

a plane to warn his fellow-actives of the enemy's approach.

The group loyalties of college folk get expressed in odes of sentiment and corny humor to fraternities and sororities, and to the alma mater. Serious songs of love and devotion are used to serenade the newly pinned coed, or to entertain a visiting sorority. They crawl with romantic clichés. But the undergrad has no scruples about parodying himself, and will compose such a slurring "Ode by a Sigma Chi" as this:

The girl of my dreams has bobbed her hair
And dyed it a fiery red.

She drinks, she smokes, and she tells dirty jokes,

She hasn't a brain in her head.

The girl of my dreams is a cigarette fiend,
She drinks more booze than I.

But the girl of my dreams is not what she seems,

She's the sweetheart of six other guys.

One must add to the stories and songs such other folk matter as the slang of the campus, and the festivals and customs that perforate college life. The enterprising folklorist doesn't need to journey into the back hills to scoop up tradition. He can set up his recording machine in the smokeshop or the college grill.

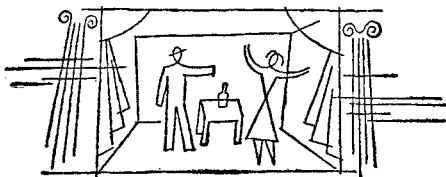
JUST BEFORE DAYLIGHT

BY ROBERT HILLYER

Just before daylight, when our dreams whirl round
Like bubbles flickering before they burst,
Sweet is our waking, although slowly nursed
Back to the real world by sight and sound.
In such a dream I gained what from the first
I had desired: the prisoner unbound,
Leaping to freedom and delight, yet found
New bonds of shyness in joys unrehearsed.
I dreamed the dreadful aftermath. You lay
Breathless and crumpled; yet with courteous grace,
Guessing the darker void of my dismay,
You spoke no word of what had taken place,
But lightly with one finger touched my face,
Then rose, and with a half-smile, stole away.

THE THEATRE

by *GEORGE JEAN NATHAN*



CLINICAL NOTES

Hollywood. What exactly is it about Hollywood that takes such severe toll of the majority of the writers who go out there? Most of the reasons have already been set down by various analysts, all of them in their way convincing. But I think there is another that is usually overlooked and that is that most of the writers who respond to the lure of the moving pictures are inferior men to begin with and are accordingly unable to preserve what small independence and measure of quality they may conceivably possess. It is ridiculous to suppose that any first-rate man and first-rate writer would inevitably be befouled by Hollywood, save he were to devote himself to it over a considerable period. But first-rate men and first-rate writers are not in their very natures tempted by the greasy riches that the place offers and have preferred to remain this side of that bogus paradise. It has been and is the intrinsically cheap boys who have fallen for the mirage and who subse-

quently have been lost in trying to get out of the desert wastes.

There is, too, I think, a second reason. Even the most upright of writers can not for long immerse himself in a pulp mill without having some of the pulp cling to him. This is every bit as true of New York or anywhere else as it is of Hollywood, yet Hollywood is always singled out as the sole culprit. A man can no more, even deliberately and with tongue in cheek, too long write trash for money and not be polluted, however strong he may be, than he can sleep in a contagious disease ward and not be infected. There may be miraculous exceptions, but they remain exceptions. A writer in need of funds may undertake a low writing job to get them. He may even undertake two such jobs. But if he undertakes three, and in quick succession, he is on the road to oblivion, since, like narcotics, three are bound to lead to four, four to five, and so on.

Hollywood is the worst of the dope peddlers because it sells its opium under a false label. Its customers pull at the pipe in the belief that it is harm-