

come infant planarians that are exact smaller copies of the parents, save that they do not possess the parents' sexual organs. In the parents themselves the sexual apparatus and activity are only a passing phase. By mid-summer there is no more mating and egg-laying. Sexuality has dwindled and disappeared, and the planarian has entered its asexual cycle. It continues to reproduce itself; but it accomplishes this by dividing its own body, and becoming, quite literally, two other planarians. The process of fission starts as a narrowing of the planarian's body just behind the pharynx. This "waist" grows narrower and narrower, until only a strand of tissue connects what were formerly the planarian's anterior and posterior ends. The connective strand severs; and what was a flatworm is become two of them, each of which will grow into a mature organism and pursue its own process of feeding, breeding, egg-laying and self-division. A planarian has no blood, no arteries,

to be injured by severance. It is equally "alive" in all its parts. A fragment of it, broken off by accident or enemy, can regenerate a whole new self.

When a planarian dies, it is hard to think that there has occurred the termination of a life. For a planarian can scarcely be said to have, in any sense of the word that we can understand, an identity. It has not a terminal boundary of being. It is less an individuality than a process: not an entity but simply a participance in the flow of occurrence. True, a kind of knowing infects the planarian. (Compound it, and it is what sends the geese winging south or north; compound it again, and it tells the fox the tricks of doubling on the trail.) But a planarian, dying, does not know it is dying. It does not know that it has ever lived.

By only a slightly awry application of a celebrated philosophical principle, we may say that it has never been at all.



HALLMARK

BY AMANDA BENJAMIN HALL

SOME certain souls there are that lack
 The high glaze of renown,
 And yet it is as though they bore
 The hallmark, or the crown

And crossed-swords imprint; sensing thus
 The pattern and the grain,
 Instinctively we recognize
 The ware as porcelain.

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The Wily One

BY FRANCIS HACKETT

NEW England is really a nation in itself. Strangers who invade it may not be taken to its broad bosom immediately; there is a certain reticence and reserve about these native New Englanders, a stiff-necked righteousness in some of them, and a very positive detestation about giving themselves away or betraying their sentiment. Once the foreigner begins to know the shy birds, however, he discovers how precious it is to be admitted to their intimacy, and he values them especially for qualities of heart, the very thing in which he first supposed them to be lacking. They may not like to be told so, reposing as they do at their happiest in their own kind of eighteenth century villages, and among their pleasant folding hills, but they are by no means markedly dissimilar to their English forebears. Poets like Robert Frost walked right into English recognition, just as A. E. Housman could very appropriately roost in the foliage of the *Atlantic Monthly*.

But for a deeper knowledge of these Early Americans, especially in their political activity, and even more in their activity as Republicans, it is not

enough to look at their poker faces and think of the warm hearts behind them. You must go to an expert — an expert like Henry Adams. Many New Englanders shudder at his name, since Henry Adams does give the show away, but if you wish to peer into the relation of Massachusetts with the nation, particularly with Capitol Hill, and to estimate what all this has to do with civilization as an ultimate, you ignore at your peril *The Education of Henry Adams* — unless, of course, you prefer to skate around on the frozen slush which is now provided by innumerable prophets, wise guys, tipsters, columnists and commentators. These “experts” can flood any arena with a plausible surface on which you can cut figures and waltz in circles to your heart’s content, but the whole thing is a show on ice, and purely for entertainment. If you wish to get down to earth, you must pay a considerable price for it. But unless the rôle of Republican New England is understood, our national and international politics remain enigmatic.

One of the instructive conclusions made by Henry Adams in regard to Capitol Hill and the New Englanders