Vachel Lindsay at Princeton

BY CARLOS BAKER

A sheaf of revealing letters written by Vachel Lindsay to Professor Francis Macdonald, presented to the Library several years ago, reflect not only the friendly relations between Lindsay and Macdonald but also the picturesque visits to Princeton made by Lindsay during his years of triumphant wandering as a twentieth century troubadour. Dr. Baker’s familiarity with the life and works of Lindsay enables him to correlate these letters with the larger aspects of the poet’s career.

In the winter of 1923-1924 Vachel Lindsay still had hopes of salvaging his artistic integrity. When in April of that academic year he came to Princeton to teach poetry for one week, he was still riding high upon successive waves of anticipatory enthusiasm. “Be sure,” he wrote to his good friend, Professor Francis Charles Macdonald, “be sure I profoundly appreciate the new opening for adventure. . . . It may mean the beginning of a great, brave, new life for me.”

Behind him at this date lay a dozen happy years of evangelical troubadouring, the years of his “roadside priesthood” when he had tramped penniless through half-a-dozen states, preaching his gospel of beauty and trading his rhymes for bed and breakfast. In these adventures he took a naive pride. “Walt Whitman in his wildest dreams was only a pretended troubadour. He sat still in cafés . . . he was an infinitely more skillful writer than any other American. But I can beat him as a troubadour.” He was proud, too, of his international reputation, fostered by lecture tours which had taken him “from South Texas to Saskatchewan, and Oxford, England, to San Francisco.” At forty-four the lonely eccentric from Abe...
Lincoln’s town was “almost wrecked by public good will.” Wherever he appeared, the author of “The Congo” was certain of a thundering reception.

The paradox is that the Lindsay who matters to American literature was then, and is now, a neglected poet. Everybody knows “The Congo,” but as Lindsay complained in 1921, “very, very few of my audiences know I have been writing eight books these twenty-two or three years.” He was smothered with applause for his readings: but he was, and is, little read. Anthologists reprint Booth’s and “The Congo” partly because publishers insist upon it. But Lindsay the poet, the Campbellite mystic, the militant reformer (as opposed to Lindsay the medicine man), is to be found rather in the shorter poems. Among these are the tributes to the Madonna, to St. Francis and the Gautama Buddha, or to Lincoln, Kerensky, and Woodrow Wilson; the charming song-games for children, or Blakean fantasies like “The Tale of the Tiger Tree”; moving visions of “The Ghosts of the Buffaloes,” or the semi-autobiographical “Johnny Appleseed.” Such works as these contain Lindsay’s reading of life, which is notably absent from “The Congo.”

In 1924 Lindsay consciously tried to meet the problem of being a national celebrity, and at the same time remaining a respectable poet. He well knew that the acclimation of his audiences, the applause which he at once hated and desired, was to be his undoing. He was told of him by an ever-deepening Slough of Despond, from which he would never wholly ex-tiricate himself. Ahead lay the disheartening sojourn in Spokane, six years more of exhausting but unprofitable public lectures, and debts that rose about him like a tide. Worse than these was Lindsay’s harrowing sense of his own failure, his growing conviction that the forces of artistic disintegration were at work within his soul. Most pathetically, one night in 1931, he was to escape his nameless and formless persecutors by self-destruction.

Between the heights of fame and the depths of despair lay a twelvemonth of calm, a period of hopeful waiting in which, for Lindsay, Princeton loomed like one of the Islands of the Blest. The period had begun in February, 1923, when Lindsay broke down in Gulfport, Mississippi, with influenza and com-

plications. The president of a small girls’ college in Gulfport was Richard G. Cox, an old college friend, who offered him sanctuary and a job. Lindsay gratefully accepted both, reading modern poets to a select group for one short period a day, and using the rest of his time for recuperative loafing, study, meditation, and, as it turned out, for an unrequited love affair with a young girl who became for the poet a kind of symbolic “bride of quietness.” Some of his letters to her were printed by C. P. Lee, “Adulation and the Artist,” Saturday Review of Literature for August 10, 1940.

But Lindsay’s visit to Princeton marked the end of the quiet life. On Monday evening, April 28, 1924, the cheering audience in McCosh 10 aroused once more his appetite for pomp, which he said was “as insatiable as that of some fat Roman consul who has recaptured Egypt.” Illness interrupted the first performance two-thirds of the way through, but on Mayday Thursday he volunteered another reading, and heard again the roar of applause and the adulatory stamping of three hundred feet. It is significant that “Johnny Appleseed,” the new poem which he read to the audience that night, was the last great poem he was ever to produce.

Lindsay’s letters to Professor MacDonald at this time contain a record of his psychomachia, a struggle that was complex and many-sided. The burnt-out creator needed peace; the tireless showman revelled in grandiloquent hisotonics. The lonely and childlike artist needed constant reassurance of the sympathetic faith of his audiences; yet in accepting him as the marvelous boy who had written “Booth” and “The Congo,” these very audiences denied Lindsay the right to maturity. He was condemned to the role of parrot and ape, to the recitation of “Booth” and “The Congo” until he cried out that he “utterly abominated ‘Booth’ and ‘The Congo.’”

I have been forced to tour [he wrote in 1921], to recite my old pieces, continually retrace my mental steps for each new audience, and all my habits up to 33 are at war with all those from 33 to 41. I am continually fighting to get my audiences to the point where my latest piece of writing will be the thing they like, and not the earliest.

In 1924 he was still a Peter Pan, with the shadow of his past sewed firmly to his heels.
I am refused all privilege of thinking in public. . . . I have to wear hat, coat, pants and shoes im years old, because I looked so cute in them then, and somebody told the public that. . . . In two hundred Universities and Colleges, the last two hundred times, they have said just this to me, "Come and recite the remarkable Booth and the remarkable Congo, and then leave town. That's all we want you for!" For this they will pay me most any price. But the deadly reiteration wears me to the bone. Let my friends [at Princeton] rescue me before it is too, too late. Let them prevent, at least for one week, that my ideas, my ideas, are much more important than The Congo or Booth, that those two poems should henceforth be recited by other people.

He would love, he now said, to make his fourth visit to Princeton utterly different from any other visit to any other university. On his third visit (22 April, 1921), he had given a highly successful public reading in Alexander Hall, where Henry van Dyke, '73, had introduced Lindsay with a rhyme especially composed for the occasion. (The two preceding visits had occurred about 1914 and in 1920.) But Lindsay made it clear that he was "bored to death with polite and successful public appearances all the way to England, for these ten years." He must come this time as a teacher, not as a reciter. At the beginning of the week he would give one public reading. The rest of the time he wanted intellectual stimulus, the give and take of ideas in man-to-man conversation. "I need," he cried, "a tremendous shaking up. . . . The old formulas are utterly dead with me. . . . I want a complete new deal."

Perhaps he hoped that the initial lecture would serve as a spiritual katharsis, would exercise the demons of egotism who goaded him into antics on the platform. But his plans for the conduct of his classes, as he outlined them to Professor Macdonald, must have given that kindly gentleman pause. He proposed a peripatetic, nocturnal school of poetry, and issued an ebullient challenge to Princeton's literary athletes, "ringers and all," to walk him down in a fifty-five-mile dance along the smooth roads of New Jersey, "reducing the world to nothing but poetic feet."

Walking is my only way out [he wrote]. I have never been walked down and have never found my limit walking. . . . I have a dancing foot and wear dancing slippers disguised as shoes. I walk like the wind at midnight when no one can be painsed. I want the quickest merriest walking possible, on the smoothest possible roads. Midnight till morning is the best time, for then there are no autos and we have the stars—and can take the smoothest roads too. I am a racer and completely ruined by heavy plodding hiking. We must make it a dance from first to last with the very best wins along. . . .

Read the letter to the champions. We can all recite poems on the way in unison, going and coming. . . .

I find I can walk better today than I could when I walked across Kansas twelve years ago. So I would like to make your Poetry-boys so angry they will swear to dance me down the Highroad or die. Slap them in the face for me. Draw blood and let us start. . . . At the end of our fifty-five-mile hike let us sit down and cooperate on an epic about it, before we take a bath. One instantaneous epic! Thus Lindsay on Princeton's poetic renaissance. He would leave the details to Professor Macdonald.

But the actual visit to Princeton was less spectacular. Lindsay was given lodgings at the Nassau Club. On Tuesday and Wednesday there were polite discussion groups at the rooms of Edward Steese, '24, in 14 Campbell. The sudden truncation of the Monday evening lectures, as Lindsay told a Princetonian reporter next day, was the result of a "gastronomic incapacitation induced by Atlantic City lobster." Last his first-night audience should be disappointed, Lindsay spoke again on Thursday in McCosh 10, reading his "Litanies of Heroes," "Hamlet," "Johnny Appleseed," and some "very clever imitations of the oratory of William Jennings Bryan." And in this way ended the "great brave new life." Poetic athletes went unslapped. The nocturnal quietude of Penns Neck and Pennington had not been disturbed by the choral chantings of a peripatetic school. There had been, one observes regretfully, no instantaneous epic.

Some of the reasons for the failure of the Princeton visit may be read between the lines of a penitent letter which Lindsay sent to Professor Macdonald a week after his departure.

I just take time to say I think of you, I remember your very great kindness, I hope we may meet often and well, and I am deeply grateful for all you did for me at Princeton. Certainly you endured a great deal of stupidity from me, but that is what my friends have endured all my life, so consider yourself now initiated into the real
mysteries of the real Vachel as he is actually known to those who truly love him, ALWAYS...

Please, dear friend, let me petition to be very close in your thoughts, to be, in spite of my mistakes and errors, a little nearer to your circle of poets in Princeton than any other circle of like sort in the world. Please get them to write to me, to send me souvenirs and projects, and to claim me ex officio for their own. I feel you know the worst about me, and that, in itself, is a wonderful start.

... The long walk nonsense and long dance nonsense I wrote to you, I may yet vindicate, for be sure, my dear friend, it is always my nonsense that turns up most approved in the end. ... It was all lucky, even the bad luck, if it helps to a permanent interchange of mutual human forgiveness, of dreams and adventures. I greatly envy you your vast culture and constant skilled reading of the poets with special groups. That is where I fall down. I wish I could attend your classes, and had fifty brains, truly to understand what is doing.

Evident here are Lindsay's contrition for "mistakes and errors," his lonely plea for forgiveness, his ex post facto humility before a vast culture in the presence of which he had played the clown. In retrospect this last Princeton visit became another chapter in the tragic dissolution of a genuine poet.
Special Collections at Princeton

V. THE WORKS OF THOMAS ROWLANDSON

BY E. D. H. JOHNSON

Dr. Johnson's enthusiastic survey of the Rowlandson collection pays fitting tribute to another symbol of the way in which the collecting zeal of a loyal friend and alumnus has added to the riches of the Library. Those who are unable to visit the current Rowlandson exhibition in the Treasure Room may find some solace in the four collotype reproductions (included herewith) from Rowlandson's hand-colored etchings.

In the realm of art no very lofty estate has been reserved for the caricaturist. Only rarely do the higher orders have to make room for a Daumier or a Toulouse-Lautrec. In this select company belongs the name of the English caricaturist, Thomas Rowlandson, who lived from 1756 to 1827. Rowlandson's work is by no means so well known as it deserves to be, even by lovers of the period; but now it is gradually beginning to come into its own, as any amateur who enters the field at this late date may learn to his regret. Thus, the library of Princeton University is extremely happy in being the possessor of a Rowlandson collection—original sketches, etchings, and illustrated books—which ranks among the finest in existence.

This collection was presented to Princeton by the late Dickson Queen Brown '95, who devoted many years of his life to its formation. Although the bulk of the bequest came to the library in 1928, the collector's instinct was so keen in Mr. Brown that further additions continued to arrive until within a few days of his death on September 11, 1939. Some idea of the extent of the gift may be gathered from the fact that it contains not many short of 2000 prints together with substantially all the books for which Rowlandson executed illustrations, including a great many items which are not listed in Joseph Grego's standard bibliography of the artist's work. Nor is this all. It was Mr. Brown's avowed ambition to acquire every volume in which a drawing by Rowlandson was reproduced or any mention was made of his name. The completeness with which this gigantic purpose was carried through is frankly astonishing. Lastly, the donor rounded out his col-
lection with almost every work of any importance on the artistic
and social history of the period, so that it is no exaggeration
to say that the student of these aspects of later Georgian England
need hardly stir outside the library assembled by Mr. Brown.

If asked to declare a preference, most lovers of Rowlandson
would probably say that they are most attracted to the land-
scapes which are the product of this artist's early career. After
a preliminary academic period, the result of his studies in
London and Paris, Rowlandson turned like the true-born
Englishman he was to his own countryside, and throughout
the last two decades of the eighteenth century painted a series
of extraordinarily fresh and lovely pastoral scenes. His medium
was watercolor; but his sketches (in most cases transferred to
copper and printed) might more properly be designated water-
color drawings, or "stained drawings" in the technical lan-
guage of his own day. In his choice of subjects and general
manner Rowlandson was at this time influenced by Morland
and Gainsborough; but the fastidious draftsmanship and deli-
cacy of coloring are all his own. Among the representative
examples at Princeton of his achievement in this vein the fol-
lowing titles will serve to indicate the content, if they cannot
express the charm of the originals: "The Pea-Cart," "A
Brewer's Dray," "Haymakers," and "Shooting: the Village
Forge."

Even when he turned to caricature Rowlandson did not
altogether forsake landscape painting. It was his habit, in
the company of a chosen friend or two, to take an annual jaunt
about England, to Devonshire or Cornwall, to Wales or to
some fashionable seaside resort, as the case might be. He would
no more have thought of setting out on one of these excursions
without his sketching-tools than an ordinary traveller would
be likely to leave his tooth-brush behind. One such journey
was made to Brightwellstone in 1789. On this occasion
Rowlandson was joined by his friend Henry Wigsteed, who
was an artist in his own right but whose share it was this time
to recount the trip in prose, while Rowlandson illustrated it
with delightful drawings of scenes along the way. The Prince-
ton collection contains an exceedingly rare copy of the pub-
lished work, for which the artist's etchings were exquisitely
aquatinted by Samuel Aiken, father of Henry Aiken, the great
painter of sporting subjects.

While on the present aspect of Rowlandson's work, mention
should be made of his seascapes and sketches descriptive of
every variety of life which has to do with the sea. George
Cruchshank thought that in the treatment of such subjects
Rowlandson was second only to Vanderweide; and anyone
who has ever seen the magnificent drawing entitled "Ember-
kling from Brightwellstone to Dieppe" (1787) will be disposed
to concur in this judgment. A brisk breeze is driving the
clouds across the sky and kicking up the channel waters.
Boats loaded with passengers are putting out to the lugger
which is standing off. Sailors, backs hunched and feet braced,
are launching another boat, while groups of wind-blown
spectators stand about the shore among the fishing-smacks
which are beached there. The whole scene suggests in a mas-
terly way the air of vivacity and adventurous expectancy
which attends the departure of travellers for foreign parts.
Another waterside study from a later period, the "Portsmouth
Point" (1814), serves to indicate why Sir Joshua Reynolds
compared Rowlandson's treatment of crowds to Rubens'.
The eye wanders endlessly throughout a maze of amusing
detail, pausing over one cluster after another of meticulously
drawn figures. Yet the grouping is in every case subordinated
to the design as a whole. "Portsmouth Point" has provided
the inspiration for one of the more interesting compositions
of the distinguished contemporary English composer, Mr.
T. R. Walton.

As the foregoing implies, Rowlandson invariably depicted
landscapes in their relation to human activities; and this ten-
dency becomes more pronounced in his later work, so that to
an increasing extent the onlooker feels impelled to bend close
in order to find out what is happening in these inn courtyards,
or by the side of those country lanes. Thus, typically enough,
the artist incorporated some of his most attractive scenes
in a book which was published in 1816 under the title of
Rowlandson's World in Miniatures, consisting of Groups of Figures,
for the Illustration of Landscape Scenery, a perfect copy of which
may be found in the Princeton collection. Rowlandson was a
true son of the eighteenth century; and that is as much as to
say that first, last, and always Nature to him meant Human
Nature.
Rowlandson received part of his artistic training in Paris,
an unusual opportunity for an English painter of that age; and
it was inevitable that one with his genius for line-drawings
should fall under the spell of the school of Watteau, Fragonard,
and Boucher. At the Royal Academy in London the extra-
ordinary fidelity of his life studies had from the first made him
the rival of Mortimer, the prize pupil. These academic in-
fluences are apparent in the much sought after figure drawings
of the artist’s youthful period. Princeton possesses examples of
nearly all of Rowlandson’s most famous compositions in this
style, including such ambitious efforts as “Box Lobby Loung-
ers,” “La Place Victoire à Paris,” “A French Family,” “An
Italian Family,” “French Barracks,” and “English Barracks.”
Later Rowlandson’s line became more capricious, and he
ceased to pay much attention to shading and similar devices
by which the illusion of reality is gained. He adopted, in the
words of one critic, “a technique of pictorial construction
which might be termed a love of the abundant life. The con-
tour of all that is included in the composition of a picture—
trees that are breezed; women who are graceful and full-
bosomed; fat lecherous-looking old men; horses that gallop;
and dancing which goes round and round.” The curious who
wish to compare the earlier and later styles of this master can
do not better than place side by side the two sets of com-
panion pieces, known respectively as “Comedy Spectators” and
“Tragedy Spectators” (1787), and “Comedy in the Country”
and “Tragedy in London” (1807). The subjects are roughly
the same; not so the handling. In the former pair the qualities
of drawing and faithfulness to the observed fact are unques-
tionably superior; but in the latter how much greater are the
animation and sense of exuberant being, achieved by the very
distortions in the mirror which the supremely great carica-
turist holds up to life.
The satiric stamp, which is generally held to be the hall-
mark of Rowlandson’s style, is notably lacking in the drawings
which have been under consideration up to this point. This
fact is recognized by Osbert Sitwell in a pleasant passage
which may serve as an epitome of the artist’s early production:
As for the subjects of the early drawings, they were diverse. Village steeples cleave the cumulus green clouds of the treetops, under shade of which the villagers dance so gaily. There are pleasant lawns, and parks in which the dappled deer graze, and urban scenes, in which the beau monde saunters or masquerades (these always rendered with a supreme appreciation of the exaggerated follies of dress), there are carnivals and rustic sports, drawings of young noblemen lurching unsteadily down back alleys among the vegetable stalls of the early morning, groups of soldiers and sailors returning from or setting out for war, the neat brick streets of provincial towns with a little shopping in progress, the rumbling of gilded coaches as their four horses, with postillions, drag them along the country lanes, their green walls splotched with open wild roses, the havoc wrought by sea-side gales on the east coast, or, favourite subjects, ships in full sail or musicians playing. Many of these drawings have implicit in them a subdued note of satire: but the satire is not allowed to become dominant as it was to become subsequently.

From the very first, however, "Rowly" had been a prankish youth, as we learn from the few surviving anecdotes which relate to his life. While a student at the Royal Academy, he had one evening brought a pea-shooter into the life class and so discomposed the model that there was no more serious work that night. And if he was obliged to take Rubens, Boucher, Andrea del Sarto, and Raphael for his academic masters in Paris, we know that on his own he discovered Teniers, Van Ostade, and Callet.

As early as 1784 he began to turn to caricature. This was the year in which the notorious Fox-North Coalition temporarily united the left and right extremities of the political front. The populace was profoundly shocked by this exhibition of opportunism, and the cartoonists leapt to the onslaught, carrying Rowlandson with them. One of the best of the artist's early political caricatures is entitled "The Devonshire, or most approved Method of securing Votes." Charles Fox, the darling of London society, was a candidate for Parliament from Westminster; and Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire took the then unprecedented step of campaigning for him in the metropolis. Rowlandson has portrayed the fascinating Duchess in all her ripe beauty embracing a butcher, who is clad in the greasy dress of his calling. The Duchess of Gordon applauds the proceedings, while a second butcher hurries up to ex-
change his vote for a kiss. Rowlandson also did a very popular series of caricatures in honor of the so-called "Delicate Investigation" of 1809, when the fact came to light that Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke had profited by her position as mistress to the Duke of York to drive a thriving trade in the sale of military commissions. Naturally, also, Rowlandson struck as heavy blows as any in the pictorial warfare against Napoleon; but on the whole political satire occupies a surprisingly small part of his vast output. This may be partly explained by the fact that the artist's genius was of the higher order of caricature which finds in types rather than in individuals its legitimate prey. In addition, Rowlandson lacked that capacity for blind indication that made Gillray the greatest of all political caricaturists. However much he might hate Napoleon, he could not transfer that hatred to the whole French race to whose hospitality he owed so much. Witness that admirable pair of etchings, "A Table d'Hotel or French Ordinary in Paris" and the "Paris Diligence" (both 1810), where we are shown the pre-Revolutionary Paris which Rowlandson remembered and loved so well that his fun at its expense is perfectly good-humored.

So it is in his inspired depiction of English life in his day that Rowlandson's true greatness lies. Others, though few, have equalled the nimble magic of his line, the exquisite delicacy of his washes; but with the exception of Hogarth he admits no peers as an historian of manners. And here a distinction is necessary. Those who view the opening of the nineteenth century in relation to its Victorian aftermath attach some variation of the sickly word romantic to the period in which Rowlandson threw. There is, however, another way of looking at the matter which recognizes that the more boisterous world of the eighteenth century was not lapped under by the first waves of sentimental metaphysics, but survived to enjoy a last splendid flare-up during the Regency. Now it was to the England of "Pimny" rather than to the England of Shelley that Rowlandson belonged; which is as much as to say that in his tough-minded, humorous, realistic way he was very much of this world. His drawings are often bawdy, as in the justly famous "Exhibition Stare Case" (to the subject matter of which exception has so often been taken by those who confuse aesthetics with morality), or in that curious and rare volume of plates, "Pretty Little Games for Young Ladies and Gentlemen with Pictures of Good Old English Sports and Pastimes." But Rowlandson's vulgarity is the inseparable concomitant of the nature of a full-blooded man with big appetites and an unabashed disposition to satisfy them. Rowlandson is never nasty; and there we may let the matter drop.

Of Regency England E. M. Henley, who was not afraid to face the facts squarely, has written: "A dreadful age no doubt: for all its solid foundations, of faith and dogma in the Church and of virtue and solvency in the State, a fierce, drunken, gambling, 'keeping,' adulterous, high-living, hard-drinking, hard-hitting age." A dreadful age, we may repeat; but it was Rowlandson's, and he accepted it and was as much a part of it as the veriest Regency buck, which is why, of course, it lives on so marvelously in his work. For was not our artist the very personification of John Bull incarnate? Henry Angelo, the fencing master, has a reference to this point in his very entertaining Reminiscences. Rowlandson had gone to France with one of his patrons, the fat banker Mitchell. The anecdote continues:

His [Rowlandson's] mighty stature astonished the many, but none more than the innkeepers' wives, who, on his arrival, as he travelled in style, looked at the larder, and then again at the guest. All regarded him as that reported being, of whom they had heard, the veritable Mr. Bull. His orders for the supplies of the table, ever his first concern, strengthened this opinion, and his operations at his meals confirmed the fact.

How is it to convey in a few words the essence of the work in caricature of one of whom it was said that he had "covered with his unflagging pencil enough charta pura to placard the whole walls of China, and etched as much copper as would sheathe the British navy"? Do we design to look inside a Regency barber shop, or butcher shop, or tailor shop, or gin or pawn shop for that matter? Rowlandson's prints will take us there, just as they will give us a pass, as the inclination prompts, to the opera, to raree-shows, or to cockfights. Would we like to extend our acquaintance among the artist's contemporaries to include highwaymen, old-clothes dealers, antiquaries, prizefighters, sellers of lavender, and dentists?
Rowlandson can and does introduce us to all of them and many, many more. Consider the following evocative titles of prints, selected at random from among the Princeton collection: “Butterfly Hunting,” “Dramatic Demires at their Morning Rehearsal,” “Intrusion on Study, or the Painter Disturbed,” “Mr. Bullocks’ Exhibition of Laplanders,” “A Monkey Merchant,” “A Sailor in a Stable.” Whole volumes of social history might be written with (for their only source) such series from Rowlandson’s pen as Cries of London, Compliments of Bath, or Miseries of Life. And since he happens to be a great as well as a perceptive artist, the spectator derives from his subjects that overplus of satisfaction which comes from recognizing the perennial elements in an otherwise fleeting experience. For instance, one print presents the interior of a fashionable bonnet shop where a woman is allowing herself to be sold a thoroughly unbecoming hat. On the wall hangs a placard with the following inscription: “Mrs. Flimsy’s fashionable warehouse. The greatest variety of strawhats and bonnets, made up in the most elegant taste. A large stock of Spanish, Flemish, provincial, gypsy, cottage, woodland, etc., etc. adapted to show every feature to advantage.” Allowing for slight, very slight, variations in taste, Vogue or Harper’s Bazar can direct us to any number of similar establishments, where upon first entering we shall be confronted by a re-enactment of the very scene which caught Rowlandson’s alert eye as he passed down Bond Street 130 years ago.

Amidst such an embarrassment of riches some choice must be made; and perhaps in the present connection Rowlandson’s caricatures of life at Oxford and Cambridge will serve our purposes as well as any. University education in the artist’s day, as illustrated by his pen, is hardly an edifying spectacle. Yet there is no reason to think that he much misrepresents the true state of affairs, if we take into account the corroborative evidence of Gibbon’s Autobiography, Byron’s Letters, and a variety of other sources. The following advice for the direction of prospective collegians is taken from a little-known satire in the Rowlandson collection, entitled A Compendious Treatise on Modern Education. For this work, Rowlandson etched the illustrations after designs by Woodward. And here it should be noted that our artist was in the habit of etching the drawings of
his less expert friends, such as Henry Bunbury, John Nixon, Henry Wigram, and George Woodward. Rowlandson’s style is so highly individualized, however, that the finished proofs resulting from such collaboration are often almost indistinguishable from work which is wholly the artist’s own. Pursuing his theme, the author of the above work writes:

As we have now arrived at that time of life when a youth is deemed fit to become in a great measure his own master, let him be removed as soon as possible from the further restraint of a public school, to the more relaxed discipline, and liberal regulations of the university. Supposing him then admitted a Gentleman or Fellow-Commoner of any fashionable College either at O—d or C—e, . . . I recommend him to make known his prerogatives as quickly as possible, by cutting Chapel, shirking lectures, and in short by breaking through every stupid rule, and institution which would check the natural effervescence . . . I must not forget also to notice two other necessary acquirements for a thoroughbred collegian, I mean the science of eating, a most delectable study for the monkish savages of culinary perfection, and that bluntness of address, and artless rusticy of manners, which when joined to the dignity of a university wig, create inexpressible admiration and awe. But to enumerate all the advantages of a college education, would fill a folio; I shall take my leave therefore of this subject with observing, that if a youth obtain but half of them, he will quit these seats of learning, and morality, like most of their accomplished students, “up to his elbows in mischief,” up to his nose in disease, and over head and ears in debt.

Rowlandson’s drawings of how students at Oxford and Cambridge occupied their time are quite in the spirit of the foregoing. In view of the fact that he never attended either university, his familiarity with the “curriculum” is truly astonishing. One early critic demurely points out the “pleasing manner in which he has characterized the architecture of the places mentioned”; but the spectator is not likely to be long detained by this consideration, worthy of attention though it be. One print is set against the imposing façade of Christ Church. Under the shadow of Great Tom carefree students are dancing and frolicking with a group of wanton town-girls, while two tutors look on and “grin with anger peculiar to the artist’s pencil.” Another scene shows a student, dressed in cap and gown, leaning from the window of his study to em-
brace a passing milkmaid. The comely wench seems nothing loath and is, in fact, so distracted by the youth's attentions as to have forgotten the two pails yoked across her shoulders, in one of which two children are riding, while a dog is helping himself to breakfast from the milk in the other. A tutor, hidden around the corner, is peering out at the proceedings with mingled indignation and envy. Nor were the dons themselves of a dignity to set an example for their pupils, if we may judge from other drawings, one of which is reproduced with this article under the title of "College Refreshment," although it is usually designated "The Man of Feeling."

Before concluding it remains to discuss yet another category of Rowlandson's artistic enterprise, his illustrations for books. After 1810 he devoted an increasing amount of his time to this type of work. He illustrated everything that came his way, not only the classics of the eighteenth century, but also sixpenny romances, song and jestbooks, and even treatises on palmistry and astrology. In his almost complete collection of books illustrated by Rowlandson Mr. Brown included examples of every kind; but the browser in the Princeton collection will naturally first turn to the plates which the artist etched for the writings of Samuel Butler, Fielding, Smollett, Goldsmith, Sterne, and Boswell.

Rowlandson's best work as an illustrator was done for Rudolph Ackermann, the well-known publisher in the Strand. One of the triumphs of this association was a handsome threelvolume work, entitled *The Microcosm of London, or London in Miniature* (1808). To this undertaking Rowlandson contributed 104 plates of scenes of historic interest in London; and these etchings are of the greater interest because he admitted a collaborator. The gifted draftsman, Augustus C. Pugin, otherwise remembered as one of the first to promote the recovered vogue for the Gothic, sketched in the architectural details, while Rowlandson confined himself to figure-drawing.

The *Dr. Syntax* series, on which Rowlandson's fame as an illustrator principally rests, involves a still more unusual collaboration. The story of it begins sometime late in 1808, when Rowlandson had just returned from one of his customary way-farings about England with a full sketchbook and a head empty of notions how this material could be utilized. From this point John Adolphus takes up in his life of Jack Bannister, the comedian, who was from first to last one of the artist's closest friends:

Dining at a tavern with him [Bannister] and a third person, Rowlandson was asked, "What are you about, Rolly?" "Why, nothing in particular," he said. "I think my inventive faculty has been somewhat dried up of late; I wish one of you would give me a hint." Being asked of what kind, he answered, "I feel in a humour to sketch a series where the object may be made ridiculous without much thinking. I have been making a tour in Cornwall and Devonshire with a friend, who, as I have made sketches on the coast for him, wishes me to introduce adventures at inn, and other comic incidents, in which he was the principal party. But what can I do for such a hero—a walking turtle—a gentleman weighing four-and-twenty stone—for such scenes he is quite out of the question. I want one of a totally different description."

"I have it!" said Bannister. "You must fancy a skin-and-bone hero, a pedantic old priap, in a shavel hat, with a pony, sketching-stools, and rattletraps, and place him in such scrapes as travellers frequently meet with—hedge alehouses, second and third rate inns, the gibbet, mad bull, and the like. Com!" he proceeded, warming with the subject, "give us a sheet of paper, and we'll strike out a few hints."

In this way Dr. Syntax came to life. It remained to procure the services of a writer who would supply a poetic accompaniment to Rowlandson's illustrations. The man to fill this bill was found in William Combe, now almost forgotten, but a very competent versifier in the Hudibrastic manner. Combe was 68 at this time and a regular inmate of the King's Bench Debtors' Prison. We have Combe's word for it that during the two years of the initial collaboration the artist and the poet had "no personal communication with or knowledge of each other." Rowlandson simply supplied two or three drawings a month, and Combe undertook to fashion a tale around them, without any way of knowing what was coming next. The work began to appear in 1809 under the title of *The Schoolmaster's Tour* in a monthly periodical named the *Poetical Magazine*, which Ackermann seems to have published chiefly for the
purpose of giving Rowlandson steady employment. The success of the work was such that with only slight variations it was brought out in book form in 1812 with the title changed to Dr. Syntax in Search of the Picturesque. Within the first year five editions were called for, and the demand continued so brisk that Rowlandson and Combe produced two further Tours of Dr. Syntax in 1820 and 1822. The popularity of this venture also inspired a number of much inferior imitations, some of which are represented in the Princeton collection.

Rowlandson was blessed with a rarely jocund disposition. There does not seem to have been much room for gloom in his scheme of things; but even that robust spirit was not proof against the distressing experiences of life. For one thing, his friends began to die off. In 1811 Gillray entered into the prison-house of insanity and lingered there until his death four years later. For another thing, Rowlandson, who had been a great gambler and had wasted his substance in youth, began to be harassed by fears of a poverty-stricken old age. Then, too, and this was most serious, sometimes it seemed that the ebullient imagination on which his pen waited was drying up. Thus, we recognize a new note of sombreness in his magnificent drawings of the Dance of Death which appeared in monthly instalments between 1814 and 1816, Combe once again contributing the text. Never has this perennial theme in art, the danse macabre, been handled with so much imaginative splendor, combined with brutal power, as in the series of etchings which Rowlandson executed. This performance may well stand as his masterpiece; in the present writer's opinion it is immeasurably superior both in conception and execution to Holbein's more famous treatment of the same material.

The Princeton collection includes fifteen proof outlines for the Dance of Death series. Anyone who has been familiar with Rowlandson's work only through the crudely tinted prints, which were struck off by Thomas Tegg of Cheapside, "price one shilling coloured," will discover with surprise, and perhaps even fail to recognize the greatly superior publications of such fastidious printers as Ackermann. It is worth while, therefore, to devote a few words to the intricate process which Rowlandson's better drawings underwent before they were released for sale. The artist first made a careful sketch, transferred the out-
line to copper (with acid or dry-point) and struck off a proof. On this proof he indicated the shading which was then etched onto the plate, sometimes by himself, more often by a professional highly trained in the business. A second proof was forthwith printed; and Rowlandson colored this with the delicate washes of which he so well understood the use. This proof served as a model to the skilled colorists who strove to make the tinting of each subsequent print resemble the original as nearly as possible. The workmen became so expert that often it is difficult to distinguish an etching from the preliminary drawing; and first editions of the books which Rowlandson illustrated are almost as eagerly sought after as works which were more directly the product of his own hand.

Basing one's opinion on the Princeton collection, what is Rowlandson's position among English artists? He must be ranked very high indeed. As an historical source his vast performance is priceless; and today when so much that the past has bequeathed to the present is perishing, it is very comforting for lovers of the Georgian Age to think that so long as a single Rowlandson survives all is not lost. As an artist Rowlandson's position is equally secure. His countrypeople have not always valued him as they should; but what can be imitated in his style has never been without influence. One thinks of Daumier, and that choicest and most impeccably correct master of the drawn line, Constantin Guys. Rowlandson's reading of life is more suspect. He set up for a satirist, but was he not entirely too facile in his acceptance of much that the satirist should find intolerable? To be sure, he castigates hypocrisy and affectation wherever he encounters it; but is he not sometimes a little heartless—in his mockery of sickness and bodily decrepitude, for instance? Where, it is asked, are there any traces in his work of Hogarth's large humanity, which expressed itself with such terrible anger only because its possessor was sick at heart over man's wanton abuse of his loftier privileges?

Let us admit at once that Rowlandson is incapable of raising his satire to the moral grandeur of Hogarth's preachments. But let us ask in return whether there is not discernible in him some attribute of genius, not equal perhaps to Hogarth's in greatness (for that we would not assert) but compensatory, at least, for defective sympathies or moral obtuseness, by what-
ever name it may be called. And for our purposes let us take a parting look at Rowlandson’s famous “Exhibition Stair Case.” As the pun sufficiently indicates, it was not nobly inspired. William Chambers had erected an inconveniently narrow and twisting staircase for Somerset House, in which the Royal Academy held its exhibitions. Rowlandson pictured what might happen when the steps became overcrowded with people passing up and down. The result is astounding. At first we are wonderstruck by the sheer virtuosity of the drawing, that great, towering, writhing pillar of entangled figures, a conception out of the later Rubens corrected by humor. For the scene is incredibly ludicrous, side-splittingly funny. Yet the realization is gradually born that in this treatment of the subject the artist has been rather ruthless, even a little inhuman. He has obviously no sympathy to spare for those painfully sprawling, big-buttocked women. One might even be pardoned for suspecting that he has identified himself with that elegant beau who stands to one side, leering, peering at the frenzied headlong rout below him in unashamed indulgence of the sort of animalism that makes men stand about street corners on windy days. But when we look longer, we begin to see still other things. In a niche stands a neo-classical nude, serene, poised, remote, yet with trace of mockery in her coy backward-glancing pose. Around the top of the stairwell runs a pseudo-Grecian frizee; there is movement there, too, but it is the calm, self-possessed haste of the golden age, how different from the cascade of disarranged drapery seething beneath. At last we begin to see what Rowlandson was driving at. Is not man, he seems to be asking us, too often the only incongruous element in his environment? And for those to whom life presents itself under this guise is there anything better than great gusts of laughter, expressive of the perfect sanity of a Rabelais, or a Pieter Breughel, or a Rowlandson? 

In September 1940 the very staircase which Rowlandson here depicted was destroyed by a bomb. One of the artist’s drawings carries this inscription: “Man is the only creature endowed with laughter, is he not also the only one who deserves to be laughed at?”

Little Magazines

BY LAWRENCE HEYL

The attractive variety, color, format and typography of many little magazines may partially explain their appeal to collectors. The Library has been gathering in these often fugitive publications because of their importance for future students of the American scene—literary, social, artistic. Mr. Heyl helps to clarify our understanding of these characteristics which permit such an endearing classification.

“CAVIARE to the general” was the legend carried by The Little Review, one of the most important of modern little magazines. This sentiment typifies the nature of the appeal made by the editors of little magazines in general; a small audience is always kept in mind; the material itself is restricted in interest. These, rather than the format, are the reasons for the designation, little magazines. They have been called “out of step magazines,” “dinkey magazines,” and, by John Eglinston, “The Remnants,” i.e. what is left over from material included in the better established publications.

Little magazines have appeared at various times and places during the past few centuries. Those under consideration here, coming in the years beginning with 1894, are further restricted to the ones published in this country, and to a few published abroad by Americans. There are three periods of ascendancy limited by the years 1894-98, 1912-29, and 1932 to the present. Coming in waves the magazines were bound to die after lives that were often short but always exciting. Multiplication of publications, overlapping of contributors, and in several cases unbusinesslike management were serious handicaps; these factors did not make it easier to cover expenses from receipts that came from an obviously restricted clientele. For several reasons the period of 1894-98, which Claude Bragdon has termed “The Purple Cow Period,” was the most interesting, but the second period was without doubt of more substantial character.

A thorough familiarity with American literature of the past forty-six years presupposes acquaintance with the little magazines of those years. Admittedly these publications display restlessness and experimentation; often they were tangible
results of the artistic ideals of small cliques; but the efforts were serious and the writers who had something to say, preferably in a new and unusual way, were enabled by these means to get their brain children into print. Unknown authors, unable to secure space in the older periodicals, often associated themselves for the purpose of publishing their own magazines. The aim was, however, to give each member the opportunity to express his or her individual point of view. The little magazine therefore provided means for getting valuable experience for writers later to become more widely known and to have writings appear in the larger periodicals or in book form. For example, some of Booth Tarkington's early work appeared in John-A-Dreamer: The Amateur Bohemian (Oakland, California) carried one of the earliest of Jack London's contributions. The works of several noted foreign authors also were introduced through similar publications.

To be sure, little magazines contain revolutionary material, whether in a literary or a social sense; but this is due mainly to the fact that the writers are generally quite young. In other words, the little magazines are to the better established ones what the early years of many people are to their mature ones. As H. L. Mencken put it: "The movement (the 1894-98 period) asserted itself as a revolt against the commonplace; it aimed to overthrow the staid respectability of the larger magazines and to open to younger writers opportunities to be heard before they had obtained recognition from the autocratic editors."

The period of 1894-98 was generally gayer than the later ones. During those years were published Gelett Burgess' The Lark, and Mlle New York. The really serious efforts came in the later periods. Then the writers withdrew to their ivory towers in order to write their prose or poetry exactly as they wanted to do it. Their work often seemed weak and trivial to outsiders, but to themselves and to their confères it formed part of some trend and was of importance, although all this may have been clear only to them. General acceptance of their work and their ideas was neither expected nor sought after; in fact the approval of a small group was preferred. Such limited approval supported convictions that the work was of a superior quality and served to increase the joy of creation.

The little magazines no longer seem so unusual or extreme as they once did. Perhaps we have gotten more used to them; perhaps the larger magazines are more receptive towards "new" things. It has been found that such material does make a fairly general appeal. It is also a fact, without doubt, that at present the little magazines have settled down; they seem to have gone as far as they can in the direction of experimentation. Another wave will start up at some time when new writers begin to feel that things should be said in some new way, in a way that will seem too revolutionary to the editors of larger magazines. To be sure, some are now appearing, but they hardly constitute a "movement"; they do not cause the stir that those in former years did.

Several lists and bibliographies of little magazines have been compiled but not one is satisfactory or comprehensive: a comprehensive bibliography would be of great value to collectors and librarians. It must be admitted that the compilation of such a bibliography would entail the inclusion of many points that are exceedingly difficult to determine. A very large proportion of little magazines had checkered careers, often their editors more so, and this frequently resulted in various places of publication; at times dates of issue were passed over; sometimes the volume numbering was upset; and finally the last number appeared without any indication of that fact. Where printers in small towns were involved, several now out of business, and none of the editorial board members now surviving, definite proof as to what constitutes a complete file is often lacking.

In order to put up this brief survey of little magazines a few typical publications will be covered in some detail. These have been selected for their variety and because they form a group which gives a clear idea of what little magazines may be like.

The Chop-Book, a semi-monthly which began to appear May 15, 1894, attained almost instantaneous success and without doubt led to the launching of several other little magazines that were started during the period which followed. The Chop-Book was first planned as a prospectus for publications to be issued by Stone & Kimball, under whose imprint it began to appear. The great success that it achieved caused develop-
ment into a periodical of more substantial character. The last number appeared July 15, 1898, at which time it was merged with The Dial in Chicago.

Several factors helped to make The Chap-Book successful. It represented a fresh point of view in the literary scene of the time, although it was not radical; it contained contributions by distinguished writers, American and foreign; the format was a joy to the eye. Caslon type was employed and the arrangement of the cover was dignified, with the initials and table of contents printed in red.

The general tone of The Chap-Book was one of quality and innovation, all of which was the result of a remarkable list of contributors, including Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Max Beerbohm, George W. Cable, Ralph Adams Cram, Stephen Crane, John Davidson, Eugene Field, Hamlin Garland, Edmund Gosse, Thomas Hardy, Henry James, Stephane Mallarme, William Vaughn Moody, Robert Louis Stevenson, H.G. Wells and William Butler Yeats. There were illustrations by Aubrey Beardsley, Charles Dana Gibson, and John Sloan, among others. Bliss Carman assisted in editing for the first two months.

Mlle New York was published in New York as a fortnightly from August 1895 to January 1899. There were no issues between January 1896 and November 1898. Under the editorship of James G. Huneker and Vance Thompson (Princeton, Class of 1883) it carried on sharp criticism of the public taste. In the foreword to the first number is the following blunt statement: "Mlle New York is not concerned with the public. Her only ambition is to disintegrate some small portion of the public into its original component parts—the aristocracies of birth, wit, learning and art, and the joyously vulgar mob." Because of the fact that Mlle New York was the most international of the little magazines of its period, its contribution to American literature was small. It did introduce to America Knut Hamsun, Maeterlinck, Ibsen, Strindberg, and Verlaine. It showed great freedom in criticism, was unconventional, and helped to increase the popularity of little magazines. Mlle New York was naturally not on the side of Richard Watson Gilder and William Dean Howells. The early literary sketches and musical criticisms by Huneker are of interest.

The gayest little magazine of the period was The Lark, brought out by Gelett Burgess, with help from Yone Noguchi, Ernest Peixotto and Carolyn Wells. It appeared at San Francisco from May 1895 to May 1897. The last issue was entitled The Epi-Lark. Printed on a Chinese bamboo paper, it is the most famous of all the Bohemian magazines, and, of course, Burgess' famous quatrain, "The Purple Cow," was first printed in The Lark.

I NEVER SAW A PURPLE COW, I NEVER HOPE TO SEE ONE

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But I CAN TELL YOU ANYHOW I'D RATHER SEE THAN BE ONE

Passing on to the later publications we come to The Little Review, and This Quarter. These are undoubtedly the outstanding magazines in the 1912-29 group. The Little Review was first published in 1914 at Chicago, later, New York, and finally, Paris, where it expired in 1929. Contributions were made by Sherwood Anderson, Ezra Pound, Hart Crane, and Maxwell Bodenheim. Several portions of James Joyce's Ulysses first appeared there, and also poems of T.S. Eliot. There were articles on Imagists and Dadaists. Ulysses caused conflict with the United States Post Office authorities, and various issues were suppressed. This Quarter, begun at Paris in 1925, contained writings by Gertrude Stein, Ernest Hem-
ingway, Kay Boyle, Ezra Pound, James Joyce, Carl Sandburg, James T. Farrell, Allen Tate, c. e. cummings, Joseph Wood Krutch, Paul Valery, H. C. Bates and John Cournos. There were occasional special supplements: among others an illustrated one on Braque and one with music by Antheil.

*Broom—An International Magazine of the Arts* published by Americans in Italy, first saw the light of day at Rome in November 1921. Later it was published at Berlin and finally died of censorship in New York in 1923. This is an interesting publication and its roster of contributors was no mean one. There were articles and poems by Conrad Aiken, James Oppenheim, Amy Lowell, Waido Frank, Gordon Craig, Edgar Lee Masters, Paul Morand, Paul Claudel and Gertrude Stein. Some material by Dostoievsky, formerly unpublished, was included.

Several more little magazines deserve places here, including *Sinister* which ran for eight issues, published at Vienna, then Berlin, later New York, with material by Matthew Josephson, Hart Crane and Malcolm Cowley; *transition*, with contributions by William Carlos Williams, c. e. cummings, Gertrude Stein and James Joyce; and *Exile* edited by Ezra Pound with contributions from *transition* writers.

The Princeton Library contains a fairly representative collection of little magazines. Selecting a few titles at random you find represented *Amis*, *Chips*, *Clack Book*, *Contempo*, *Contact*, *Direction*, *East and West*, *Echo*, *Four o'clock*, *Goose Quill*, *Impressions*, *Latin Quarterly*, *Lotus*, *Manuscripts*, *Mosaic*, *New Quarterly*, *New Review*, *New Talent*, *Oasis*, *Others*, *Pageant*, *Pierrot*, *Rainbow*, *Saturday Night Lantern*, *Scope*, *Space*, *Trend*, *Transatlantic*, *Whims*, as well as the titles discussed above. Each of these is represented by one or more issues—and the Library will be happy to receive from interested Friends any numbers which may help to complete the sets.

**FORTY MERCER STREET**

**BY LAWRENCE THOMPSON**

It is satisfying to report that Mr. Adler's new quarters on Mercer Street assimilated fourteen tons of books, prints, paintings, records and equipment in little more than a month; that the considerable campus interest which began to grow before the house was in order has increased steadily since the day of opening. So many questions have been asked concerning the extent and purpose of this experiment which the Friends have encouraged Mr. Adler to undertake, that it seemed fitting to give some specific picture, specific answers.

**THURSDAY, October 17**, was a very important day in the history of the Princeton University Library. At four o'clock on that day, the Friends of the Library formally opened to the University community the printing collection of Mr. Elmer Adler at 40 Mercer Street. The occasion was an auspicious and distinguished beginning of an experiment; it was also the successful fulfillment of the most ambitious project yet undertaken by the organized Friends. Now that the experiment is under way, all its well-wishers are agreed that a warm and congratulatory word of thanks should be spoken to the chairman, Mr. Robert Creasell, whose imagination and industriousness aroused the support of the Friends, the University, and the Princeton University Press.

Those who entered 40 Mercer Street on the afternoon of the opening expressed considerable delight and surprise to find that Mr. Adler had been able to arrange his 8,000 books and 4,000 prints so attractively in a dwelling house which still retained its hundred-year-old dignity, restraint and charm after digesting such a large collection. The house gave the intended appearance of being at once a showpiece and a workshop: an artistically decorated home and a reference library for study and research. As the door was opened, the visitor was permitted to step into a spacious hallway, with a graceful staircase at the far end. Hall and staircase had been transformed into a gallery of paintings, drawings, etchings, lithographs, and wood engravings representing the media and techniques of artists during the past three centuries. On the left, the visitor found a high-ceiling room, beautifully proportioned, and attractively illuminated with indirect lighting.
The first piece to catch the eye was a tall mahogany book-case, delicate in its general appearance, with an imposing array of fifteenth century books and other rarities visible through the thinly leaded glass of the locked doors. Members of the library staff were on hand in this room to greet the guests and introduce them to Mr. Adler. Those who were curious to look behind the leaded glass were shown some of Mr. Adler's choice possessions: books printed by Aldus, Jenson, Schoeffer, Pynson, Wynken de Worde and many others; books printed from engraved plates; books illustrated by the woodcutters from Holbein and Durer to Bewick; just a few samples to whet the appetite. Those who were content to look around the room soon discovered more treasures in the only exhibition case, a tall glass-walled oblong with glass shelves. Therein stood a few objects well chosen to open doors on numerous mysteries of the printing and illuminating art: vellum manuscripts in fifteenth century bindings, leaves from a block book, incunabula adorned with burnished gold, rubrications, miniatures, wood cuts, colors printed or stencilled, books with early examples of roman and gothic type printed on hand made rag paper still crisp and white after nearly five hundred years. Along the walls of the room were low units of bookcases crowded with more examples of the printers' art,—folios, quarto's, octavo's which ranged in time and style from the "Nuremberg Chronicle" and the "Baskerville Vergil" to the Works of Durer's patron Pirckheimer or the Gutenberg Bible. Above the low cases were temporary exhibits in temporary frames—single leaves of early books and manuscripts: here a highly illuminated vellum page from a fifteenth century folio misal, there a leaf from the forty-two line Bible beside a leaf (almost duplicate in spirit and general appearance) from a manuscript Bible which might well have inspired Gutenberg.

One might have been tempted to stay longer save for the attractive vista of two rooms beyond, the first lined on two sides with high cases loaded with books. In one of these cases, the extensive reference library of books about books, bibliographies, histories of printing, of typography, of paper-making, of writing, of binding. In the other case, a section devoted to reference books concerning the technique and history of graphic processes—etching, wood engraving, lithography; another section devoted to examples of book illustration from the sixteenth century to the present.

Beyond this, the print room with walls for the display of prints and below the prints on display the doors of files which house scores of black boxes packed with a varied wealth of examples which will afford material for a constantly changing series of print exhibitions. Temporarily transformed into a tea-room, the print room caught on its white walls the yellow autumn sunlight which came through French doors opening on the brick terrace and, beyond, a first harvest of colored maple leaves on the green lawn.

This was just a beginning. Briefly the rest may be suggested only. Upstairs, a room devoted to private presses and examples of work done by the best English and American typographers—Updike, Bruce Rogers, Goudy—in profuse abundance, from heavy volumes to long-treasured fugitive pieces, pamphlets, broadsides. Here, after scanning shelves lined with samples from the Nonesuch, Golden Cockerel, Ashendene, Grabhorn, and other presses, one may finally locate at the further end of the room the books of Mr. Adler's own Pynson Printers and a complete run of the Colophon modestly tucked away. And in an adjoining room, units of shelves are devoted to the work of modern presses in France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Czechoslovakia. There also are units devoted to more technical aspects of printing: photomechanical processes, color printing, layout, type design; or to related fields such as book-binding and the history of paper making. Special collections hide in out-of-the-way corners and closets bulge with overflow material related to the main collections. Downstairs, in the basement, is the "Friends Room," a cozy lounge with a fireplace, a divan, and (for the first time) ash trays. Somehow the atmosphere of the other rooms in the house is sufficiently saturated with the dignity and importance of the book so that one is inclined to save his smoking for this fireplace room, even as Mr. Adler intended. But the basement has still other rooms, storerooms lined with boxes which contain the complete records of Pynson Printers: metal filing cases with correspondence from authors, printers, designers, illustrators, patrons, customers; accounts of expenditures and receipts for
jobs undertaken and completed, proof sheets, manuscripts, metal cuts, layout designs. In time, this well-kept record will increase in value for the student and historian of printing in the first half of the twentieth century; for that reason it is being kept with care.

Such a tastefully distributed array offers abundant material for undertaking the experiment intended by the Friends of the Library. It would be difficult for a student to walk the rooms of 40 Mercer Street without having his curiosity stimulated, his desire increased to push back the horizons of his own knowledge by asking questions and by exploring lines which arouse his interest. But the experiment is intended to do more than expose the Princeton undergraduates to the attractions of browsing. Small groups of six or eight men have been organized to pursue some particular subject of investigation, informally, with Mr. Adler’s teaching and guidance. These informal courses are conducted in weekly sessions which will meet only for a period of six weeks; then new groups will be formed to explore different subjects. One group may investigate the history of the book, its structure and its art, while another group may study book illustration, and still another group may be gathering at another time to form a print club or a club of book collectors. From time to time, speakers will be brought in from outside—artists, typographers, printers, bibliophiles—to give assistance in the experiment of stimulating undergraduate interest in the history of the book and related graphic arts. If such a program arouses greater appreciation, understanding, interest in collecting, interest in further study, the experiment will prove to be a success.

The cultural returns from such an experiment can never be determined, can never be measured. Students who learn to appreciate works of art in any form may be here taught by Mr. Adler’s tasteful example, the satisfaction which comes from being surrounded with favorite books and prints, selected with an ever-growing discrimination. And these students will inevitably include a few who may continue the noble tradition of public-spirited collectors who have left monuments. If the days are past when huge private collections of paintings, prints and books may be amassed, the days are not past when an enthusiastic collector may use his intelligence and discrimination to add to our knowledge by making available collections which throw new light on the endlessly varied phases of cultural history—as does, for instance, the important library on the Opening of the West, which has been gathered with pleasure and wisdom by Mr. and Mrs. Philip A. Rollins. Think of units around which the Princeton University Library has grown and recall just a few of the men whose love of accumulating books in their favorite fields has enriched our own heritage—from Governor Jonathan Belcher and President Witherspoon to Professor Allan Marquand and Junius Morgan. The future potentialities of 40 Mercer Street are unpredictable, but exciting.

Mr. Adler is well qualified to communicate his own enthusiasm and knowledge. For eighteen years he has been a creator of fine books and has won well deserved recognition for his good taste, high standards, and ability to achieve lasting symbols of his talent. But back of those eighteen years were just as many years devoted to the development of high standards and good taste. As a very young man in Rochester, New York, he began to collect modestly and has continued ever since. He has passed through successive stages of collecting, without losing his interest in any of the earlier stages which included such miscellaneous pursuits as the gathering of Japanese prints, occasional pieces of fine furniture, a miscellaneous assortment of bells, and a good library of books depicting the life and art of Whistler. His collecting interests began to take a fixed direction when he added books which he liked because they were well printed. William Morris and his Kelmscott Press may have been at fault in many ways, but Morris influenced Mr. Adler and many others to look back seriously to the noble examples of printing in the fifteenth century. And during three trips abroad Mr. Adler has picked up a number of examples of well printed books which remain prized possessions today. His interest in the history of printing taught him of the rise and fall of the art; led him to recognize the virtue and integrity of new masters such as Bruce Rogers. While still a young man in Rochester, Mr. Adler arranged an elaborate exhibition of finely printed books in an art museum there and compiled a valuable catalogue to explain the nature
of the display. The direction of his mind had been set, and his knowledge was that of the connoisseur.

When Mr. Adler helped to establish Pynson Printers in New York in 1922, the organization was no mere imitation of romantic ideas fostered by the Kelmscott Press or of the high practical common sense of men like Updike and Rogers. High standards and idealism were foundation stones which the new firm shared in common with these predecessors, but on this foundation was erected an individualistic and independent superstructure which sounds today almost too quixotic. The announcement of the new firm read, in part, as follows:

From the twentieth of March, 1922, the Pynson Printers are at your service for the planning and production of all printing in which quality is the first consideration. We have founded our organization on the belief that the printer should be primarily an artist—a designer and a creator rather than a mere manufacturer. Toward this end, we have assembled a group whose several abilities and varied experience cover every phase of the art and business of printing.

Our shop is adequately equipped with presses and a careful selection of type faces. ... But we consider this equipment of value only as it serves our ability as designers and creators. And to supplement our own effort we have available in our library the example of the master printers of five centuries.

We do no work in which quality must be sacrificed to exigencies of time or cost. On the other hand, we will demonstrate that promptness and economy are not incompatible with high standards of workmanship, and that good printing depends on beauty and effectiveness of design, on conscientious craftsmanship, rather than on expensive materials or elaborated processes. We believe that the practice of competitive bidding encourages the awarding of contracts to the bidder most willing to sacrifice quality to cost. Consequently we will have no part in this system. However, we will always be ready to prepare, on order, plans and layouts to meet a definite appropriation.

Such a program required courage and a willingness to accept for a time the need for sailing close to the wind. Apparently the task was too difficult for some of the founders, for within a year the only remaining subscriber to the manifesto, the sole active director in the Pynson Printers office, was Elmer Adler. And for nearly eighteen years more he remained true to his standards, without compromise. Under the circum-
stances, he might have given up. But he was willing to make sacrifices for his ideals until gradually his ideals produced results which attracted a discriminating clientele. Alfred A. Knopf was just beginning to engage distinguished printers for his books, and before long some of his best publications bore the device of Pynson Printers. The reputation of the firm had spread enough to win an invitation to take space in the New York Times Annex, when that building was constructed and furnished by the Times executives with specialists in the allied graphic processes. At once Mr. Adler built outside his printing rooms a very attractive library for his collection of books on the history of printing, and beyond this charming reception room, an alcove for constantly changing exhibitions. His printing plant itself was considered a model of order and economy. Friends began to bring strangers to view this wonder of idealism in the center of time-crazy New York. Attracted by Mr. Adler's painstaking accuracy and precision, T. M. Cleland brought Rockwell Kent to the Press, and the resulting friendship led to collaboration. Thereafter, the familiar Kent wood engravings were largely pulled by Pynson Printers and several books containing Kent illustrations were printed there. The Rockwell Kent Candeo, a strikingly successful combination of illustrator-typographer talent, was perhaps the most influential product of this collaboration.

Equally interesting but more familiar is the history of The Colophon, projected and designed by Mr. Adler in 1928, at the suggestion of the collector-bibliophile Vrest Orton. It was again a brave and unique experiment, quite distinct from anything which had been undertaken before. Since each article was printed separately by a different printer, The Colophon became a kind of typographical anthology; a cross section of contemporary American printing styles. And in the first volume, four signatures were printed in England. The discontinuance of The Colophon, which occurred in February, 1940 (four months after the Friends had begun negotiations with Mr. Adler) caused Philip Brooks to mourn the loss in eloquent phrases: "After nine years of service to bibliophiles The Colophon makes its exit with banners flying in a beautifully illustrated issue of 118 unnumbered pages. ... Though The
Colophon died young, it was a lusty, gay-spirited child, and it remained in good health to the very end."

Those of us who have admired the adventurous spirit with which Mr. Adler has embarked on a variety of uncharted seas, in the past, feel confident that his voyage to Princeton is the beginning of another equally successful saga. A man of decided principles, and of unflinching loyalty to those principles, he will certainly make his influence felt far beyond the range of his splendid printing collection. His accomplishment is a symbol of a way of life, a way in which experience may be endowed with vital, artistic, and valid meaning. And such a goal is a worthy objective to set up before apprentices in any walk of life.

Biblia

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF
THE FRIENDS
OF THE PRINCETON LIBRARY
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The Chronicle is now in its second volume, and with increased age has come a modicum of financial stability. Since June our list of paid subscriptions has more than doubled: to date there are 94 such subscriptions. This slow but steady growth of our list indicates that the Chronicle is receiving ever increasing recognition as a periodical of real importance. It is to be hoped that eventually the Chronicle will not have to be financed largely by means of larger contributions from some of the Friends.

Long and most favorable reviews of the first volume of the Chronicle appeared in The New York Herald-Tribune supplement "Books" on August 11, 1940 and in The New York Times "Book Review" on September 15, 1940. The first was by Lawrence C. Wroth, the second by Philip Brooks.

COLLECTION ON ITALIAN FOLK LORE

The collection on Italian Folk Lore which was referred to in the Chronicle of February, 1940, reached the Library last July. There are, in addition to several important periodicals, hundreds of books and pamphlets, many of these formerly the property of the celebrated scholar Pirrè. The fact that he had considered them worthy of inclusion in his own library is sig-
significant. The purchase of the collection was financed almost entirely out of money contributed to the Emergency Fund last year.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Since the June issue of the Chronicle, contributions have been received from these Friends, to whom we repeat our thanks:

William B. Bamford '00 for books on housing.
James Boyd '10 for the copy of Charlevoix, listed as a desideratum in the Chronicle of April, 1940.
C. Vincent Armstrong '14 together with J. Harlin O'Connell '14 for the copy of Thompson, also listed in the Chronicle of April, 1940.
John H. Scheide '96 for a New England Bible Box, ca. 1690, from Concord, Mass.; also a volume of Rousseau, once the property of Philip Freneau, class of 1771, containing annotations in Freneau's hand.

The Emergency Fund has been enriched by contributions from F. Wallis Armstrong, Jr. '31, Howard Froelick '15, Louis D. Froelick '06, Albert C. Hencken '93. These contributions total $570.72.

GIFTS

Several Friends have presented books, pamphlets, and autograph material since last June and again we express our gratitude. We should like to list all in detail but, regrettably, lack of sufficient space prevents our so doing. These are a few: from Thomas H. English '18 additions to the collection on the Southern States; from James Thayer Gerould a collection of books on literature, history and politics; from Archibald A. Gulick '97 photostatic copies of two letters from Isaac Pierson, class of 1789, dated December 3, 1814 and March 22, 1828; from Frank J. Mather, Jr. nine volumes of special interest because of their illustrations; from Dr. James A. Miller '93 Metropolitan Museum of Art, Egyptian Expedition, Robb de Peyster Memorial Series, 4 volumes; from L. Frederic Pease '95 two hundred eighty pieces of sheet music; from Reuben J. Ross '13 collection of material related to the development of the automobile, together with pamphlets on American history; from John H. Scheide '96 an autograph letter signed by Samuel Stunhope Smith, dated August 11, 1807; and from Mrs. Willard Thorp seventeen letters from Agnes Repplier together with letters and pieces related to American history, drama and literature.

Gifts were also received during the past four months from the following Friends:


LITTLE MAGAZINES

In this same issue reference is made to the fact that the Princeton Library contains broken files of several little magazines, of which only some titles are listed. Odd number of publications of this type are to be found in several homes. The Library will be greatly indebted to Friends who will send in any numbers or volumes that can be spared.

REPORT OF THE LIBRARIAN

The report covering the activities of the Library for the year ended last June 30 has been mailed to all Friends.
In his rich memoirs, entitled *Across the Busy Years*, Nicholas Murray Butler (bom. 1902), tells of his Princeton contacts, including, strangely enough, his participation in a Princeton geological expedition in 1886. This expedition, led part of the summer by William Berryman Scott, consisted largely of Princetonians. Later, President Butler was a member of the "Gin Mill Club," a New York lunch club. To this also belonged Moses Taylor Pyne, Francis Speir, Jr., Henry Fairfield Osborn, and Andrew Fleming West. And the purpose of this paragraph is to record the printing of part of one of Dean West's poems on pages 419 and 420 of volume two of this autobiography. This poem was entitled, 'Boston,' which he described as "An Atrocity in Three Cantos." We append a few lines:

Soon after our young planet on its course through space was twirled
There appeared the Adams family as the oldest in the world.
Everything was fixed to suit them, everything put up their sleeve,
And for Adams express company there was furnished lovely Eve.
Everything made way before them, and if there was need to weave
Fig leaves for a coat for Adam, then the fig trees had to leave.

We wonder how many know that little collection *Stray Verses*,
by Dean West (Princeton University Press, 1931), with its pleasant mixture of nonsense and verse of great beauty. But then—Dean West's prose is often hard to distinguish from poetry. An afterthought—Ernest Poole ('02) in his *The Bridge*, an autobiography, says kind things of Dean West in the chapter on the author's Princeton days. We wonder, incidentally, how he happened to misspell President Patton's name!

While on new Princeton books—Abraham Flexner's autobiography *I Remember*, just published by Simon and Schuster, in his chapter on the Institute for Advanced Study, mentions the University and some of its professors, and their part in the fulfillment of his educational dreams. Then, too, in *Richard Halliburton; His Story of His Life's Adventure, as Told in his letters to his Father and Mother* (Bobbs-Merrill, 1940) there is a series of his letters as undergraduate. Readers will recall that upon his death, it was found that he had remembered the University and Library.
Before us is a copy of The Printed Writings of Jonathan Edwards, 1703-1758, A Bibliography, by Thomas H. Johnson (Princeton University Press). Dr. Johnson, of the English Department at Lawrenceville, and a recognized authority on early American literature, "took over" this task, when Dr. James Thayer Gerould's health prevented him completing the work he had begun. We believe this compendium will stand the most severe test on its accuracy of description and complete inclusion. The Press, too, has done a beautiful piece of work, and is especially to be complimented when one considers pages of bibliographical descriptions are not in themselves attractive. It is, by the way, labelled "Princeton University Library Publication." Dr. Johnson consulted all the Edwards collections of any importance, and reports that Princeton's collection is one of the best. We are always happy to add to it. Only the other day some one presented us with The History of Redemption in Arabic.

Those who have followed the Thomas J. Wise episode, will want to read in the Southwest Review for July of this year, an article by Fannie Ratchford, Librarian of the magnificent Wrenn Collection at the University of Texas, and as great an authority on the Wise forgeries as there is. Especially fascinating to us, however, is her story of the superb collection of first editions of English and American authors, gathered by John Henry Wrenn, and its presentation to the University of Texas when that institution was, as Miss Ratchford says, "a campus of shacks." Incidentally, Princeton has a copy of the five volume catalog of this collection. The result of the bold acquisition was that other famous collections were attracted to the same Library, and suitable housing was necessary—in short, to quote Miss Ratchford again, "The Wrenn Library proved, indeed... the proverbial parlor lamp in opening the eyes of the state to the fact that its University deserved to be in Dr. [R. H.] Griffith's forward-looking words, 'as good as the best.'"