoon slowly. The water was almost supernaturally clear, but when I focused on a single spot on the bottom in order to see its composition, patterns of light and shadow leaped across the spot, and then the boat was past it. The water was without color, yet radiant with blue light, like glassware which is colorless when held up to light, but imparts color to liquid when filled. The sun was high in the sky and bright, but the source of the water's radiance seemed to be below. Instead of shining down, the light shone up. I felt as if the little boat was floating between a pair of skies full of light.

The boy ran the boat straight into the dock, which was buttressed with ragged tires. We bounced so far back that we had to come in again. I was the first to walk off the boat. A black man at the foot of the ramp, whom I nearly gouged with the three rods, asked if I needed a guide. I said yes. He said he was the man. I asked him if he were ready to go fishing at once. He said yes. His name was Clarence. I gave my suitcase and two dimes to a little colored boy, and sent him off to the hotel where I had made reservations.

The tide was high. Bonefish move into the tidal flats when the water is flat and the tide is low, and sweep along the sandy bottom sucking up small shellfish. When their mouths tip down to filter the food out of the sand, their tails necessarily tip up, and this portion is visible in the shallow water of the flats. At high tide the fish move out into the channels and are not easily caught.

Clarence suggested that we fish for barracuda until the tide was lower. We settled into his skiff and sped around to a wooded section of the island. Clarence took a white rag from underneath his seat and tore off a piece several inches long. He impaled one end on a long shanked bright nickel hook. The hook was attached to a length of wire leader. The leader, hook, and rag were connected to my line. My tackle was very light. Clarence gunned the motor a bit and told me to cast. I was intent on giving the appearance of a relaxed and skilled angler. I brought the rod tip over my shoulder without hurrying and sent it arching forward with a compressed motion of the wrist. The little white rag shot across a hundred feet of water and cropped without a splash. I felt like smiling but yawned instead. We moved through the channel at low speed.

I was considering and rejecting questions to ask Clarence, when my rod bent almost double and line began to be stripped from the spool. The violence of the strike was astonishing, Clarence gave a sharp command to start reeling. I began to pump the handle madly. The opposing force was sullen and very strong. Fifty feet behind the boat a silver shape erupted from the water, flexed, and shot straight down again. The steady tension of the line soon gave way to uneven spurts. Twenty feet from the boat the fish erupted again. This time he danced on top of the water, gills flared and head shaking. Little bursts of light reflected from his sides. I yanked him along in the air all the way to the side of the boat. Clarence shot an arm out, grabbed the line just above the wire leader, and jerked the furious barracuda over the side. He whacked it solidly on the head with a piece of black iron pipe. The fish arched up until only its nose and tail touched the bottom of the boat, shuddered along

its full length, and sagged flat.

I stared at my prize. Teeth shaped like railroad spikes stuck out randomly from beneath its lips. While I watched, the mouth opened slowly until it was very wide, as if it were having a good yawn, and clanked shut suddenly. I thought this was how a skeleton would sound dancing on a plank floor. The end of the white rag hung from its lower lip, speared by a single tooth.

Clarence whacked the fish again, wedging its head under one foot, and worked the hook from its jaw. Then, with his foot still on its head, he cut a strip of white meat from its back and ran a hook through a tip, as we had done with the rag. I cast again. The bait was struck almost at once. This was a heavier fish than the first, and it charged along the bottom without coming up to jump. It was a long time before I brought him close to the boat. My arm was tired. He lay like a torpedo under the boat. As Clarence reached for the end of the wire leader, a flurry of long shadow crisscrossed my fish. The line, taut so long, went slack. Clarence pulled up the head of the barracuda, cleanly sheared at the gills. He said that probably its own mother had eaten it. The head lay in the bottom of the boat and clanked its teeth.

We caught four more barracuda, bringing them in quickly once they were within reach. I felt as if our boat were a castle and the water about it a moat where instead of fish, crocodiles lurked.

We anchored in a shallow bay and ate lunch. Clarence took a knapsack from under the prow, and produced four sandwiches and two bottles of root beer. I sank down into the bottom of the boat and rested the widest part of my back against the bench seat. The sun was bright but not hot. There were no clouds and no birds. I sat still in the still boat and let my brain sort out the flood of images it had registered since morning. A complex of flat bays formed out of strings and wisps of land stretched all about us. Here the shallow water seemed to take on its special luster from the bright white sand base, perhaps as a mirror does from a silver backing. Ribbons of very dark water coursed through broad areas of lighter water; these were the channels from which we took the barracuda.

Clarence drank his root beer slowly, tipping the bottle high up but keeping his head level, and jutting out his lower jaw to accommodate the inverted head of the bottle. He kept the bottle propped up in this position for long moments, allowing the liquid to fizz and trickle until his mouth was full. Then, still without moving his head, he focused both dark eyes on the level of the root beer and swallowed. A bubble appeared in the inverted head of the bottle and, growing rapidly as it rose, it erupted on the surface with a blurp. The dark eyes shifted off into space, and the trickle and the fizz began again.

At length the bottle was emptied and returned to the knapsack, and we both sat still. There was neither wind nor movement. My arms were warm and deeply browning. Clarence sat with elbows on knees and chin on hands, looking about alertly, though at nothing in particular. The whites of his eyes provided a highly lustered ground between dark skin and dark pupils to set off his eye movements strikingly.

After a while Clarence said that the tide was low enough to begin hunting for bonefish. He cut the wire leader from the line we had used for barracuda and substituted a long length of fine nylon, looped at one end and rigged to a small bronzed hook at the other. He took a live grass shrimp from a papier-mache bucket hidden in the shadow of the seat and slipped the hook slightly through its tail. The little animal drew up its body like a man punched in the groin. Clarence dropped it back into the pail and pushed it back out of the sun.

He knelt and jerked the outboard into motion. We crossed the bay at high speed. Just when it seemed we would dash headlong against the side of the island, we entered a tiny waterway with the suddeness that an express train enters a tunnel, but instead of a rush of blackened masonry and red light bulbs, green foliage and bright flowers swept close by the sides of the boat. Ahead, all that betrayed the presence of water was a leaf here and there, lying gently on air.

We burst into a broad sand flat as abruptly as we had entered the narrow waterway. Clarence cut the motor and hoisted it from the water, letting our momentum carry us well beyond the shoreline. He put on a pair of sunglasses, then slipped a bamboo pole from under the gunnel and stood up straight on his bench seat, legs bent a little forward, trunk tipped a little back. He leaned against the pole to push us off, and began to scan the water intently. We had begun to hunt.

In a low voice, while his eyes swept the water, Clarence warned me not to make banging noises

and to speak quietly, as he was. We might see a hundred fish, but more probably, one fish. We might see his tail tipped up as he feeds on the bottom, or we might see normally clear water a little clouded, where the fish had fled moments before. We might not see any fish for a long time. Bonefish are nervous and wary by nature, and any noise made against the side of the boat will send them dashing from the area at once. I should be able to see the fish when it is pointed out to me. If not, I will cast in the direction of the pointed finger as far as I can. I will not be be casting at the fish, but in the direction the fish will probably move in his feeding pattern. Even though the fish has had no dealings with man, he knows the danger. The bait must be lying in a natural fashion when he first takes notice. If he accepts the bait, he will suck it up slowly, roll it about in his mouth, and perhaps savor it for a moment. Several seconds will elapse between the moment he first nudges the bait and the moment I strike. The inner part of the fish's mouth is tough, and a firm strike is necessary to set the hook well. When the fish first feels the sting of the hook, he will accelerate to full speed almost at once. I must not nestle the line in the crook of my index finger, as I do normally, The taut line will have the speed and efficiency of a power saw.

I tried to follow the path of Clarence's gaze with my own. Immediately about the boat the water was of flawless clarity. There was no hint of where the curve of the hull met the waterline. The bottom was white sand, finely grained. But the broad area that Clarence searched was a shimmering surface of blue and silver, no more transparent than molten metal. I narrowed my eyes until the tips of my lashes meshed, and the shimmer exploded into a flutter of prismatic hues. I looked down at my brown arms and my eyes enjoyed the rest.

Far out in the flat a dull black object canceled a portion of the blue and silver shimmer, and seemed to stir. I would have thought it was something inanimate being flexed gently by the wind, had there been a wind. I looked again to be sure I really saw it, and asked Clarence what it was. He said that it was a manta ray, perhaps ten feet across, which was dozing in water too shallow to cover him completely, waiting for the tide to float him. It seemed remarkable that we shared our bay with this strange animal which flexed black wings broader than our boat.

I alternated between trying to follow Clarence's gaze with my own, watching the white sand beneath the boat, and finally looking down at my brown arms. After a long time Clarence got down from his seat and knelt again at the motor. Soon we were racing through another narrow waterway, the water in front invisible, the water behind a froth, and the foliage on each side a blur of green punctuated by spots of bright color.

We entered another flat, this one smaller than the first. Clarence cut the motor, took his pole from under the gunnel, and got back up on the seat. I began my cycle of visual transitions again.

In my mind I was constructing a scene in which we had poled with stealth up to that monstrous dozing manta, and had smashed him over the head with an oar, and were towing him in triumph back to the docks of Bimini, when I looked up and saw the veins in Clarence's neck stand out. His head, which for many hours had been making sweeps from right to left with the regularity of a swinging electric fan, stopped moving. Clarence lifted his arm and pointed. Quietly I rose and let my eyes be drawn along the line of the motionless arm. I looked with all the intensity I could gather. What Clarence saw I could not. The water shimmered as before. I squinted until the shimmer became a rainbow again. Clarence put his arm back on the pole and pushed us off silently. I stooped and picked up the rod. In all the time I had thought about this trip, and even in the hours we had been on the flats, I had never really considered that the easy tempo of the warm afternoon would suddenly be frozen into this moment. In a small voice Clarence told me to cast when he pointed again. I tried to draw all my energy to my eyes. A dazzle of blue and silver points of light blinked before me. Just as the shimmer was about to explode into color, Clarence, high on his seat, pointed. I released the bail mechanism with one finger. With great care I brought the rod tip over my shoulder and let the bait fly. It sailed evenly out in the direction of the outstretched arm and fell lightly into the water. This was the place where the fish should come next in his feeding pattern. I clicked the bail into receiving position. Clarence held his arm stiff and wiggled only his finger and whispered, "See him. See him. He's coming . . ." I looked and could not see. The arm swung closer to the spot where my bait lay. I was set to explode. The arm closed the angle. The rod dipped very slightly and gently and stopped. It dipped a little lower. Clarence jerked his head

back. I jerked the rod back. The line snapped taut and tore off the spool. The hum of whirling gears rose evenly from inside the reel. Out beyond where the bait had lain the water was silver, but my fish—at last I saw him—was silver in motion. The sun and ripples on his back made a trail of little bursts of silver as he raced. I held the rod tightly and smiled at Clarence. He smiled back, and even his teeth sparkled.

The fish had begun his dash with three hundred yards of nylon on the spool. The drag was set so that the line could be pulled off the spool by a force just under its breaking point. The line was being stripped away quickly and with ease. Half was gone and the rest seemed to be going faster. A wisp of smoke undulated about the gear housing, the product of friction. The gears spun on. I brought the rod tip up as much as I dared, but the additional pressure did not cut back the speed at which I was losing line. It occurred to me that my fish might soon be racing through the flats trailing three hundred yards of nylon. "When do they usually stop?" I asked Clarence. He only shrugged.

The first indication that the fish did not have limitless energy was in the uneven hum of the drag mechanism. The line began to move off in spurts of speed accompanied by a hum that rose to an urgent whine, then tapered off to a slower speed and lower hum. The fish was becoming more tired with each additional sprint, but I was literally also reaching the end of the line. When half a dozen turns were left on the spool I raised the rod above my shoulder with both hands and forced it to arch to its limit. Somewhere out in the flat my fish stopped. He did not know that he was one lunge away from freedom. I began to retrieve. The fish leaned the other way, but he came. I pumped with deliberation. He made defiant little dashes, taking with him several yards of line that I had just won. I wound line onto the spool and watched it stripped off. Each time I stopped winding it gave my wrist a chance to register additional protest against its work. To start winding again required mounting effort. A hundred yards away the water swirled, and I saw my fish again, racing away.

I kept on retrieving. The ache in my wrist crept to my elbow. My arm was not used to the work. Very slowly the fish came closer. Now I was able to watch his method of battle. When I retrieved, he turned sideways against the flow of the water and wriggled. After I had won a few new yards of line, he flipped his tail up sharply and dug into the water with a kick that shot him off in the direction from which he had just come. When he had raced away with half of what I had gained in the last exchange, he stopped, and I began to wind again. My arm had become a length of pain.

After a long time the fish was ten feet from the boat. When he stopped for a moment to sulk on the bottom, Clarence drew a long handled net from under the seat and held it in readiness. The fish looked up at the net, Clarence and me. We looked down at him. All was still for a moment. Then the fish pivoted around on his tail again, and the sound of whirling gears rose as he sped away.

He went a hundred yards. I was not prepared for this. I thought how tired I was. Then I thought how much I weighed and how little he weighed, and I began to get my line back. This was easier than the first time because my arm did not protest any more. The numbness that had first nudged the pain out of my wrist must have continued up into my head, because when I had brought the fish to the boat once more, and he had looked at us and we at him, and he had kicked up his tail and left again, I accepted with serenity.

Perhaps the fish understood that quality of serenity in my face when I brought him to the boat the third time, and thought that, like a yogi, I must have been beyond physical victory or defeat. Perhaps he was not thinking at all. In any case he lingered too long. Clarence slipped the net under him and lifted him from the water. He lay in the net still and glistening, not understanding that he could not flick his tail and be gone. Suddenly he thrashed violently, throwing beads of water against my face.

Clarence swung the fish into the boat and put him on the bottom. He was slim through the shanks, tapering evenly at each end. In back, the taper reversed into a flared fork tail. A spray of green extended along the length of his back, and all the rest was silver.

The engine roared, the boat swung around, and we sped down the bay toward Alicetown. I began to feel my muscles again, and the warmth of the sun. I flopped down into the bottom of the boat next to my beautiful fish, and lay my head on my brown arm, so that the roar of the motor and the rush of water were all that I heard, and we could see each other eye to eye.

AIN'T NOBOD

CAREFULL, SHARP EGGS UNDERFOOT

By DORIS BETTS

The long strip of white fabric, like a giant's bandage, was stretched high across the town square. It moved slightly, not from any breeze but because it rode on layers of heat waves rising off the cracked asphalt street.

Everytime he drove his car under that banner, Wink Thomas swore he would not read it again, but each time his mind recaptured the words no matter where he sent his eye to look. In crooked red capitals the sign said, AIN'T NOBODY HERE BUT US CHICKENS.

Thomas groaned at it anew, stomped the accelerator and shot beneath the banner and into his usual Main Street parking place. Daily he fitted his car into an invisible rectangle at the right curb, where all painted guide-lines had long since worn away, and he prided himself on parking precisely in the same spot every morning. If the area were measured, Wink Thomas thought, it wouldn't vary two inches from day to day.

Locking the car, he walked past the grimy plate glass windows of what had once been Main Street Grocery & Notions, and was now his law office. His image there was powdered with dust and he stopped to frown at the dim reflection of his face —eyes, a mouth, the rest was blurred. Below that his body fell, almost crashed, down the curve where a once husky chest was suspended below his belt. He looked his 58 years, and the summer heat had already wilted his suit and wet his thin hair.

He wiped the dust from black lettering on the glass door. This he did read, looking for flaws. WRISTON PEALE THOMAS, JR. ATTORNEY AT LAW. PRESIDENT, PARSONVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. STATE SENATOR, 1938-40. NOTARY PUBLIC.

He shook his head. No, he still couldn't see what his daughter found wrong in all that information on his door. "Some people wouldn't *know*," he argued aloud now, and went in and spoke Good Morning to Miss Ida Kay King at the front desk.

"Another scorcher," Miss King said without looking up from her novel.

Wink agreed that this summer was hotter than last, quoted the weather predictions from the car radio, and complained about the humidity. She was no longer listening. With a forefinger enclosed in a coating of lotion and tipped with pink polish, she turned another page. For the hundreth time, he almost asked her to leave those library books at home. For the hundred-and-first time he decided against it, opened the gate in the low railing behind her desk and sat down at his own.

Wink Thomas didn't know why he persisted in calling that thing a railing, as if it were cousin to those polished ones dividing Federal courtrooms. Everybody in town knew it was only the porch bannister off the decaying old Richards house, and half the male population of Parsonville could still find the initials they had carved on it as boys. He used it now as a shelf for sorting half a dozen letters.

Miss Ida Kay King said, "It's Egg Day tomorrow."

"I know it. I know it." He hated Egg Day. "Phone calls this morning?"

"None," she said crisply. She was a woman of few words, chiefly because her new dentures hurt and she preferred to let her tongue lie slack between cheeks slightly puffed out like a couple of air cushions.

There were seldom many telephone calls, except that time last summer when the banner above the square had read discreetly, PARSONVILLE EGG FESTIVAL. All that week the sign had stirred citizens to call him and argue the old question about the town's name. Some said it was really Parsonsville, after old Nello Parsons who had built its first house and let his chickens roost in the chinaberry trees; but others claimed there never had been an extra *s* and the banner was correct as it stood. Or, as it floated.

The jangling telephone and the mixed history and argument had so worn him out that this year, when the midsummer week came for honoring the town's only industry—poultry raising—with picnics and events, Wink had appointed a committee to hang a new banner over Main Street.

Well, he had only gotten what he deserved, trusting the job to somebody else. He understood that, in private, they had even called themselves the Cluck Committee. No wonder the current banner became a joke. Was it the county farm agent who, at 36, still wore his hair in crew cut who had swayed the others to this silliness? And helped them hang it, at night, in a mood he could only describe as anger?

All Thomas prayed now was that nobody he had ever known in the North Carolina Senate would pick this week to drive through Parsonville, at least not before Saturday, when he could take the thing down and burn it.

Thomas hung his coat across his chair. "Did you hear me say it was going to be a hundred degrees today?"

"Yes," said Miss Ida Kay King. She refilled her mouth with air, trying to give her gums the illusion false teeth were merely floating lightly in her mouth. Besides, she hated to interrupt her book about plantations, lusty octoroons and dueling pistols fired through curtains of Spanish moss.

He threw away a notice about the County Democratic Rally and Barbecue in Roxton. It angered him to go for any reason to Roxton, with its lace factory and trucking concern. Roxton was a regular stop for all the trains on the North-South line. The County Fair was always held in Roxton, which had good schools and the only hospital for miles. He thought of the county as of a young tree: Roxton was the leader, the main stem, while Parsonville shriveled for lack of nourishment. And, in time, they will prune us. The state and the nation will chop us off for compost, he thought. He made a note of that in case he should be asked to speak at the service Sunday, honoring the city's founders and early settlers.

That made him think of tomorrow's duties. "Have the eggs come?"

She pointed. On his side of the railing was a small wooden keg brimming with eggs in all shades of cream and tan. Small eggs, of course. No need to waste what might be good for market.

"Teed Kiser brought 'em in early this morning," said Miss King. Regretfully she closed the book on her thumb and fixed her mind on musk and verbena. That's how book people smelled on an August day, back in the *real* South. Musk and verbena. She came back to Parsonville with a jolt and found her armpits damp and the glare off Main Street painful against her bifocal glasses. "Half of the barrel," she said, "must be nest eggs for Teed's setting hens. Be sure not to drop one with an *x* marked on it."

He could see a few penciled crosses from where he sat. "I've never dropped one."

"Some of those eggs must be older than I am."

I doubt that, he thought but did not say. Miss Ida Kay King had been his father's secretary and the veins ran in her skin like swollen rivers down the globe. Her face was the color of gray granite and like granite it had merely eroded with time. There was no break in her anywhere; she was compacted by her age. On that stony surface rode layers of powder, rouge, lotion, cream; and they counted for no more than a dust mote on the side of a mountain. And at its peak, rising cone-shaped on her skull, round piles of gray hair grew in clusters like lichen on a stone.

Thomas took off his tie and let it droop across one shoulder. "Collection letters?"

"Sent them out Monday." She opened her book again, waited, and then returned to a land of gallantry and high-spirited horses. Irritably he tagged her, "Miss Scarlet O'Hara of 1889."

But he was silent, suddenly depressed that the letters had been mailed and now the day, and even the week, arched 'round him like a shell with its contents already blown out through the other side. Collection letters on behalf of furniture stores in Charlotte and Greensboro *were* his week's work, although he knew how few Parsonville people really understood their references to payments and signed contracts. He felt about debt the way he felt about capital punishment: the jury who said "Guilty" ought to pull the cyanide switch, and the manager who bragged on his sofa ought to go collect for it, and look into the pitiful living room where the foam rub-

ber stood, well tended, under the tinsel sign, GOD BLESS OUR HOME.

After Egg Day ceremony tomorrow, a few chicken farmers might amble into his law office, and take up an hour apiece talking about how the government kept dumping eggs into the Potomac until all the fish between Washington and the sea grew fat—indirectly off the expensive feed thrown down right here in Parsonville before these very hens.

At the end of that ritual, there would be a dollar bill or two, stacks of damp quarters, a tiny trickle of soiled money like the drop of water the wicked rich man begged Lazarus to bring to Hell and lay upon his burning tongue. Those bits of money would never quench so much consuming debt, and there would be stronger demand letters and repossessions. Thus, with a rare title to search or a will to write, another whole year would slide by, and there would be a new banner sewed from bed sheets and lettered with house paint, hung quivering in the heat of next August.

He talked now in a search for friction, anything to impede how slippery time was.

"Didn't see you last night at the sack race, Miss Ida Kay."

"Too hot."

It had been hot, and he still felt heavy from the picnic afterwards; rows of cakes yellow and sad under seas of seven-minute icing, lukewarm custards, deviled eggs, chicken salad, broth and dumplings, egg salad sandwiches, fried chicken, puddings under towers of scorched meringue, gumbo and giblet gravy, pot pie and chicken croquettes; and, at the end of the eating, bushel baskets full of drumstick bones for the dogs to crunch and get hung halfway in their throats.

Hens and eggs—he was sick of them. He would have liked to march back through history and locate the first man who ever said, "Make the most of what you have," and beat him to death.

His daughter Sherrilee came into the office, squeezed a smile from Miss King, and swung across the bannister to him in a pink whirl of skirt and lace petticoat.

"Place looks like a ghost town," she said, "And your office isn't much better."

His daughter's body seemed to move to a music he could not hear. He watched her turn gracefully and sit on the edge of his desk. "Hello, Ducky."

Her voice was irritable. "Don't call me that!"

Sometimes he felt they were changing her over at that Greensboro Woman's College, pulling her loose from him, while he paid with tuition and taxes for their end of the tug-of-war. He felt like writing somebody a letter about it.

"It's a good nickname for you," was all he said. "As good as the day it was given."

"Yes, yes."

He saw she was annoyed. To Miss Ida Kay he called, "I ever tell you how I gave Sherrilee that name?"

Patiently she closed her book and waited behind glazed eyes. Sherrilee (*that* name had been her mother's idea) snapped, "A hundred times!"

He went on with it anyway. "The day I first heard Marva and I were going to have a baby, I'd been duck-hunting down East . . ."

("A thousand times, maybe," Sherrilee said toward Miss Ida Kay.)

"With Harvey Leamon—you remember him? Had a feed store down the street. Fell over with a heart attack taking up church collection. And Pete Willett went, you know? It was 1942 and he was home on furlough. Died later in the war."

"Daddy!" she groaned. She walked over to a chair and sat in it. He half thought her bones were made of perfume.

"Anyway, I came in that night and Marva had been to the doctor. My head was full of those wild ducks. Like women, they moved all of a piece."

Seeing they looked puzzled, he spread his hands into false wings to demonstrate. "Ducks don't exactly turn in flight . . . I thought then it was more that they had swayed a little and leaned into a new course. It seemed to me they fly in air the way fish swim in water. Ever been duck hunting, Miss Ida Kay?"

"Never." She was still watching him politely but her hands of their own will had already opened the novel to the proper page.

"It was just how they moved," he finished lamely. "I remembered it when Sherrilee was born. Such a pretty baby. I called her Ducky from the start." He did not add that he had thought Sherrilee a terrible name, and by the time she had her first birthday he was already sick of spelling it for people.

"All that," said Sherrilee, "was before I was born."

"It's still nice to know these things."

She seemed to be angry. "Do you know I've never seen you go duck hunting once, not in my whole life."

He shifted on his chair. "Time, you know. Family. The office . . ." His voice got smaller and smaller. "But I really did like it. It used to mean a lot to me."

He saw that Miss Ida Kay, without comment, had begun to read again.

"I came in," said his daughter firmly, "to talk about Scandinavia."

"What about her?"

Scandinavia had been their cook since he and Marva were married, had nursed Marva through cancer, operations, death. Then she stayed on to run his house and rear his daughter; at present she was supervising the long, slow death of Wriston Thomas, Sr., his father, of strokes and old age. Scandinavia seemed to him like a large, dark lodestone, drawing pain and trouble into herself, sponging up his own fatigue, absorbing his father's senile temper. He relied on her as sailors might rely on the North Star.

But now even that seemed under threat, with Sherrilee home for the summer and forever talking minorities, underprivileged homes, and Southern mores.

"Scandinavia," she declared now, "should send her son to college."

"Apart from the cost, Kestler wouldn't know what to do with college."

"There you go!"

"I mean it, Ducky." (She said, "Don't call me that!") "Scandinavia is a fine woman and a smart one, but Kestler hardly knows dark from daylight."

"What do you expect in this environment? Don't you ever take environment into consideration?"

Thomas closed his eyes. She could ask him that while he spent his life watching Parsonville disappear beneath the Industrial Revolution like a ship falling under the sea. Every year the grass slipped in on another street, but he and Kestler Burns would die here because neither one of them . . .

He said, "Have you talked to Kestler?"

"In a general way. About incentives. Self improvement."

"Uh hunh." How long would it be, he wondered, before she joined the other college youngsters, all colors, and marched in the Greensboro streets under a placard about equal rights? Marva would spin in her grave like a pinwheel.

"I still say Kestler couldn't pass fifth grade. I only let him vote because of his mother."

"If Kestler is under-educated, whose fault is that?"

Under-educated! "I don't know," and looked into her cool face, pink lipstick on an indignant mouth. She had thrown her left arm westward, like a wing lying on the wind. "Is it mine?"

"Oh, Daddy!" She began to pace between his desk and the small barrel of eggs at the railing. He guessed summer in Parsonville must be pretty dull, a record heat wave surrounding the house in which her grandfather was dying. He couldn't afford Wrightsville Beach, or her own car. Perhaps in the future she would understand, when she found herself paying the bills for another generation's ruined arteries. He had an awful feeling she would never pay for his; he would have to go off and have his death alone, under sanitary conditions. She and Geriatrics would tell him how really humane this was and he could only nod—as he discovered he was nodding now, although for the life of him he did not know to what.

"I give up. I'm going to get some ice cream," said Sherrilee. She stood pressing one finger to her cheek where she feared that once adorable dimple might soon wrinkle her before her time.

He was relieved. "Go ahead. It's mad dog weather." Too hot to talk of such things. Too cold in the winter. In the spring, wet.

Miss Ida Kay King, who liked her heroines safely closed in books, watched the girl swing across Main Street with a long stride. At thirteen, those legs had seemed to be hinged at the neck. How there was this grace . . . In the sun, Sherrilee's hair, which had Marva's same auburn lights, burned like a torch. She thought of marathons and torches.

"She's very pretty," said Mis Ida King, making it sound like a disease.

Egg Day dawned for the fourth year hot and cloudless, and the air felt hard.

From his bedroom window, Wink Thomas looked out into the morning. The good weather depressed him. Other towns rated an occasional tornado and Federal Aid but Parsonville—nothing.

When he, single-handed, had founded the Parsonville Egg Festival four years before, it seemed a possible answer to the poverty of the area and the monotony of the summers. He had imagined it would draw tourists, county officials, perhaps the State Secretary of Agriculture to have his picture made while plucking chickens. There might have been a handicraft business painting eggs for the Easter trade. News dispatches could have been written with leads like, "All the good eggs in Parsonville gathered today for . . ." or even, "Egged on by fair weather . . ." Life Magazine might have done

a picture story tracing the egg's role in human civilization. He had pictured chickenfeed companies that would sponsor baseball teams, a firm to package and deodorize hen manure for flower gardeners, ceramic bantams on ashtrays which claimed Parsonville as the Egg Center of North Carolina, Mother Nello Parsons' Fresh Egg Mayonnaise . . .

Well, it was a farce; he had counted all those chickens long before they hatched. Even the weekly newspaper in Roxton no longer sent its old maid reporter. Only the old ladies and old gentlemen and Negroes of Parsonville came to the annual events. They came because the summer was very hot and very long, and it was better to eat chickens or talk chickens than feel so trapped in feeding the unbearable rhythm of their hunger, or sorting eggs against a candle's worth of light.

Wink Thomas went downstairs and into the dining room. He still called it that, although the table and sideboard had been stored upstairs for six years, and his father's hospital bed was stark and incongruous under the small chandelier.

"Who's that?" called his father, rising on an elbow. His flesh was like papier-mache. "Who's coming in?"

"It's Wink. Did you sleep?"

"Never. I never sleep. There's a dog barks all night."

The only dog in any of the yards on Chestnut Street was Mr. Bison's old cocker, and it barely had strength enough to snore. The only sounds in the summer night were the songs of mockingbirds and their sweetness was sufficient to pierce window-glass, but he never mentioned that.

"Has Sherrilee come down?"

"Who?"

"Your granddaughter, Sherrilee."

"So much traffic in and out this house I can't keep track of it all." Abruptly the old man hacked, emptied his throat into the palm of his hand and held it out. "Looky there," he breathed, his voice respectful. "Solid blood. That's what happens. That's why I don't get well. During the night I bleed away all my strength."

There was nothing but spit, slightly yellow, in his hand. Wink nodded and patted his father's thin shoulder which felt like a coat hanger. "You're going to be fine," he said, and pushed past the swinging door through the butler's pantry to the kitchen where he drank half a pint of tomato juice—hideously red—and almost choked.

In the kitchen Scandinavia stood feeding clothes through the wringer. He hoped she would not begin again about spin washers and electric dryers. They said Good Morning and, as usual, he turned down her offer to cook his breakfast. He never ate an egg if he could help it.

"Sherrilee has been telling me about your boy. How old is Kestler now? Eighteen?"

Scandinavia looked withdrawn and sullen. She looked as if it gave her satisfaction to be crushing his wet shirts between rollers. "He done it," she said.

It was not possible. "Kestler? What?"

She dropped a balled garment into the basket with a thud. He thought of guillotines. "Heard all Miss Sherrilee's talk about bettering himself. First thing at sunrise today he hitched straight over to Raleigh to join the Army."

He sat hastily at the table. "Does Sherrilee know?"

"Now who'll cut my stovewood?" A sheet came forth like a flattened white worm and fell, squirming, into the basket. "Left me here," she grumbled. "Left your shrubbery to grow and nobody to do them windows at your office. Left Mr. Teed Kiser with nobody to cut his yard or clean his chickenhouse. Left us all."

"The Army." Acting mentally as Parsonville's one-man Chamber of Commerce, he lowered the census by one. Left us here, he echoed. Sherrilee soon. First college and then . . .

"I can't crawl up there and shingle my roof," said Scandinavia. She was less sad than angry. "I can't shoot no squirrels for stew. I need help turning Mr. Thomas in that high bed."

Left us here. Thoughts flared in his mind: *If Daddy would die. . . if I were a better lawyer . . . if all my old contacts in politics weren't either dead or too prosperous . . .* One by one he snuffed them all and a feeling of great sympathy for Scandinavia swept over him.

"Well," he said crossly, "the Army won't keep him forever."

There was a companionable silence. She turned off the wringers, set the basket on the back porch. "Egg Day, ain't it?"

Wink nodded. He put the rest of the juice into the refrigerator and stood gratefully for an instant in its cool air before he closed the door.

"Think I can leave Mr. Thomas long enough to step uptown for it?"

"He'll be fine. He'll probably sleep."

"Good weather for Egg Day. Hot."

He sipped some coffee and began to sweat. For all he knew, Kestler Burns was now riding to Fort Jackson on an air-conditioned bus. The coffee was bitter.

Scandinavia said, "Is they a pee-rade this year?"

He shook his head. Only the first year had there been the straggling young marchers, their brass horns filled with noise and sunlight. Now the small high school population of Parsonville had been added to Roxton High, and the few youngsters who rode to it each day on the orange bus were not students of drum or trumpet. Indeed, already they belonged to Roxton, to its formica-lined drugstores, its motion picture house and public swimming pool. They would not be home on any August afternoon to watch a bald man fry eggs on the sidewalk.

"No parade, but the sewing circle will sell lemonade," he offered. "You buy a glass for a quarter and they embroider your name on the church memorial quilt."

"Not my name they don't," laughed Scandinavia, who viewed Jim Crow as a complicated joke on white people. She enjoyed watching them try to keep it all straight—yes to this, but no to this other. Her money, she knew, would buy lemonade in a good goblet, which would then be set aside for an extra-careful washing. It would be served her by smiling ladies who would remember to ask how Kestler was and if her bad back was better this dry weather; but no "Scandinavia Burns" would ever be silk-embroidered on the Methodist Church quilt. She was glad she didn't have the responsibility of drawing that line between what was allowed and forbidden.

Wink put a quarter onto the kitchen table. "You have a glass anyway," he said. "Made in the shade and stirred with a spade. Best ol' lemonade ever made."

"I see you're the announcer as usual."

"As usual," he muttered.

On the way out he said goodbye to his father who, after a silence, called, "Goodbye, Orlando."

That made him stop. Wink's brother Orlando had been dead for 40 years, had died before he was ten, and was thus hung forever in a time still safe for believing princes sought and won their fortunes, fish offered three wishes, and magical hens might lay a golden . . .

"It was a goose," he said aloud. "It was a goddamn goose!"

"Goodbye, Goose," called his father, trying to be agreeable.

The people of Parsonville gathered in the town square, clustered in the street under that silly banner which seemed to be describing them all. The street was as safe as sidewalks because most traffic stayed on the by-pass and never drove through the small town at all. The lemonade stand had been built of packing boxes and stood on the Main Street corner near his parking place.

When Wink came squinting into the sun from his office, he thought the small crowd looked funereal, and the street lacked only a gallows to complete the scene. He was still irritated with Sherrilee's good intentions, Kestler's flight, library books in his office. His father had set him thinking about Orlando—Orlando, the clever brother, the quick lad in school, the boy with straight teeth who won all the races and could swim upstream. If Orlando had lived, he would not now be here in Parsonville on a hot afternoon breaking eggs. Wink Thomas knew that much.

Men and women who waved to him were all his age and older except of Sherrilee, who had put on a flowing wide dress and white high heels and earrings that glittered. Teed Kiser came from the group and took the small barrel of eggs. Both men spoke politely to the lemonade ladies with their pasteboard fans which said, "SHOP IN ROXTON." Miss Suffolk, who could make hand stitches as tiny as any sewing machine, remarked that this year's banner was real original.

Wink said, "Teed, is that thunder?"

"I don't hear nothing."

He knew as soon as he came to the center of the intersection of Main-and-Carter that Kestler Burns had run off to the U. S. Army without painting the customary oval outline of a giant egg on the asphalt. Someone from the lemonade stand had already noticed this lack and brought a bag of sugar to trickle a wavy, uncertain circle in place of it. The crowd was watching Wink nervously to see how he would take it.

"All we could think of," somebody said.

"Best we could do."

"Knew it would be an aggravation."

Wink saw then, for the first time, that just as he went through this silly business once a year for their sakes and to break the boredom, so they only came for his; and he scrubbed at the sun glare in his eyes.

"Hot as hell," he managed. "It's a fine egg." It seemed to him Sherrilee ought to learn something from all this, but she had already gone over to the lemonade stand and begun spelling her name carefully for the Chairman of the Em-

broidery Committee. "Mighty resourceful," Wink added and then, with haste, "Smart. Real smart."

Faces beamed and for an instant the crowd seemed to fuse at the points of nudging elbows into a unit.

But then somebody was heard to say, "Always something goes wrong!" and he saw flickers of anger. At the speaker? The egg? The heavy spilling of sun about their heads?

"Ain't one thing, it's another," said somebody else.

Teed Kiser whispered to him, "I do hear thunder, sure enough!" He put the barrel of eggs alongside the sugar-outline on the street.

Wink went on sweating, although by now he could see a sudden cloud South, blotting up some of the blazing light. "I didn't hear it that time."

"You better hurry." Kiser raised both hands to quiet the talk, then gave him a nod.

"Friends," Wink began. Suddenly his voice, as if it were brittle and hollow, caved in. He wondered if that embarrassed Sherrilee.

He was handed lemonade and heard his name called toward the booth to go on the Methodist quilt.

He tried again.

"Friends, this week the city of Parsonville has been engaged in a celebration."

Their faces were sober.

"Once a year we meet together to . . . to count our blessings. You've all heard, ha-ha, of walking on eggs; well, all of us walk on them here, because our community was founded on eggs. Eggs and hens, of course."

Now, belatedly, they smiled. Over their heads the sun faded. He could hear the thunder sliding across the sky. He spoke louder.

"Nello Parsons was the first man to make a good living here off chickens. You all remember that in 1937 every ribbon at the State Fair in Raleigh went to Parsonville eggs and Parsonville chickens. Because we've got standards here. We've got standards."

He wiped his forehead on a handkerchief. At the edge of the crowd Scandinavia leaned forward to make sure it was a clean one, worn thin by steady bleaching, so he would not disgrace her. One bird passed overhead, out-flying the storm.

"So every year," he continued, "the first week in August, we take this way of thanking our lucky stars that Nello Parsons had foresight. That Nello Parsons had standards."

He whispered to Teed Kiser, "Is the road cooling too fast? Will they still fry?"

"They always have," said Kiser. But he shifted from one foot to another and frowned upward.

"You all know," said Wink to the crowd, "that on Monday we met and cleaned up the cemetery, put flowers on the Parsons' plot, and heard a fine poem about Easter and rebirth composed by Miss Tildy Perkins . . ."

(Miss Perkins, who was deaf, had asked to have her left foot stepped on when she was named so she might smile; now three shoes ground onto hers and she cried out instead. The people around her stirred uneasily.)

Wink pressed on. "Tuesday evening we heard some fine quartet singing, had an egg hunt, and a bountiful picnic supper out at the old school grounds. And last night the competitions for the heaviest hen, egg with most weight and biggest circumference, and our other contests. I might add that Mrs. Lockley, who fell from the judges' platform, is resting comfortably in Roxton hospital and the fracture was not a bad one."

Somebody applauded.

"Today, we fry the traditional eggs on the pavement. People are always saying it's so hot you could fry eggs on the sidewalk, but we do it every year right out in the street, and Mother Nature acts as our cook."

Sherrilee, he saw, had stopped listening to his speech and was gazing way down the road as if she saw something he could not see, something that moved.

"We break our eggs," he said loudly, "and drop them around the outline of a larger egg, remembering as we do that the egg is the seat of life, that life begins in the egg and feeds on the egg."

With a fine, high-wristed gesture he reached behind him, cracked the first egg on the barrel's metal rim, and dropped the contents neatly onto the wavery sugar outline at his feet.

Even as it fell he knew his error. Two flies glutting on sugar were drowned in the egg's liquid, but the sudden smell sprang forth until they all were choking in it.

"Teed Kiser!" he cried in an angry voice, then gagged on the rotten, sulphur smell.

They were drawing quickly back, noses clipped shut between fingers. Sherrilee had begun to trot gracefully in her white pumps toward his office door and Scandinavia, laughing, poured out her lemonade onto the curb.

"Shame on you, Teed Kiser!" somebody yelled.

"Old cheapskate!" called another.

And, "Fed your hen buckshot before the weighing!" accused a third and one of them rushed forward and grabbed an egg—not rotten—and

smashed it atop the old man's head. At this Kiser, insulted, let fly with a whole handful, one of which fell unbroken into the lemonade pitcher and sank in slow motion onto a bed of sugar grains. Another flew from his hand to splatter on the blouse of Miss Tildy Perkins, the Easter poet, so that it seemed her shriveled breast had suddenly gushed forth; and she flailed out with her parasol at Mr. Wilson who had stepped on her foot during the speech, and opened a long cut above his wrinkled ear.

Then all of them swarmed forward to the egg barrel, like Jews stoning Stephen, and screamed as they threw at each other. Strange white-and-yellow blossoms plopped into being on backs and stomachs; Mr. Bison's eyeglasses were covered and he walked blindly into Aunt Christy's wheelchair and she beat him with her crocheted pocketbook. Mrs. Kiser, rushing to her husband's aid, slipped in a puddle of egg white and fell heavily onto the street and got her hair frosted with dust and sugar crystals.

A little man struck Scandinavia in the neck with another rotten egg, yelling her nigger son had enrolled at the University of North Carolina and she lumbered off toward home like a brown bear, her hands splayed up as if she were surrendering under fire.

In the general rush the whole lemonade stand was overturned; Mrs. Weiker was pinned beneath it with her sewing needle jammed up under her thumbnail; and the last remaining piece of Mrs. Atkins' crystal—her prized pitcher—broke on the curb into bits no bigger than breadcrumbs.

Then, like the roar of Jehovah's rage over the recalcitrant Israelites, a clap of thunder broke in the town square and froze them into sudden statues. They were transfixed with their raised fists and mouths open upon insults; and one egg which was already in the air seemed almost to float above their stillness before it hit the trembling banner and came down and broke like an echo. They looked upon each other, unbelieving, terrified. A river of light ran down the sky and thunder broke over them again. Then the first hard raindrops were thrown down around their heads and they scattered, running, down the four streets, and Aunt Christy's wheelchair rocked crazily as it rolled away downhill behind them.

It was a downpour, ruining the little drawstring bags and melting the words on those paper fans the ladies had dropped in their headlong flight, diluting both the ruined and good eggs which lay where they had shattered, breaking up the sugared oval outline and washing it away into the gutter. The banner, heavy with rain water, sagged down toward the street and Wink Thomas slapped up at it as he began running too, his heart trying to thrust out between the rib bars and burst forth through his coat. He slipped and slid on a street slick with raw eggs, and bits of shell crunched with a terrible sound under his running feet. And although he had not run all the way to Chestnut Street since boyhood races with his brother, he ran the distance now—heavy footed, jarring the earth, putting new cracks into all the sidewalks. Without even slowing down he worked out of his wet coat and slung it into Mr. Bison's forsythia bush as he passed.

Sherrilee had ridden with Miss Ida Kay King and was already home when, heaving from his effort, he burst into the house. She came forward and started to touch him, but drew back from the wet clothes, sulphur, sweat. He staggered past her, huffing, and she followed him into the living room.

"Who's that?" called old Mr. Thomas before she could say a word, "Who's coming in?"

He tried to get his breath. In a minute he managed to croak, "Ducky, I threw them too! I did. I did."

"What got into everybody?" was all she said. And, as an afterthought, "Are you hurt?"

"I threw the most of all," he panted.

"I never saw anything like it," she said.

He did not have enough extra breath to explain. From under his chandelier his father bawled, "Who's out there?"

"Miss Perkins laid on her umbrella like a broadsword," said Sherrilee. He was able to smile.

"And Scandinavia got covered. If you'd had the reporters you always wanted, you'd have hit every newspaper in the country. Typical race riot in small Southern town."

He laughed, fell weakly into a chair and laughed some more until his lungs were as empty as envelopes; and when he sucked in the next breath it stretched them painfully, and rushed forth as a groan, a wail. He huddled into a ball in the old rosewood chair, shaking with a chill and crying like a baby.

"Daddy?" With a smooth movement she put her hand halfway in the air between them. "What is it, Daddy?"

Out of what once had been the dining room the old man began to whimper and to beg, "Don't cry, Orlando. It can't be that bad. Whatever it is, Orlando, don't cry."

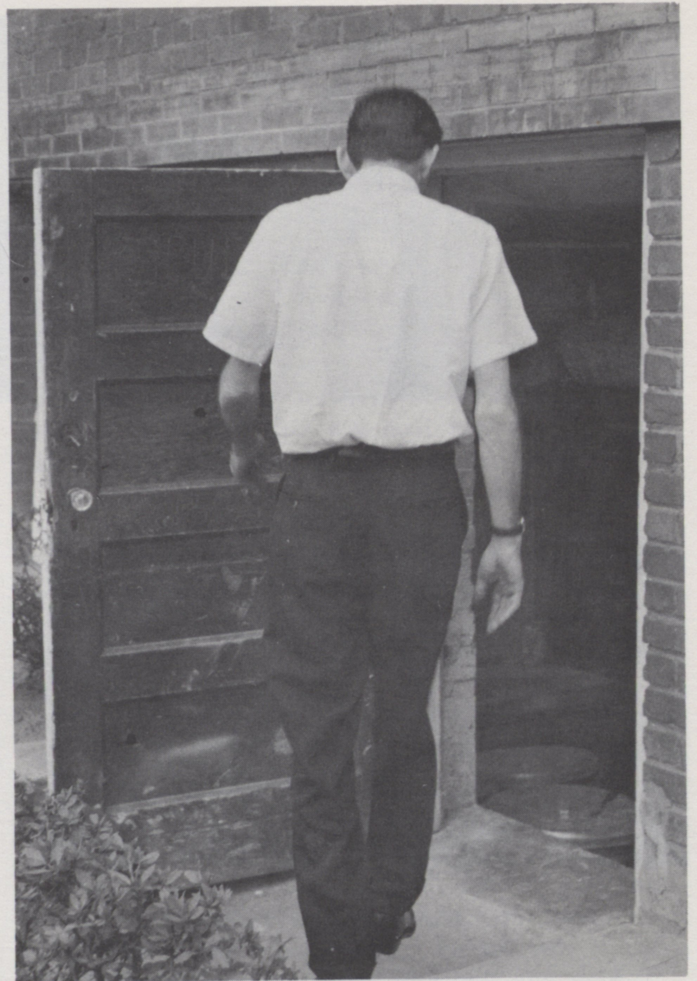
But he did.

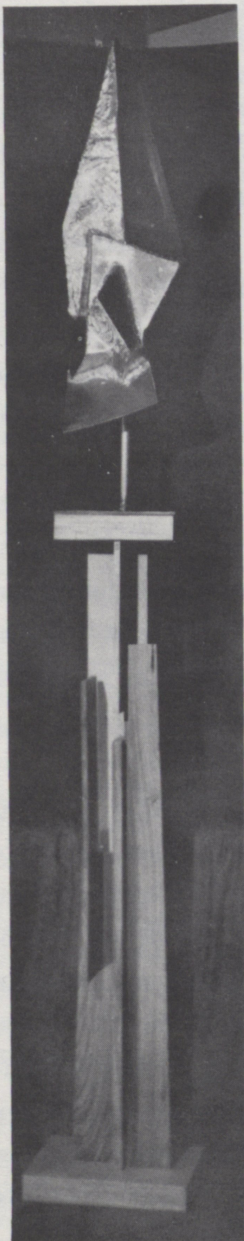
JOLLEY: LEFT OVER FEELING

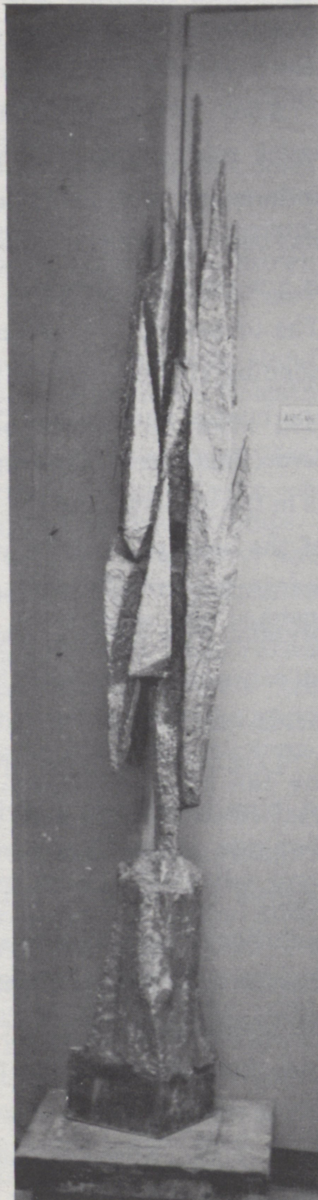
George Jolley has always whittled, his whittling led to carving, and his carving led to sculpture. George has been studying sculpture at East Carolina since 1952. (In between his studies he has night-clerked in a hotel, served in the Navy, operated a railroad telegraph, and is now teaching in Asheboro.) With artistic singlemindedness, he intended only to learn how to sculpt. When he decided to earn a degree in art, the same singlemindedness blossomed into the familiar artistic disdain for academics and flowered the familiar results. One academic course now delays his degree. In George's view: "If on my way to class I get an inspiration . . ." Hence, perhaps, "I am a noncomformist—but worried about it."

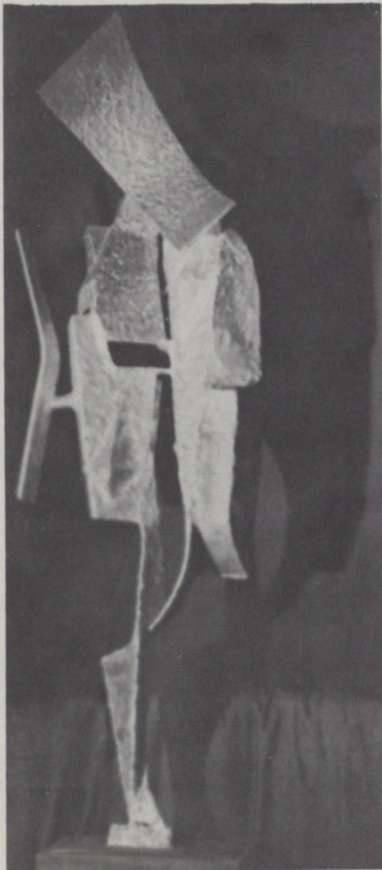
Asked about the influences in his work, the quick reply comes that he has been inspired, not influenced; and immediately after that—nature has been his influence, his inspiration. The *Turkey* is a measure of George's inspiration from nature. The turkey, ". . . poised on one foot, listening, depending still on natural instincts, is outsmarting the hunter and his gun." The *Turkey* and *Roosters* (illustrated) also imply a basic idea: "Beauty is in the moment, and the capture takes away some of the beauty . . . (The viewer's) reaction is also momentary." He has settled, at least for the present, with welding, because one can "work fast to capture the moment." He heats, beats, and welds, and bends.

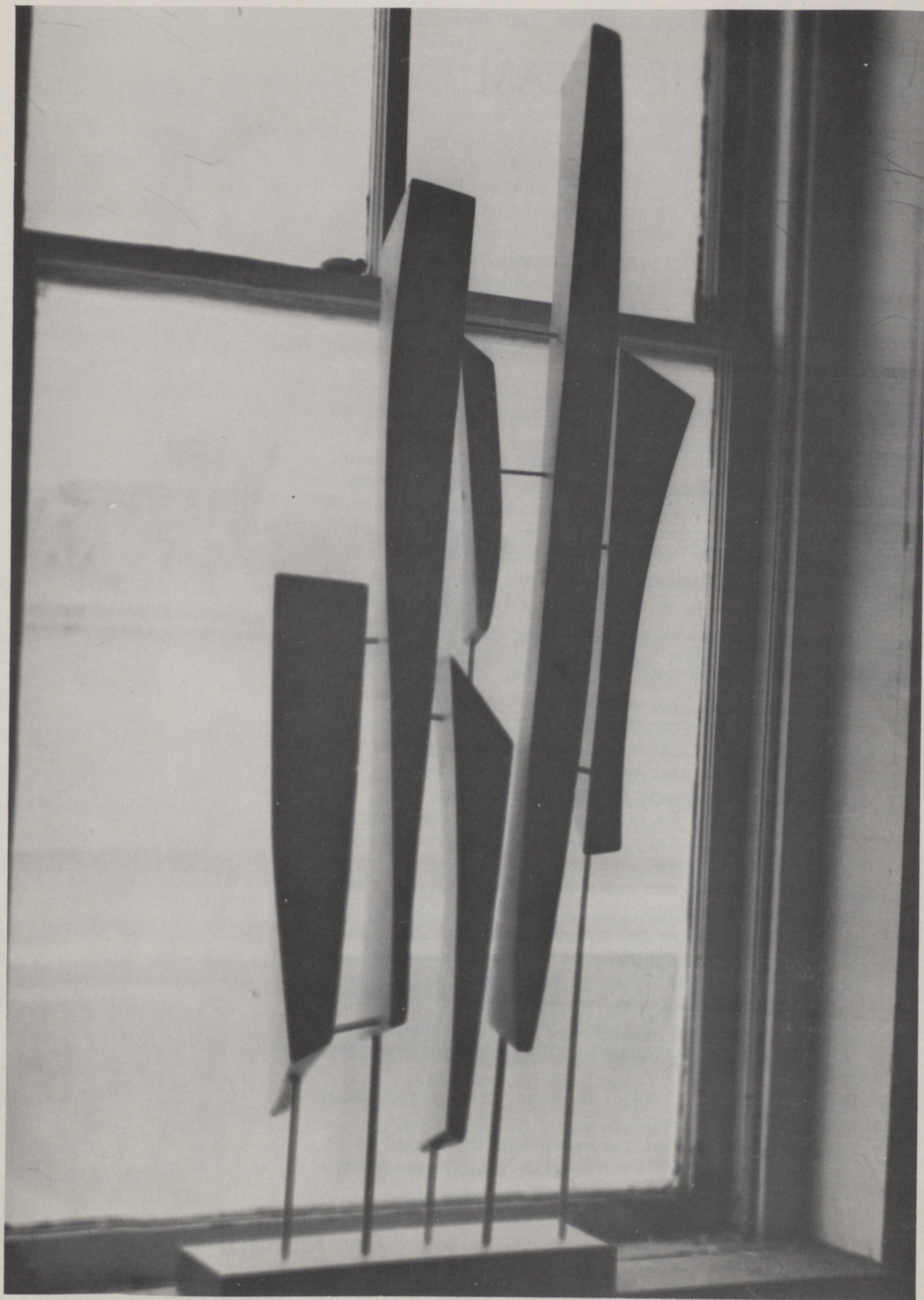
"Left-over feelings" from whittling prompted him to rise to carving and then again to sculpture. Similarly he has felt compelled to express the feeling "left-over" from his representational work in semi-abstraction and complete abstraction. The *Art Critic* (so named to amuse the judges at the North Carolina Artists Exhibition, Raleigh, 1963) is laughing at the viewer and at the critic. One can imagine them shrinking with sickly, agreeable smiles, faced with this metallic laughter.











KEEPER OF THE DREAM

Time: 1855
Place: Northeast Mississippi

Well, now, Tom. You've found me sleeping off
a drunk
Among the hogs here under the doggery porch.
Lord, I know this is no way to welcome home
My lawyer-brother come all the way to Corinth
From Louisville and the like. Take my hand,
It's filthy, I'm ashamed, though from your look
Not half ashamed as you are to see me so.
Damn, I'm so groggy yet, I'd best set down.
You stand up in front of me, I can't look you
In the face, so I'll jist talk to your watch-chain,
If you'll be still and shade me with your hat.

There's no need to think I'll drink myself to death
Like Pa. I keep his grave nice for you to visit
Ever ten year or so you come this way,
Frownin tragic to see your brother
Livin like Pa in them last years, like a hog,
Whilst Hokey Simms and Harbert Till done
taken on
Plantation airs and a Yankee overseer. But Tom,
I keep the place, there ain't no debts, you'll always
Know you've got a home, good land Pa cleared;
The bottoms is still good huntin, there's fence posts
For a hundred year in the locust thicket where Pa
Seen witches naked whoopin and Redcoat soldiers
Climbin the sky like it was King's Mountain,
And Pa there shootin with the Sayers from Tennessee.
Lord, Tom, since you went off to school, there
ain't been
No more goat barbecues like there used to be,
And I ain't got the heart to listen to the polytics

by Richard Clement Wood

Which ain't about the Independence, "them great
Republican times."
They're sour now, Tom, talkin about hangin abolitionists
And some on em rolls their eyes and grits "Secession";
Some says, "If there's war, by God, I got the rifle
Papa burned them English with at Noo Orleans;"
There's talk of niggers risin up, killin chaps and women,
But old Sam, he ain't goin to rise untwell I ring
The breakfast bell, and there ain't no women here.
For Nell, you know, she taken no more shine to me
After you went off to school; it was you she wanted anyway.

I see you won't quit lookin disapproval till I
Splain why I got drunk. I speck it ain't
Whiskey you disapprove, for Lord knows you lawyers
Are a sight a-guzzlin and a-prankin at the sessions.
(O, I know, you're goin to the legislature where they drink polite.)
You're shamed to see your brother in his plowin jeans
Plumb stoned among old Ritter's rooting hogs
Right here in a public place. Well, don't worry none:
I'll fix your bed and git your supper, and sun-up
Whilst you're sleepin still, Sam and me'll be in the field.
Grass is mostly outen the cotton anyway. I come
Down here 'bout ten o'clock to git some snuff
And then, well, I couldn't leave, some Millerite
Was in the store and seen me take a little swig
From Ritter, shaken his finger in my face and says
The world was endin I fergit what day, but soon,
And so I thought I'd better fortify myself, O, hell,
That's jist a joke, I got the misry, Tom.
Misry hit me yestiday, it's what them law-books,
Good clothes, fine speech and writin leaves behind
In Pa's grave and your brother's ignorant head
And leaves you free-wheelin for the gals in hoopskirts and the Congress, may-be.

I'll tell you, Tom. I was plowin twixt the graveplot
And the thicket yestiday, when Ollie Harper and his wife
Come in a covered wagon down the old field road
By where the Church burned, and they waved and yelled

They's headed West, and didn't even stop.
Ollie had a stogie stuck up in his teeth, he stood up
Leanin westards with the reins, like as if
His shadow owned apiece of it already. They
rattled
Over the hill, and then I seen fat Sam a runnin
After my brindle cow what had broke tether . . .
She was headed eastward, she seemed to take the
wind
Like a flat-boat under sail. Lordy, how she never
touched the rows.
And, Tom, I couldn't move, it's like I fainted
Standin up atwixt the smooth plow-handles,
And dreamt that cow kept kitin out
Upcrost the Cumberland by that cove where
mother died
On *our* old way west. I dreamt I sunk down by
her grave
And prayed it never happened, like we'd stayed
In Tennessee, kings of the silver valley,
Where in June I couldn't tell where stars
Begun and fireflies ended, where Ma
Said—d'you remember—that it didn't matter
Whether God was in the sky or inside a person,
It come to jist about the same. O, Tom,
I stood at the plow and still I hung fire by her
grave;
Sam he had the cow by a rope, but for all of me
She was crossin Delaware, the salt rivers,
Them sea-marshes where Pa said his grandad
Chopt tobacca with a tommyhawk.

So there you are, there's east where ever'body's
been,
And south where you're goin; nothing much but
Yankees
Where you been, and Ollie Harper, not jist Ollie
Harper
But Nell, her Pa and Ritter's son, and all the
Masons—
Name the countryside—all headin west; their
mule-dust,
Wheel-dust blowin like a rancid smoke
Against my legs. I spit and give old Jake a flick,
I water my father's grave and keep a farm for
my brother
To remember for a home, a box of good old time,
But yestiday, I got the misry, Tom.
I come down here tellin Ritter I'd a cow
Run off to Delaware. He give me a squint
And says, "Well, Rad, let's likker," and we
done it.
The hogs was kind to grunt over me right gentle
and low.

Gulls

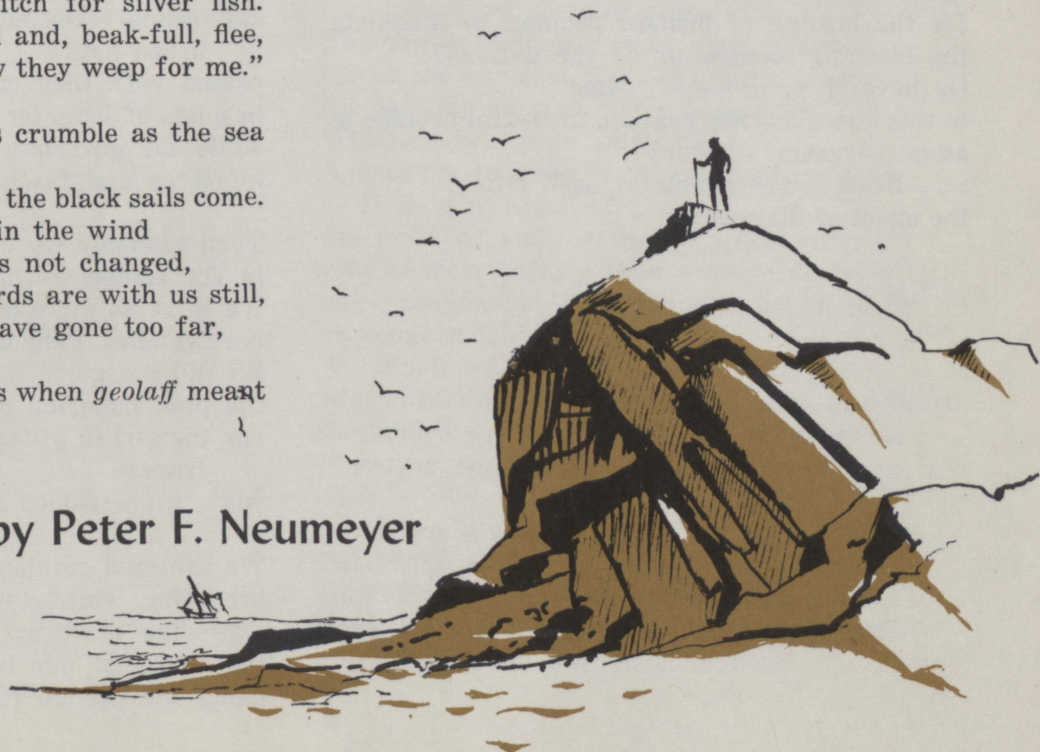
A *goll* in Middle English was an unfledged bird
And hence, the gulled, the fool, the person tricked.
A very different root, a different word, the *gull,*
Which from the Welsh word *gwylan,* Cornish
    guilan, Breton *geolaff,* means to weep—
A thought that may have come to Arthur on the
    Cornish Coast, or Iseult as she watched for
    sails
And saw—and saw—it was only wings, wings
    and wailings, skimming rocks
Dry wailings riding fogs and inlet mists and
    seeming far—
Far from us, and far from tears, the salt dry cry
That scratches granite, skims the steaming sands,
    to lose itself in kelp.

One by one, old Arthur's knights had ridden
    forth; some died, and some strayed long,
And *guilan,* thought the blear-eyed king—*guilan*
    in the air—and crumbling stones.
And weeping in the air, and weeping thought that
    queen as only black sails showed.
All Nature weeps with me; my love finds echo in
    the birds.

Indeed, white cries cut through the mist
And golden beaks would stitch for silver fish.
White fliers screech in greed and, beak-full, flee,
And shaken men think, "How they weep for me."

But still today the kingdoms crumble as the sea
    breaks in,
And from our tower we sense the black sails come.
And hope to hear a crying in the wind
And look for signs that all's not changed,
That seas and beasts and birds are with us still,
And tremble lest the gulls have gone too far,
Are now too far to care,
Have gone too far from times when *geolaff* meant
    to weep.

by Peter F. Neumeyer



The Picnic Wine

by Ulrich Troubetzkoy

I. *Palais de Chaillot*

It is prepared with exquisite irony
for the fiesta of nations:
the burgundy satin, the gold leaf,
the mirrors to ape with lustrous mimicry
the cynic rehearsal of gestures,
the private grimace and the affable
masquerade of diplomats with gloved
professional antipathies.
Dark focus on the City of Light—
the illumination of facades where crouch
the beasts invisible to electricity,
with fountains of feathered water
mocking the African thirst, the scorched wheat.
From the loud premeditated bickering,
the monotonous clicking keys,
relentless translation of grave platitudes,
the televised oration, the news flash,
are there no words or silences devised
for the healing of bruised peoples, to coagulate
the bleeding momentum of the nations?
Or have they, ill-mated, come
to this querulous assignation, in fretful prelude to
atomic orgasms of war?
. . . Read in the rubble of dead cities
the envoi of dialectics.

II. *The Park*

When we were children we were sent,
starched and admonished, with a governess,
to play with the decorous children
in the park of the Tocadero,
where the boxwood was a tidy metaphor
of our snug lives,
bound by predictable change in the maronniers:
the tall flambeaux of spring,
the dusty shade of August and the glossed
rind of the chestnuts falling in October.
The tame trout and the gudgeon gaped at us
through glass in the aquarium
in its synthetic cavern down the stairs,
and soldiers in puttees, Americans with their
broad hats
passed with their mademoiselles
in gusts of laughter . . .
while the governess twittered over us
in terror and fascination.

Then suddenly we were not children there
in the somehow timeless weather of the park.
We went no more on the carrousel, at Passy,
nor watched Polichinelle, the puppet show.
We did not go to the circus to see the clowns,
the pink ballerina on a plump white horse,
nor the girl in green tights who swung from the
trapeze
while we screamed in an ecstasy.

We cantered our horses slowly,
breathing whitely with the morning frost,
skittering the crisp leaves,
the debris of our last summer
along the avenue Henri Martin.

III. *France Libre*

. . . And when I came home on leave
in May, I took Elise
on the little electric train
to Meudon-Val-Fleurie.
We carried the hamper between us
into the darkness of the chestnut woods.
But when we opened it, we could not eat
the roasted chicken or the yellow rolls
in a linen napkin, or the pears.
But we poured the picnic wine, the young rose-
colored wine,
the laughing wine that we drank solemnly
as the sun leaked through the trees,
leaf-sifted light on the sadness of Elise
and her eyes were gold with it
like a wild creature hurt.
The pain was in our kisses.
We carried the hamper back to the electric train,
the chicken and the rolls, but the pink wine,
the wine of our unused years
was spilled in the scurf of leaves at Meudon-Val-
Fleurie.
. . . And I was made a Lieutenant in the Second
French.

IV. *Tiergarten*

What does the Red sentry wonder
pacing this island post
at the hub of chaos?
Guarding the bronze soldier, the giant shape
to nameless dead,
does he hear the planes come in at midnight
on moving beams to Tempelhof? Does he think of
Varvara?
imaging his son, Seroja?
What does the sentry dream in private loneliness,
without posters and loudspeakers,
watching this huge presumption to the dead?

What does the Greek child think
in the utter blueness of Athenian morning,
without bread, without word
from the mountains?
. . . or the Chinese girl for sale
with the orphans of hunger?
What does the numb face in Budapest
hide in the fury of silence?
Where are their delegates?
Listen, the loud world's shell
shouts in the ear,
pounds like an extra cognac in the skull.
Listen, chic passerby on avenue Kleber—
Il pleut, il pleut, bergere,
Presse tes blanc moutons . . .
The nursery rhymes were once political,
the storm was real, the lightning marked
the dazzling nape of Marie Antoinette.
Will this become a fairy tale?
A once-upon-a-time of men assaulting peace
as if it were a hill of glass,
the prize or ruin, nothing in between?
Life is more tedious than a *conte de fees,*
more roundabout. The princess could go by
unrecognized.
Noah was a tiresome old man
who warned about unlikely, most unnatural rains.
Cassandra was a hoyden who bored everyone
repeating her predictions of calamity.

. . . I was a child in one war,
fought the other.
How can I solve what I never understood
except as mosaic, as puzzle, piece by piece?
Garcon! un Pernod bien tasse!

THE REBEL REVIEW

The Promise of Power, A Criticism

Helmets. Poems by James Dickey. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press. 93 pp. $1.85.

The last few short years have seen time turn alluvial and swallow up the Olympians of the expatriate era. William Butler Yeats, Wallace Stevens, Robert Frost, e. e. cummings, William Carlos Williams—their obituaries read like a roll call in modern belles lettres in poetry of this century. Their names are on the stones, leaving us Eliot in silence and Pound, who would now tell us in his distraught and seemingly too human voice that all that he has ever done should be considered the ravings of a madman. Whether this be true, and so too with Eliot's silence, is not the case that concerns us here. We at mid-century are in dire need of a poet of great power who is truly of mid-century.

Some would say that such considerations are excessive, a little too maudlin, and tend to present an exaggerated picture of the reputation accredited these poets in the continuum of 20th century poetry. And toward such considerations, I give a much qualified nod. That is to say, I am aware of Wilbur, Corso, Ginsberg, Lowell and many other austere pretenders. The latter mentioned, and for that matter later existing poets, are not for the most part inferior technicians. They know their trade; (Wilbur) "The Death of a Toad" and the "Kingfishers", parts of "Howl" as well as such poems as "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" oscillate around the grand experience.

Once I felt that the lack of poetry incised with emotion, furthered by impact after impact of deft expression, and attuned to "heart's deep core" could be traced back to a lessening of the grand pose. I felt that with the introspective murmurings associated with the sporadic and short-lived vision of a poet, such as Walter De La Mare, the mode might be moving away from the grand pose cast against the background of society in a significant manner; but after explicating Stephen Spender's "nine bean rows by a factory wall" and, more recently, such thoughts as Robert Watson's pained remembrances of a rather tasteless silk tie. I don't know.

These random considerations of poets and the tenor of poetry as an art form at mid-century leave us to consider the question: "What are we searching for?" The answer to such a question is by no means a simple one, but it would seem reasonable to assume that at least one aspect of the poet of great power can be ascertained. The poets that I have chosen to consider as "artistic litmus paper" lack a consistency of sensibility and craftsmanship so necessary to view their expression against the greater backdrop of encompassing human experience. That is not to say that poetry at mid-century should explore the realm of mundane and pedestrian human experience as an actuality, per se. Art, and poetry in particular, has always been dependent upon its voices having the craftsmanship and vision necessary to perceive and express the human condition in terms larger than life. This is the only constant criteria. To restrict the artist, whether it be self-imposed or the result of a stringent convention, is to leave him and his expression in a state of less than life, thereby asserting that his art is hamstrung into a condition lacking even the spontaneous and inherent vitality of esoteric human experience. In this state, poetry or any other form of art is imbued with aspects of sterility, leaving it a lesser existence than human speculation as "The earth hath bubbles, even as the sea."

Keeping in mind those voices of the expatriate era and the one entity which seems to be ever present in the work of a poet of power, I wish to explore a few aspects of the poetic art of James Dickey, a poet of great promise whose voice has already evinced the capacity of power most sought after at mid-century.

James Dickey, the author of two earlier books of poetry, *Into the Stone* (1960) and *Drowning with Others* (1962)—is now 45 years old. A veteran of both World War II and the Korean Conflict, he has been the recipient of the Swannee Review Fellowship as well as a Guggenheim grant; the latter making a year's work and study in France possible in 1961. James Dickey is presently Poet-in-Residence at Reed College, Portland, Oregon.

In *Helmets* the poet ranges through his years, fashioning incidents both real and imaginary into patterns of deft lyricism. The poems seem to be

placed in the book according to time, place and the nature of the incident rather than in terms of type and technique. Sections I and II concentrate on, or at least allude to, the poet's early years in Georgia and are primarily concerned with observations in nature and of basic experience. Poems, such as "At Darien Bridge," "Cherrylog Road," and "The Scarred Girl" seem to be the best examples. In section III, the poet turns to some of the situations inherent in more mature life, such as a father's concern for his child in troubled sleep, i.e. "In the Child's Night." And finally in the fourth section, Mr. Dickey turns to the war years. "The Driver" which was first published in the *New Yorker*, is a fine example from this last section.

"At Darien Bridge" presents the poet's pensive reflection upon having seen convicts build a bridge near the sea; and through the mind's eye, he now sees the bridge in disrepair, beginning to sink into the salt marshes which once sucked at the manacled feet of the work gang. The poem concludes with his precisely controlled comment on constancy and inconstancy in terms of time.

> I stand and look out over grasses
> At the bridge they built, long abandoned
>
> Breaking down into the water at last,
> And long, like them, for freedom
>
> Or death, or to believe again
> That they worked on the ocean to give it
>
> The unchanging, hopeless look
> Out of which all miracles leap.

In choosing this theme, the poet has done little that one could call unique. The theme is by no means new—it is, rather, the expression fashioned by the poet that gives the poem its indelible lilt, shifting the basic situation upward to the realm of intensity we seek in the poet of great power.

In "Cherrylog Road," adolescent love with its fumblings, fears, and unfettered releases is set in a junkyard. Doris Holbrock and her lover are subtly seen by the poet as existing in a state of emotional transition. For even now as the two move toward each other through the old cars, an excitement with the form of '34 Fords and ancient Pierce-Arrow — with crumbling speaking tubes and fantasies about the rum runner and the dowager owners of long ago—blend with the twosomes' still ravenous appetite for new inelegant, worthless junk and their new attraction for each other. After the act and Doris has returned to her father's gaze of ignorant fear, the boy, now feeling his sense of loss and exhilaration, imagines his bike transformed into a motorcycle modeled after a wrecked one that had probably earlier served, in its wrecked state, as a transition from the Lone Ranger to a clean cut Marlon Brando. Through the poet's expression, we see the simple experience in the junkyard leap far beyond Cherrylog Road.

> Restored, a bicycle fleshed
> With power, and tore off
> Up Highway 106, continually
> Drunk on the wind in my mouth,
> Wringing the handlebar for speed,
> Wild to be wreckage forever.

"The Scarred Girl" is indicative of a further aspect of the poet's range; for in the poet's presentation of the simply stated dilemma of a young girl who holds a view of docile cattle in green fields against the force and inward as well as outward felt fears she now is struck with as her face crashes through a windshield, Dickey portrays the girl's reconstruction of the shattered scene and shattered outward self by exploring the nature of the human spirit within its shell no matter what the condition. She reconstructs her world. The doctors and nurses

> Who do not see what she sees
> Behind her odd face in the mirror:
> The pastures of earth and of heaven
> Restored and undamaged, the cattle
>
> Risen out of their jagged graves
> To walk in the seamless sunlight
> And a newborn countenance
> Put upon everything.
>
> Her beauty gone, but to hover
> Near for the rest of her life,
> And good no nearer, but plainly
> In sight, and the only way.

In this poem, it is the simplicity of the situation that drives home the absoluteness of the state of being.

In the poem "In the Child's Night," the poet works in a quieter introspective vein. After a father slips into a child's bed to reassure him in a troubled sleep by nearness, Dickey sees the relationship, the warmth between father and son, in terms of the infinitely complicated polarity of the human situation. Again, we do not have a revelation in theme but rather in terms of the poet's use of it. The theme has been handled by other poets; for instance, Yeats, in "Prayer For My Daughter" treats aspects of the same theme. Themes in themselves have never guaranteed us great poems, and "In The Child's Night" this is still the case. The poet imparts, through the

incalculable yet deeply realized physical relationship, the immutable force as easily perceived as the cosmic course, that holds the heavens over us, even before we gave them names and dimensions.

The final poem that I will consider is from the poetry of the war years. We have been looking for a commentator for this period for some time. To say that I have found you one would be something more than reckless, yet I do feel that in "The Driver" as well as other poems on related subject matter, James Dickey brings a sense of empathy and personal correlation to this still unexhausted, and for that matter inadequately treated area of concern. Through this approach, the indigenously land-locked Illinois farm boy can become more than just incongruous blood upon the decks of the battleship *Missouri*, for through the imagination the poet perceives, by descending into the offshore morass of sunken men and machinery deposited there by an absorbed invasion's wave, these men in a continuum as assured as the sea above their decaying fixtures. Dickey remembers

> I saw, through the sensitive roof—
> The uneasy, lyrical skin that lies
>
> Between death and life, trembling always—

The poems in *Helmets* give us assurance as to the poet's range. In many more poems than I have chosen to treat in detail, James Dickey strives with confidence for the larger than life vision and voice so essential in the making of the poet of great power. He manages to stand alongside his contemporaries with a most satisfying consistency, which at least indicates that we have another poet of strength and individuality. In these moments when he strives for and achieves the grand screen, we possess a poet of great power—a creature sadly lacking at present. We look for more and soon.

—B. Tolson Willis

An Ernest Endeavor

A Moveable Feast. By Ernest Hemingway. New York: Scribners, 1964. $3.95. 211 pp.

In his introduction to *A Moveable Feast*, Hemingway explains that this memoir of Paris was written during the same period (1957-1960) as was *The Dangerous Summer*. And remembering that last debacle, one should not be too surprised at this one.

The setting of the book is the early 1920's, during that period when American writers trooped as faithfully to Paris as they now do to college English faculties. Hemingway, in Paris, schooled himself to a rigorous discipline: he went hungry in the Grand Tradition; he prevailed on Sylvia Beach of the bookstore Shakespeare and Co. to lend him books *gratis*; he cached drinks off friends. He learned to be a writer.

He began, then, to capture the sound of American English (albeit, my Southerners, Midwestern). And the writing of dialogue became one of Hemingway's great achievements. But surely no one, no place, at no time ever engaged in a conversation like this one:

> "When should we leave?"
> "Whenever you want."
> "Oh, I want to right away. Didn't you know?"
> "Maybe it will be fine and clear when we come back. It can be very fine when it is clear and cold."
> "I'm sure it will be," she said, "Weren't you good to think of going, too."

A bad parody of a bad parody! But perhaps, as Faulkner remarked of Hemingway in another instance, what else can burned out writers do?

However, to do the man justice, this stylistic nonsense does not go on the entire course of *A Moveable Feast*; or could it be that one doesn't notice it after awhile for watching the feast move from roast contemporary to roast contemporary? In striking examples of Hemingway's gifts to characterization, we see the gods of the era neatly and systematically mowed down before the Hemingway ego. Joyce is a blind, remote stick figure, never given life at all. Wyndham Lewis has "the eyes of an unsuccessful rapist." Ford Madox Ford is an odiferous toad: "He was breathing heavily through a heavy, stained mustache and holding himself as upright as an ambulatory, well clothed, up-ended hogshead."

More of this condescending vein is evident in Hemingway's presentation of Gertrude Stein. "In the three or four years that we were good friends I cannot remember Gertrude Stein ever speaking well of any writer who had not written favorably about her work or done something to advance her career . . . . "She got to look like a Roman emperor and that was fine if you liked your women to look like Roman emperors." He doesn't even leave her with having originated the term "lost generation." He claims she borrowed it from a French garage mechanic. And of their famous falling-out, he says he overheard her and a companion (presumably Alice B. Toklas) in a most degrading, for Miss Stein, argument; at which he was properly and forever disgusted.

Throughout these diatribes, Hemingway, for

all his chest-beating masculinity, is a prig and a bitch. Only in his treatment of Ezra Pound—"... he was a great poet and a gentle and generous man . . ."—is he less than vindictive.

He is at his most patronizing in his dealings with Scott Fitzgerald. At the time in question, and although Hemingway thought him a prostitute (it seems he sold material to the *Saturday Evening Post*), Fitzgerald was a successful writer. But here he is treated like an erring and wayward child, to be led into the paths of righteousness by Papa Hemingway. In a really funny anecdote, the two are taking a trip together through southern France. The Renault they drive has had its top sawed off due to Zelda Fitzgerald's finagling, and, of course, it rains. Fitzgerald thereupon decides that he has pneumonia. At their hotel, he insists that Hemingway send for a thermometer. After much to-do—the drugstores are closed and the hotel people are uncooperative—he locates one—a bath thermometer with a wooden back. The thermometer eventually convinces Fitzgerald that he is not dying; and, after several whiskey sours to ward off any stray germs which might be lurking about, he calls Zelda in Paris to tell her all about it.

Perhaps one of the values of the book (and it does have some) is the insights gained into the nature of Scott Fitzgerald. His wife, of course, was mad—"Ernest don't you think Al Jolson is greater than Jesus?" Furthermore, she was an artist of sorts, and Hemingway felt that she was making a deliberate attempt to destroy Fitzgerald as a writer by constantly dragging him into parties and drunks. Of them at one of these parties, he gleefully tells us: "Zelda had hawk's eyes and a thin mouth and deep-south manners and accent . . . Scott was being the good, cheerful host and Zelda looked at him and she smiled happily with her eyes and her mouth too as he drank the wine. I learned to know that smile very well. It meant she knew Scott would not be able to write."

And, we are told, Zelda cast aspersions on Fitzgerald's manhood; an idea which Hemingway, in a locker room mood, attempts to dispel from poor Fitzgerald's mind. The irksome aspect of Hemingway's commentary on all of this is that he seemingly cannot help a smirk, like a very smug, very dirty-minded little boy.

Well, maybe Fitzgerald, Zelda, and the rest weren't Code Heroes. Or maybe Hemingway is pandering to an audience hungry for literary gossip.

At any rate, and for all this, *A Moveable Feast* is certainly Hemingway (though perhaps aided and abetted posthumously by Miss Mary and brother Leicester). Here is the familiar sense of loss, (his marriage was breaking up, the bone clean imagery); even the elaborate drinking rituals. It is unfortunate that he felt that he, like a boxer past his prime, had to bolster his ego by trotting out trophies won at the expense of old friends. It might have been less painful and much less embarrassing if he had just gone ahead and titled the thing *The Importance of Being Ernest.*

—Mary Jane Jones

A Cluttered Endeavor

Renaissance in the South, A Critical History of the Literature, 1920-1960. By John M. Bradbury. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. $5.00. 222 pages.

After the First World War, the South, as well as the rest of the world, found itself in a changed environment. Some new standard of values had to be discovered, or the old ones altered. Because it had been stagnant for such a long period of time, in the South the situation was more drastic than most other sections of the world. "The South had experienced a primary challenge in the 1860's, but the social upheaval attending the war was accompanied by no intellectual ferment, only an emotional response that demanded expression in action . . . The Southern situation in 1920 called for reassessment, not for regrets and recriminitions." The decayed Compsons were met by the opportunistic Snopeses. Wolfe's hero "did not understand change." Whichever way they encountered the strangeness of something that they had taken for granted for so long, they intently explored the region and the lives which immediately surrounded them.

Renaissance in the South is the second such piece of work by John Bradbury, a professor of humanities at Union College, Schenectady, New York. His first book was also about the literary situation in the South; however, it covers a much narrower range, as its title, *The Fugitives: A Critical Account,* implies. His new book starts with the awakening more or less founded by the Fugitive movement under John Crowe Ransom in Nashville in the Twenties and follows the growth of Southern literature up through 1963. Patterns in poetry, fiction, and drama are traced; and the works of leading writers are evaluated.

Mr. Bradbury took on far too much to cover in 222 pages, particularly the way he approached the subject. Rather than isolating his topic to just the more important figures, the author chose to drag in all sorts of lesser figures who tend to

clutter the book up and take up space needed for more study of the main currents of thought. Authors are seldom ever mentioned in depth and usually whenever he would reach the point of more than just passing criticism about one of them, he would switch the conversation to a group of minor writers.

Renaissance in the South could have been written in a much better way, particularly considering the large amount of knowledge Mr. Bradbury obviously has about his subject, but it can still be of considerable value to a student of American literature.

—JAMES FORSYTH

Put a Nickel in the Slot

Music in the Life of Man. By Julius Portnoy. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. 1963. 260 pp. $5.95.

Modestly billed on the dust cover as a volume that embraces "the entire tradition of the humanities to demonstrate dramatically how music has influenced, inspired, and enriched the life of man," Julius Portnoy has come forth with *Music In The Life of Man* as a new addition to an ever increasing line of philosophically oriented material on music which tries to reason on an art and pigeonhole its essence into an immediately obtainable form.

Built around a format similar to that used in many music appreciation courses where some of the basic vocabulary, elements, and techniques of music are discussed, the rest of the book is made up of musings upon quotations by many of the great philosophers, psychologists, sociologists, painters, and occasionally, musicians. After reading so many varied views upon the single subject of music by so many respected persons as Plato, Kant, Spienosa, Leibniz, Coleridge, Keats, and many others, it becomes quite apparent that in spite of its scholarly writing, the validity of this book is in its proving that music is an art with a history and principals, but it defies being philosophized into a slot for which there is no need.

If Portnoy were to feel the poignancy of one of his own statements he might see what musicians have almost always felt. "During all this time, as in times before, the musicians marveled at the ease and wisdom with which scholars, who do not create fine art, could speak about such matters, since he himself could not." Musicians of today still marvel at this phenomenon not as to how these scholars speak, but to what purpose and cause, for certainly it is not for music when music is not the art of talk.

—DON TRACY

The Art of Rhetoric

Saint Genet: Actor and Martyr. By Jean-Paul Sartre, Trans. by Bernard Frechtman. New York: George Braziller. 1963. 625 pp. $8.50.

Saint Genet, Jean-Paul Sartre's titular word play on the martyred Saint Genestus, patron saint of actors, and on Genet's exhalted position in the heirarchy of evil, was originally published in France in 1952. The book was written to be an introduction to the collected works of Jean Genet.

Whatever the intention of the writer at the outset of his work, an introduction *Saint Genet* is not, neither is it a biography. Rather it is an artistic, philosophical treatise on a human type—a unique type—that coincides with Jean Genet. For although Sartre talks about Genet, starts his book with an incident early in the life of Genet, it seems likely that he would have written this work even if Genet had never existed.

Sartre's rhetoric is beautiful; the book is well worth reading for his prose alone. He spends pages developing seemingly irrefutable syllogisms to point a blaming finger at society for Genet's willful perversion and evil, but it is extremely difficult to tell when the ideas are Genet's and when they are Sartre's. This assigning each man his own thoughts is not a winnowing process in *Saint Genet;* indeed, it is probably necessary. Since Sartre has such a cavalier attitude about facts and the order of Genet's life, why should we be so mundane as to try to call his book anything like a biography or introduction. Actually, the entire book is so stamped with Sartre's superior intellect that it exists as a work of art without even considering the life and writings of Jean Genet.

Although Sartre feels that, considering the Masoch-de Sade genre of writers of evil, Genet could evolve as the most important, he is more concerned with the flower of evil as a person (*Saint Genet* was published before "The Blacks" and "The Balcony.") than as a writer. Sartre is not Genet's explicator; that is, his exegesis is not for Genet's writing, but for his depravity. And illuminating he is.

This reviewer could not honestly recommend *Saint Genet* to the general reader and expect to be taken seriously. *Saint Genet* will not be widely read, unless it be by philosophy students, and perhaps special ones at that. This is unfortunate, for few writers equal Sartre for treading the sometime thin line that exists before true artistic rhetoric becomes clever sophistry.

—ALBERT PERTALION

Notes On Our Contributors

Peter Hellman by now has graduated from Duke University and is an ensign in the Navy. His recollection, "Bimini," won second place in the prose division of the **Fifth National Rebel Writing Contest.** In 1963 "Bimini" won the Flexner Prize for undergraduate writing at Duke University. He has been published in the **Archive.**

Doris Betts wrote the short story, "Careful, Sharp Eggs Underfoot," and won first place in the prose division of the **Fifth National Rebel Writing Contest.** She has two published books, *The Gentle Insurrection, And Other Stories* and *Tall Houses in Winter,* a novel. A second novel, ". . . titled either 'White Bird, Black Bird," which sounds too racial or 'Bread and Stones,' which sounds too Biblical," will be published by Harper's.

Richard Clement Wood is Director of the American Studies Program at Randolph-Macon College. His poem, "Keeper of the Dream," won second place in the poetry division of the **Fifth National Rebel Writing Contest.** He won prizes for verse at the Southern Literary Festivals of 1947 and 1948. His poetry has appeared in **The Georgia Review.**

Peter F. Neumeyer is Assistant Professor of Education and Tutor in the Department of English at Harvard University. His poem, "Gulls," won first place in the poetry division of the **Fifth National Rebel Writing Contest.** He has an article in the April issue of **The Clearing House** and an article on Kafka accepted for the December issue of **The University Review. New Mexico Quarterly** has accepted two of his poems for publication.

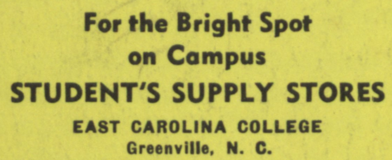
Ulrich Troubetzkoy is Writer-in-Residence at the University of Richmond. Her poetry has won numerous prizes. She has appeared regularly in **Essence.**

B. Tolson Willis is one of the directors of the East Carolina College Poetry Forum. He is also a member of the Greenville Poetry Group whose appearance in the Fall issue of the **Rebel** led to the publication of their book, *Local Habitation.*

Mary Jane Jones, Don Tracy, and Albert Pertalion are members of the faculty of East Carolina College.

James Forsyth is an ex-officio member of our staff.

The judges for the **Fifth National Rebel Writing Contest** were Dr. Howard German, Dr. William H. Grate, Mrs. Antoinette Jenkins, and Mr. John Conner Atkeson; all are members of the faculty of East Carolina College.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