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The Editors Say

February, 1940

Volume III, No. 2

The stories reproduced in Portfolio are as diversified in setting and tone as any reader could desire. David Timrud portrays an interesting tale of India, a land with which he is well acquainted. Tom Fox's realistic account, *Purgatory of the Gods*, takes place in the western gold mining country while Virginia Martindale relates a story of strange psychological fiber. Several new poets appear. Margaret Gratza and B. J. Wright offer short poems of merit and an anonymous writer has submitted verses somewhat reminiscent of Bill West. Alson Phillips is being put on our "regular" list.

The interesting sidelight revealed behind the production of Masquers' Abraham Lincoln is as good reading as any fiction. The student art pages once again bring reproductions of original oils done by several majors. Our tribute, we feel, is one that has been long felt by all and is worthy of expression. Ed Deeds, treatment of Handel's Messiah is a comprehensive article and proves to be good reading filled with both history and anecdote. The quarterly acknowledgements for our art and photographic work must not be forgotten; these are vital contributions.

Not too far distant are the annual writing contests sponsored yearly on the Denison campus. Prizes for verse, short story, essay, and plays are available; look into the matter and start working early. May we again urge you to submit material for Portfolio. As we become established, far too common is the conception that writing for the magazine is up to a few capable and reliable students. Not at all. To them we are grateful, but many of you want to write and likewise many of you have been criticizing us; combine these and submit what you would like to see printed in Portfolio.

Pass us an occasional remark as to how we're doing—we'd appreciate it and we'll see what can be done in the way of improvement.
Brain Fever

"Her head felt large, terribly big."

By David Timrud

Out of the East, where the darkness was a bounding mass, sucking up daylight like a sponge, a lone bird came silently flying. It perched on the top of the one dead tree in the compound, ignoring the extravagant tropical growths all about it—the royal palms set at each end of the garden, the great "peepul" tree at the Southern gate, all the dense tangle of lianas and undergrowth of the surrounding jungle.

Adela's eyes, glazed and widened by months of malaria, blurred as they vainly tried to focus the bird into clear relief. Without looking at her husband she said, "That's a queer bird."

"Yes, it is," he answered, quickly following the line of her vision. "I didn't know they came so far south."

He handed his cup to the native boy, and laughed. "Some whiskey-headed Tommy dubbed it the "brain fever" bird, you know. Wait till you hear its call."

Abruptly, from the top of the dead tree, three minor keyed notes fell eerily to the veranda.

"Brain fever!" And again, "Brain fever!"

"Oh Don! It's weird!"

"No, darling, only drunk soldiers think so. Do you know what it says, really?"

The young doctor laughed again. "No, darling, only drunk soldiers think so. Do you know what it says, really?"

Adela's thinned hands clutched at the arms of her chair. She tensed with fear. "Brain fever!"

"I'm sorry I had to do that," said Don, looking at her intently, "Those birds meant a lot when half a world separated us."

God! If they only separated her from this now, she thought. She said, "I think I'll go to bed, Don." "That's where I ought to have kept you, you old rebel," said Don, "I know how it is when the tropics pile the fever bugs on you, though. Head starts to do funny tricks, doesn't it, less you get a glimpse of the outdoors."

He talked as he carried her. She had become so very thin. Hardly felt like she was more than the weight of the blanket. He kissed her on the forehead. She made no sign she felt it.

After he had drawn the sheet over her and adjusted the mosquito netting, he left to make the rounds of the house. There was only one lantern in the room. It didn't give much light, but she could make out the lizards on the wall. How she hated them! Don said they killed off the insects. She hadn't minded them before she became ill. But now—ugh! Beady-eyed, coldblooded, miniature monsters from another age! What place had they in the home of civilized people?
There! The one above her head was moving. She couldn't make out the room. It looked because of the hazz of the mosquito netting. Her eyes didn't want to focus, either. The lizard seemed to grow as she looked—a scaly, horrendous dragon!

Rather the insect win than that primitive reptile! "Shoo!" she said, "Shoo!" The lizard kept moving—one squat leg at a time. Inexorable as the fatallum of those Hindus, she thought. If she only had strength to throw something! Once she had thrown a napkin.

And she hardly dared to look into a mirror these days. Her face was lean, her dark hair falling flaccidly. How flat it had become! And whitewashed with that ghastly blue-tinted stuff. Now it looked like the inside of a tomb.

"Brain fever!" No! No! Only five bullets! One had been for that "brain fever" bird! The room became brighter. All her senses were becoming more and more acute. In the distance she heard the demonic laughing of the jackals. She always envisioned them as black creatures with white collars, dancing about on their hind legs. She really knew their coyote-like appearance, but now they became what she first imagined them to be—evilly grinning, shrieking spirits, dancing about in a whirling circle!

Her shallow breathing brought in the heavy scents of the garden. How they had worked and planned color schemes for the garden! How everything they planted grew! Maybe for that very reason it wasn't as beautiful as her garden back home. Flowers there had to struggle to grow, and when they did, the colors contrasted so with the drabs and grays of the North. But here the jungle dripped rich colors. The jungle came now. And faintly, a white thread in the heavy scents, she could smell the little laboratory. God! What a surprise it wouldn't be now for a whiff of real salt air, a cool spray whipping up in her face! Here everything pressed in on her. The mosquito netting was about to collapse around her. The wall was weighted down like a stone! He even went quick, his eyes were bloodshot. He'd be better rid of them too, she thought. She stood still, steadying herself, listening to the jackals. He'll be glad to be rid of them too, she thought. She walked slowly, her head light and floating with the exertion. She touched the mosquito netting. She tried to hear his breathing. No! Even when she was in bed with him she couldn't have Don suffering. Make sure he was dead.

No! Only five bullets! One had been for that hideous bird. She'd do it as fast as she could pull the trigger. With more strength than she thought she had left, she pointed the barrel to the middle of the room, and he had never been the slightest bit impatient with her. She'd keep on being in bed for months and months, and then she'd die. And then she'd die! What was the sense of it all? Her head felt terribly big again, but it was light too. She wondered if she could lift it, and she did! She sat up, sliding her thin legs under the mosquito netting. Her feet eased right into the slippers Don had thoughtfully placed there. It was dark now, quite dark. She couldn't see the bureau anymore, but she new her way away the room. How glad she was the floors were cement and not creaky wood. Fortunate, too, that the servitude were used to shoes at night.

The gun felt so heavy. It took both her hands to lift it. The exertion made her dizzy—in the middle of the room she lost her bearings, kept creeping under their shadows, she could smell the little laboratory. How heavy the gun— and how hot against her...
Remember, Love

If I should die, and you gone from my side—
One moment gone, or years; one door apart,
Or miles, or very worlds—remember, Love.
As life slipped out, as that last darkness touched
My brains, you were fix sum, its end, its ill:
You leared there a thousand ways: the eyes,
The lips, the breast, the hair, tears, smiles, scent, touch.

My memory crammed into a pulse-beat, caught
Entire, intense, and perfectly arrayed.
The edge of love, my life tied to an end—
All, all of you my soul and senses knew.
Swung up in that last instant, burned,
Blazed i' the mind, taught me faith, whatever black
Engulfed me in the next . . .

Before the close of my few remaining days, it is
my hope that I will be able to preserve for the world
the record of the chance that has been my destiny. It is
a story somewhat like a dream, somewhat like a
nightmare, almost defying belief. But it is the story
of my fate, the trial of my life's blood.
In 1854 I started out from San Francisco in a search
for a new gold field, heading toward a deserted section
of the lower Sierras where geological formations had
convinced me that gold would be found. I took
with me no companion other than a small mule to carry
my few supplies, for too often I had heard stories of violent
disputes and even murders in a remote gold field.
Ten days out of San Francisco, I found myself traveling
in a north-easterly direction through a mountain wilder-
ness. My horses showed me that I should reach my
destination sometime on the following day.

Late that afternoon, just before the valley became
a pool of terrifying blackness, I found an answer to
my problem that made my blood run cold and my senses
freeze. Under the towering cliff I found the skeleton
of a man, with arms and legs extended in a futile at-
tempt to scale the walls. How he came here I'll never
know, but I could see how he had perished. The four
silent walls of my prison were the walls of a death
cell!

With this realization, the chance to travel the
world seemed like a dream. I was alone with the
maddening silence of a prison, high formations of slate
and rock. Here, in a place as yet unknown
and at first believed to be the result of my hard fall.
Later, when I was able to walk again, I discovered
a thin stream of water coming from a small cave far up
in the canyon wall and falling into a tiny pool. Here,
I thought, there must be some means of
escape from this cell. There must be some hidden
broken in the walls, some exit to the world of sunshine
and life. Late that afternoon, just before the valley became
a pool of terrifying blackness, I found an answer to
the problem of my prison. I felt an irresistible impulse to
stretch myself up, to reach for the light above and the
safety it personified. I could see that I was not alone
in this impasse, for the pines that ringed the clearing
were tall and thin, with upturned branches. They too
were stricken with a mortal feeling of desolation.

An unpleasant, dull sound was ringing in my ears,
and at first I believed it was the result of my hard fall.
Surely, I thought, there must be some means of
escape from this cell. There must be some hidden
break in the walls, some exit to the world of sunshine
and life. But I soon found that my hope was
unfounded. The sound was produced by my
prisoniere, high formations of slate and rock. Here, in a place as yet unknown
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gathered almost three quarts of berries and constructed a small encampment of sharpened branches within which I proposed to keep a few rabbits. My rifle supplied me with dinner in the form of a plump squirrel, and went to bed quite satisfied with the day's outcome. On closer inspection, my prison had lost some of its terror, but no sane man would ever want to be there alone at night, and I, the condemned man, least of all!

Those first few weeks passed swiftly with the work of building a permanent log cabin and securing rabbits and squirrels, while at one end I found a sizeable patch of building materials. I was soon able to count 27 rabbits. I proposed to keep a few rabbits. My rifle supplied me with dinner in the form of a plump squirrel, and went to bed quite satisfied with the day's outcome. On closer inspection, my prison had lost some of its terror, but no sane man would ever want to be there alone at night, and I, the condemned man, least of all!

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Haunted

By ROBERT MAXWELL

Tell me dear, is he tall and straight? Is his voice young or old, gay, sedate? Is he filled with passions, fierce and wild, or does he clench your hand like a little child? What has he promised; what has he said? Has he lived and suffered; has he loved heartache and broken dreams? Can he rise from defeat with rebuilt schemes?

How broad are his shoulders; are they heavy and strong? Does his smile well keep, clear and long? Does he hold his head proudly high; does he show his pride within his eye? But the thing that I want most to know:

You told me not to judge you by your good looks, nor the things that he did apart. You told me that you were a very small girl. But you cannot go on without any changes. You cannot be a girl forever. And so the question is raised once more: Are you finding happiness that long ago we knew Haunted and me and perhaps you if you bear this in mind.

ONLY THE TANGIBLE

Hands that have cupped hard to my face, That have felt hot tears sobbed from my eyes, Arms that tendered and caressed and held My sad self and twined about me soothingly. Lips that have brushed mine lightly with a smile, That have torn mine with a deep empassioned crush. Eyes that have filled me full of empty words, That have meared me with a silent voiceless hush. These are the things I hold secure. . . . Not even you, nor you, nor you, nor you.
Judy was the last. The gypsy bent once again over the crystal, peering deep into its revealing depths. She looked long and then speechlessly stared across at Judy. Her face changed and all of the fatigue vanished. Her features were grim and hard in the low light. I wondered if this were a part of her performance. For a moment I couldn't distinguish whether she showed anger or fear.

"Well, what's the future hold for my bride-to-be?" Paul asked, smiling. "Will she make me a good wife?"

The woman glanced quickly at him and then rose and started to hurry away. He caught her by the arm and looked at her in a puzzled way.

"Here, what's up? Tell the young lady's fortune," she murmured without looking at him.

"Absurd! What do you mean you can't?"

"I can't."

"Oh come, we only want to finish our little game. No matter what foolish things you see."

"Foolish woman." Paul muttered.

Then I began to talk to the woman and she finally wearily consented to write on a slip of paper what the crystal had told her. And I was amused when she showed it to me. It was a sheet of paper, crumpled and torn, and it contained the following words:

"My dear," the note read, "you have no future."

I smoothed it out and read the scrawled words by the flickering light of a match. Then as the irony of the thing burst upon me, I flung the paper from me.

"Never mind, Paul, I don't care." Judy tried to prevent any sort of unpleasantness.

"Nonsense! We pay the woman to tell our fortunes and we expect her to do so.

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"My dear," the note read, "you have no future."

Among the hosts of Denison's unsung heroines and heroes is a group whose daily activities are as important and essential as the rising and setting of the sun itself. These are the reliable and far too frequently obscured chefs and cooks of the various social groups on the campus. Probably the most particular about food and the first to put up a howl when dissatisfied is the average group of college young people. These masters and mistresses of the kitchen have accepted difficult jobs and are constantly faced with numerous likes and dislikes which must be respected.

But these men and women have become far more than just domestic servants—they are an integral part of their many groups. Most of them are personal friends of members of the group; many of them are sympathetic confidants, and all are champions and friends in-need of the underdog, the pledge. They have absorbed much of the history and the tradition of their respective groups and frequently one of the most loyal members is to be found in the kitchen preparing the daily meals.

Many a between-meal snack has passed by with only an exchange of sly winks and a good bet for the latest in fraternity or campus talk is the chef or cook in the kitchen.
"Way back in February of 1934, a young boy and his instructor stood looking out of a window in the Senior High School building in an Iowa town. The boy was speaking, as young men are wont to do, of the future, and the older man followed his reasoning with the knowing patience of a "young Mr. Chips." Both were discussing the impersonation, the day before, of Abraham Lincoln, that the young man had given in speech class. Previous reading, and the urge to better know the character of the famous man, had prompted the boy to work out an eight minute sketch in speech class. Previous reading, and the knowing patience of a "young Mr. Chips," had prompted the boy to work out an eight minute program, which included the Gettysburg Address. From earliest childhood, "Abe" Lincoln had been the boy's favorite historical character and the opportunity afforded him in speech class, to so project this character, had been utilized to the fullest extent.

Sincerity augmented the boy's eagerness. "Do you know; I've been thinking about this man and it seems to me that he's a character so great that somebody ought to write a good play about him. Since my try at the Gettysburg Speech, I feel that something of the spirit inherent in the life and work of my hero is in me. The more I study the man, the more eager I become to share that enthusiasm with an audience. He practiced the way he thought Lincoln would walk, talk, look, and stand. He never forgot that promise, that someday, somewhere, he was going to be able to portray Abraham Lincoln. Never knowing when or where it could be done he strove to satisfy an insatiable craving for imitation that lovable, homely figure of a great man.

Two years passed and Abraham daily became more alive in the boy's mind; one who could be called forth at will, and who was almost a part of the past and present. Still no date or place had ever been mentioned for that dream's reality. Then, in 1938, came the glorious news that perhaps the young man could transfer his dream. The more the idea presented itself, the more enthusiastic he became. Finally he turned down a scholarship to study journalism in a larger university and entered the Ohio school.

With a sly smile the instructor replied, "That certainly fits you." They both laughed and the boy treasured the man's next words.

"I'll tell you what you do. You go ahead and study the role and sometime, somewhere, I don't know when or where, you and I'll do that show." That may have been a chance remark, but it struck a chord in the boy that in itself set up a goal to strive for.

Weeks passed and came the close of the year and yet another and the boy was graduated. The two parted: the boy went to college in Missouri to study journalism, and a year later the instructor took a professorship in an Ohio University, but they continued to correspond. That dream never left the boy. Gradually he gathered material on "Old Abe" and subconsciously built a character in his mind whom he knew as intimately as his own family. He read and studied and collected pictures and made a notebook on the life of Lincoln. As the factual material on this great character became more enlarged, so did the boy's admiration of Lincoln and his enthusiasm to experience the joy of interpretation and to share that enthusiasm with an audience. He practiced the way he thought Lincoln would walk, talk, look, and stand. He never forgot that promise, that someday, somewhere, he was going to be able to portray Abraham Lincoln. Never knowing when or where it could be done he strove to satisfy an insatiable craving for imitation that lovable, homely figure of a great man.

And so, to bring this story to a close, we can but point out that the culmination of this six year dream of a high school student is to become a reality. On February 8, 9, 10, audiences will sit in judgment of John Drinkwater's Abraham Lincoln when Masquers of Denison University present that great classic in the 100-year-old Opera House in Granville.

On these nights, Bernard Bailey will realize an ambition of six years standing and Edward A. Wright, the director, will see unfold a rather hasty promise made to an ambitious High School Junior in 1934.

Bernard Bailey As LINCOLN

*Photo by Thompson.*
THREE POETS

16

Their vivid blaze revives your muted songs.
And think of you.
Those nasturtiums glowing still
Often I pick them from my garden plot
Long after you had gone... your songs had faded,
And when you played
All catching sunbeams in their laughing faces.
Your fingers wove their colors into tunes.
Your melodies caught their sunshine,
Burnt rose, yellow, flame, white, maroon...
On the grand piano by your tumbled music.
You placed a bowl of bright nasturtiums
Gay with flaming color
The fathomless atmosphere of the night.

MARGARET GRATZA.
ALISON PHILLIPS.

RESTLESSNESS

Sleepless nights.
Darkness
And running silence.
Blacksness.
Then the snoring beat
Of tiny puddled feet.
All around me, "Sleep my bed,
In the walls above my head,
Rats--
Gnawing, clawing,
Scratching, snatching,
Blood, blood, blood
Bloody and fast.
Pointed nose
And pointed tail.
Pointed teeth
Sleepless hours.
Fearfulness.
Tensely waiting.

By MARK RUSSELL

The Boat In The Bayou

"For not she beckoned from the pool."

By Virginia Martindale

Curling crazily, from the battered tin smokepipe,
the ribbon of blue smoke rose upward to be lost in
the dump air. Within the tumbledown shantyboat, the
old man bent over a pot-bellied iron stove and poked
the few strips of bacon that sizzled in the skillet. The
odor of frying bacon grease filled the tiny, cluttered
room. Over the man's face lay a certain tranquility
sometimes characteristic of those who have lived long
and well; those seasoned by sorrow; mired deep at
times by misfortune. The old man slapped at a
mosquito buzzing near his ear and then turned the
bacon. Shuffling over to a red-checked table, he
laid a piece of cheesecloth over the partially prepared
meal. The shantyboat rocked gently with occasional
ripples of the backwater. "Old river must be kickin'
up a bit," he mused. "Reckon this old tub ain't rocked
an inch since the last time the old river ran wild 'round
these here parts."

A meager porch chug to the front of the shanty-
boat. A brown dog, his coat matted with burrs gathered
on his frequent sallies into the underbrush lining the
bisty shore, licked a sore paw, yawned and sniffed
hopefully at the odor of frying bacon. Padding into
the room he eyed the old man expectantly, then circled
the table and flopped down onto the warped floor.
After he had finished his meal and fed the dog, the
old man carefully stacked the dishes into a tin dish
pan and shook the crumbs from the red-checked
cloths. After spreading it over the table again he ambled
out onto the meager porch, licked a soggy pipe and
flopped down onto the cushioned chair over the edge of
the porch where he could easily prop his feet up on the
tired railing. The day had been unbearable in hotness and
the rain which had fallen with studied constancy for
many days had finally stopped. The old man pre-
sumed that it would start to fall again before long.
Over the little bayou which cradled the boat swam
shaggy, beaver-like creatures, leaping over the stagnant
waters even as the smoke from his pipe chugged like a
wraith around the old man's head. The snorting beat from
the lowlands was washed over the boat—and the old man—
and the lacy-tipped willow branches dipping into the
water. There was no movement save that of the glassy
waves stirred into ripples by a passing moosca. Every-
things was water-logged, beaten by the beat.

The old man seemed to be propping the waters around
the boat—searching, it seemed, for something. Then
slowly his eyelids, weighted by the beat, closed. He

The tinkling of glasses lent a cooling effect to the
scene aboard the gleaming river cruiser. The men and
women sipped at frosty glasses as languorously as they
surveyed the passing river scenes. One woman, gazing
out at the passing banks, paused with her glass halfway
to her lips—

"Whoa old wreck is that, anchored back there in
the bayou? It's without a doubt the worst eyesore we've
seen on this river! It seems to me something could be
done to remove such atrocious sights! Certainly
people can find some other places in which to live.

The man to whom she addressed her remarks replied
that they could hardly expect to remedy the situation
themselves, but if the river kept on rising maybe things
would naturally take care of themselves.

"Then we'll be rid of such wrecks," he said.

There was a hush in the conversation during which
one of the men who had been quietly sipping his drink
by a far railing rose and, approaching his companions,
spoke.

"There is a particularly interesting tale attached to
that old fellow and his boat over there. If you like, I
can tell you just how he came to be anchored in that
particular bayou. Then after hearing the sentiment
attached to him, perhaps you won't be so angered by his
presence.

"It seems that many years ago, that old man brought
his new bride and their household goods down the river
on that same old boat, headed for a settlement on the
lower Mississippi River. They poled their boat into
that bayou to anchor it there out of the reach of
the mischievous old Ohio, in flood stage then as it is
now. It was while they were anchored there that the
flood broke loose and his young bride was drowned.
I don't know how the tragedy occurred. I only know
that she drowned in the waters of that very pool where
the boat is now anchored. With her death the grief-
stricken youth lost all interest in everything and never
went on down the river. He contented himself with
odd jobs around the nearby town and there he has
lived ever since, not once moving the shantyboat from
its moorings. That old John-boat you saw tied to the
porch is what he uses for his trips to and from the
shore.

"Each night since her death he has been seen to
paddle his boat homeward after a day's work in the
town. Each evening finds him standing motionless
at the bow of the shantyboat, staring into the pool as if
trying to conjure her face up out of the fast-darkening
waters. He believes she is still near—talks to her.
For this reason some people call him eccentric and warn
Their children not to go near him. We who know his story speak otherwise. We speak kindly of him for he has hurt no one and his presence there is a kind of tradition to us who live nearby.

The shantyboat had long ago passed out of sight and now only remarks of "really?" and "how provincial!" fell upon the echoes of the gentleman's story. He indulged in the callous lack of sentiment. He shrugged, and did so glanced over his shoulder and saw, far in the wake of the boat, above the treetops lining the shore, a thin ribbon of smoke rising upward into the damp air.

In the light of early morning the old man rubbed his eyes. He had awakened with a feeling that this was not like any other morning; indeed, this was not like his own shantyboat for it seemed to be tossi ng about like a child in a bad dream. Looking out of the window he saw the familiar shoreline and, peering closer, knew that the river had risen much more and wasapparently rising at a rate with insistent snake-tongued Little flames of memory licked at his heart. That other flood—that OTHER FLOOD! God, how long ago that was. His heavy-ridden hands trembled as he dressed. Somehow his age fell away from him like a shell—that other flood! People had needed his help then, HIS help. He would help them again—his heart thudded against his ribs. He stumbled out onto the porch again. Then he saw her—vaguely now through the mist he saw her; rising half out of the water. Surely that was Mary.

She was beckoning to him—

Reeling back over the span of years he heard once again the voices of the two fishermen, in their boat alongside his shantyboat as they said that Mary was dead—drowned in that very bayou when she had plunged in to save a pet kitten. "We couldn't rush her in time," the two fishermen were saying. The other side follows up with Fine Dinner (a Hawkins original) that is hard to beat also, although each man has a chance to show off on this one.

Bob Crosby puts out two sides that are fairly good in considering some of his other recent releases. High Society and Boogie-Woogie Maxie. Decoy Mag is, empty years spent alone were vanished now. The old man knew Mary needed him—he had been in the town, yes—now he was back—Mary gone? No, for when she beckoned from the pool—

"I'll reach her—yes, Mary, I see you. Don't be afraid—"I'm coming, Mary."

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The swing composer's record of the month is unquestionably Calling and Body and Soul, Bluebird 10523. In this record the "Hawk" stays this favorite through twice, with bridges included, and good for the finest performance on tenor sax that I have ever heard. His perfect tone, great ideas, and lovely notes prove to the listener that he is supreme on his respective instrument. The other side follows up with Fine Dinner (a Hawkins original) that is hard to beat also, although each man has a chance to show off on this one.

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THERE ARE MORE KINDS OF DEATH THAN DYING

In the World War, approximately 17,000,000 men were killed. A few more million people—many of them children—died from starvation or undernourishment suffered because crops were destroyed or because it was clever strategy to shut off the enemy’s food supply. These were the dead, the actual dead. But more things human were killed than the white crosses tell of.

The kind of hope that buoyed men’s hearts was, for my thousands, killed forever and replaced with bitterness and disillusion.

There was no real conquest for anyone. There was no true victory, no lasting peace. Nothing, absolutely nothing. The “war to end war” ended only by death of the woman and survived on sheer bravado (and by Katherine’s permission).

It is an interesting reflection on the production that the biggest laugh of the evening came when two unfortunate late comers were politely bowsed into their seats by the cast, while the show stopped until they were comfortable and then repeated the scene which just preceded the interruption. I would hate to suggest a plant, but things were just too convenient to have been accidental.

Some people feel that the Lunt production was in absolute keeping with the spirit of Shakespeare. They point out that the theatre of the Elizabethan era was bawdy, noisy and plays presented therein were horsed to the limit. They say that the audience should enter into the actual stage picture because in the early seventeenth century the audience exchanged pleasantries with the players. There is nothing that I can say to refute this argument. It is sound and convincing, but still I feel as though I had seen sacrilege perpetrated. I thoroughly enjoyed the show as long as my enjoyment was based on the antics of the Lunts and the clowns, jugglers, midgets, etc. and not upon The Taming of the Shrew.

It is possible that I have been so long a worshipper of a much defiled Shakespeare that my sensibilities are too easily shocked where his pairs are concerned. But, whatever the cause may be, I must confess that it was a shock to me to see one of his plays “hosed” all over the stage. It was so much of a shock, in fact, that it was not until the second act that I was able to forget what it was I was seeing and could relax and enjoy the Lunts for the Lunts’ sake. For the second and third act, then, I settled back in my chair and watched a hilarious circus parade before my eyes.

And all of the elements of a circus were there. There were clowns, horses, and clowns. In New York, I understand, they used elephants here and it sound a bit of a chore to take the elephants with them on the road. There were jugglers, jugglers and mummies—the two principal mummies being the principals. All it lacked to do credit to P. T. Barnum was the bearded lady, the snake charmer and the “Big-Top.”

Perhaps, for the benefit of those unfortunate who did not attend the show, it might be well for a word of explanation to be thrown in at this point. Just what was it that the Lunts did to make this show so different from the usual run of Shakespearean productions? In the first place, they were the intimitate pair that has stormed the Broadway theatres for years. They that they could do, whether it was readable between the lines or not. That alone would make any show different. And when Alfred Lunt read his part in his high voice, it seemed to me the voice of a true Shakespearean. Perhaps the simple, matter of fact emphasis which seemed to make the show run rather slowly. (At least during the first act when I was still shocked and hadn’t gotten used to the idea of hearing Shakespeare’s singing lines yelled with measured monotone.) Of course every line which suggested the least possibility of shabby sophistication was played up to its full, and lines which under ordinary conditions might have been uttered from a pulpit took on new and Rabelaisian significance. Even the theme of the play was altered. Katherine knew as soon as she looked at Petruchio that she was going to be tamed—in fact was eager to be tamed by him; while Petruchio went into his wooing dance with a faint heart—in truth he was scared to death of the woman and survived on sheer bravado (and by Katherine’s permission).

The Taming of the Shrew is a non-profit organization and determination to solidify the antipathy and all other forms of artistry with the players and the naturally beautiful setting working together to enliven and enhance the lyric lines and romantic action of this rollicking farce. At the Hartman Theatre, the Lunts played Alfred Lunt and Lyne Fontaine with The Taming of the Shrew as purple.

We feel that there must be a more intelligent and civilized way than murder to settle the differences of men and nations. If you feel the same way we’d like to hear from you. Won’t you add your voice to ours? Why not sit down now and write to World Peaceways, 103 Park Avenue, New York City.

The Lunts Do The Shrew

“This is Shakespeare a La Lunt”

For the second time a review of Shakespeare’s Taming of the Shrew has appeared in the Drama section of this magazine. But, lest we be accused of repeating ourselves, perhaps it would be wisest to assure the reader that aside from the title, author and the lines, which were undoubtedly the words of Shakespeare, the two performances were so radically different that they might just as well be considered different plays.

At Denison last June, Masquers played the Taming of the Shrew on the Plaza. Their performance was a thing of artistry with the players and the naturally beautiful setting working together to enliven and enhance the lyric lines and romantic action of this rollicking farce. At the Hartman Theatre, the Lunts played Alfred Lunt and Lyne Fontaine with The Taming of the Shrew as spectacle. There were clowns, horses, and clowns. In New York, I understand, they used elephants here and it sound a bit of a chore to take the elephants with them on the road. There were jugglers, jugglers and mummies—two of the principals being the principals. All it lacked to do credit to P. T. Barnum was the bearded lady, the snake charmer and the “Big-Top.”

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Lyne Fontaine was super. She was ever the vivacious and beautiful woman. Never did she make you feel that at heart she was a shrew no matter how showish her actions. She used lines with color and meaning, and she displayed the freedom and grace of movement which is essential to the part.

And then there was the curtain call. Nowhere was the spirit in which this show was done so summarily shown than when the curtain rose for the curtain call. But what a curtain call! Instead of the usual row of graciously smiling and bowing actors stretching from one side of the stage to the other we saw, way at the back of the stage, Petruchio and Katherine in a beautiful chariot drawn by a white steed, soaring through the air into the future. Shades of Melodrama! Not Shades of Shakespeare!
est oratorio. But a half-starved little clergyman named Pooley, who lived with Jennens as his secretary, did the work, the credit for which his master stole, and he has gone down into an unknown grave, unhonored and unsung.

Pooley was a humble little creature. Where Jennens found him no one will ever know, but Pooley’s mission in life, whilst in the service of this great man, was to be more humble than ever. He had to apply himself assiduously to a proper appreciation of the greatness of his master. So brow-beaten was the poor wretch that he made no protest when Jennens palmed off Pooley’s selection of biblical words upon Handel as his own.

With the Pooley-Jennens libretto before him, Handel began work on the score of the Messiah, August 22, 1741, at the age of fifty-six. Twenty-four days later the score was complete. Considering the immensity of the work and the short time involved, it will remain, perhaps forever, the greatest feat in the whole history of musical composition. It was all original work, except the choruses, ‘And He shall purify’, ‘For unto us’, ‘His yoke is easy’, and ‘All we like sheep’, all of which were adapted from a set of Italian duets which he had written in July, 1741. It was the achievement of a giant inspired—the work of one who, by some extraordinary mental feat, had drawn himself completely out of the world, so that he dwelt—or believed he dwelt—in the pastures of God. What happened was that Handel passed through a superb dream. He was unconscious of the world during that time; his whole mind was in a trance; he did not leave the house; his man-servant brought him food, and, as often as not, returned to the room in an hour to find the food untouched, and his master staring into vacancy. When he had completed Part II with the Hallelujah Chorus, his servant found him at the table, tears streaming from his eyes. “I did think I did see all Heaven before me, and the great God Himself!” he exclaimed. Certainly, Handel was guided by some extraordinary power. Never in his life had he experienced the same emotional drive, and he never experienced it again.

Although he finished the first copy so quickly, Handel altered various numbers from time to time, so that, in the end, he spent more time and thought over this work than over any previous oratorio.

Handel’s achievement becomes all the more astounding when one considers the size of the orchestra he had to write for. At no time in the Messiah are there more than fourteen staves in the score, whereas in a modern score it is not unusual to find more than twice that number.

Conducting with a baton did not originate until the last century. Prior to that time, the ‘conductor’ sat at the harpsichord or organ and directed things as best he could, assisted by the leader of the first violins (concertmaster), who beat time with his bow whenever possible. Orchestral technique was therefore limited, and it was for this reason that the lowest stave in every full score was devoted to the continuo, or figured bass, which is simply the bass part with figures below it signifying the chords that the composer intended to be heard above it. The conductor devoted himself to this line of the score. Playing the continuo is a very difficult art and almost a lost one. Handel was one of the great masters of the art, and it must have been intensely interesting to hear him freely improvising on the figured bass. However, in later days, and in the hands of less imaginative musicians, it became a very dull affair. Certainly, few contemporary organists could do it justice.

Handel himself had no thought of producing the work. As soon as it was completed, it was put away in a drawer. It is doubtful if he ever intended to produce it in London after the discouraging experience he had had there. At any rate, he received an offer to appear in Dublin to produce a work for the benefit of charitable institutions. Handel accepted and took Mrs. Cibber and Signora Avoglio with him from London as soloists. The tenor and bass soloists were recruited from the Dublin cathedral choirs. The work was first performed there April 13, 1742, and it was so successful that a second performance was demanded. For his second presentation, the ladies were requested not to come with hoops this day to the Musick Hall in Fishamble Street. The gentlemen are desired to come without their swords. If for they could abandon fashion ‘for one evening only, however ornamental, the hall will contain an hundred persons more, with full ease’.

The Messiah was not performed in London until a year later, and it did not create a great stir then, although it later become a great success. The performance was repeated annually at London until 1791, when it gave way to the great triennial Handel festivals. It is pretty well authenticated that the custom of standing through the Hallelujah Chorus originated when George II and his court leaped to their feet when they first heard the great theme, ‘For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth’. And yet, the theme merely walks four intervals in between. This same inspired economy is apparent all the way through the oratorio. For instance, the whole Hallelujah Chorus, with the exception of two measures, is in only two keys.

The Messiah has been performed more often than any other oratorio, and many interesting anecdotes could doubtless be told of its thousands of performances. But the story I like best is the one about Karl Eichman, who has conducted the Messiah at Denison for most of its thirty-five performances. The oratorio used to be given in the Baptist Church, where the temperature changes affected the pitch of the organ. The night before a performance the thermometer took a sudden drop, changing the pitch of the organ so much that the other instruments could not tune to it. So Karl had to stay up all night, transposing the orchestra parts to suit the organ.