

# the Phoenix Nest

## THE CRITIC'S CROWN

THERE'S wormwood in the critic's cup.

He wears a thornset crown,  
Who if he mean to write Keats up  
Thinks he must write Pope down.

This truth the constant Muse repeats,  
Which gives her faith and hope,  
That if there's poetry in Keats  
There's poetry in Pope.

In deeps few lenses penetrate  
She seeks the flaming choirs,  
Where suns uncounted radiate  
Their antithetic fires.

Think not with any spectroscope  
To gauge such lights and heats.  
Under the stars there's room for Pope  
As there is room for Keats.

What if some Giant blazes red,  
What if a Dwarf burns white,  
That splendor must not be gainsaid  
That hangs aloft the night

It's idiotic to proclaim,  
Imbecile to declare,  
That if I worship Algol's flame  
I must ignore Altair.

### FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 270

*A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 270 will be found in the next issue.*

PRLV VB APBQWPD QERP VB

JRWNR GP BKKBHVPWVO,

VER UBJV WUKBHVGPV

VEWPD WP CWTR WJ VB

APBQ QERP VB TBHRDB GP

GSMGPVGDR.

X. SWJHGRCW

**Answer to Literary Crypt No. 269**

Logic is nothing more than a knowledge of words.

CHARLES LAMB.

And so, insensitive to power,  
Feebly the critic mourns,  
For the wormwood in his cup is sour  
And he is crowned with thorns.

By which I don't imply at all,  
For I am no blasphemer,  
That any critic great or small  
Resembles our Redeemer.

LEONARD BACON.

\* \* \*

I am glad to print the following  
from Lambert Fairchild, chairman of  
the Committee for Republican Integrity,  
of Broadway, New York City:

What do you mean—remember  
"Short Sixes," "to be read while  
the candle burns"? To say nothing  
of "The Story of a New York  
House." [Yes, O yes!: Ed.]

"Hector" who littered! And Colonel Brereton, kept in line with his mammy's slipper! I can even remember the Colonel's speech on the contractor's overcharge—"Does he measure it off; does he even pace it off with those corkscrew laigs he's tryin' to hide under his chair? No. He says, 'I'm Finnegan, and this here's forty yards,' and off he sashays, wonderin' where Finnegan'll fetch up to when he walks off the topmost peak of human omniscience." You ought to get a thousand letters like this—I'm not so damned old.

P.S. As soon as I can find out what a chant-royal is, I'll write you a bang-up chant-royal. Villanelles and rhyme royales are good fun too.

\* \* \*

### QUIET!

"Quiet, my children, your Daddy is reading."

"Hush now, Dad's deep in a case he is pleading."

That's how the whispers go all round our house.

Mother is guarding the peace of her spouse.

Junior and Sis take a furlough from quarreling.

Kitty and Fido turn mute in their snarling.

Both the canaries stop short in their cheeping—

Their lord and master is peacefully sleeping.

Telephone, doorbell, the calm do not shatter.

Cook in the kitchen stops banging a platter.

Even the steam heat valves cease all their rapping—

Daddy, the man of the house, is still napping.

No iceman cometh, no mailman, nor grocer.

No plumber looks at the pipes and says, "No sir."

Hot water faucets decide to stop dripping—

Daddy is wrapt in a mystery gripping.

Ah, but let Mother seek quiet seclusion

For a few minutes quite free from intrusion.

Crash! There goes silence in noises, disruptable—

Mother is one of the Sex Interruptible.  
JOSEPHINE MILLS REIS.

\* \* \*

There seems still to be time to enter two contests held by Albert Ralph Korn, one for a hundred dollars for the best poem submitted, the other for an essay not exceeding 750 words on "The Advantages of Clarity in Poetry." All entries should be mailed to P.O. Box 43, Lenox Hill Station, New York 21, N. Y. The poems should not exceed twenty-four lines—only one from each contestant. All poets residing in the USA, Canada, and Great Britain may compete. Mss. must be typewritten and carry the contestant's name and address. They will not be returned, though the author retains all rights. The poetry judges are Marguerite Janvrin Adams, Leslie Nelson Jennings, and Albert Ralph Korn. The essay judges are the two latter. The contests are under the auspices of the American Literary Asso-

### LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Lute. Poe: "Israfel." 2. Banjo. Foster: "O, Susanna." 3. Flute. Walter Learned: "Consolation." 4. Bugles. Carman: "A Vagabond Song." 5. Trumpets. Emerson: "The Snow-storm." 6. Chimes. Shakespeare: "Henry IV" 2. 7. Clarionet. Keats: "The Eve of St. Agnes." 8. Violin. Mary Kyle Dallas: "Brave Love." 9. Drum. Fitzgerald: "The Rubaiyat." 10. Fiddle. Yeats: "The Fiddler of Dooney." 11. Piano. Kipling: "Certain Maxims of Hafiz." 12. Dulcimer. Coleridge: "Kubla Khan." 13. Horn. Wordsworth: "The World Is Too Much with Us." 14. Organ. Milton: "Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity." 15. Fife. Joseph Auslander: "Steel." 16. Harp. Moore: "The Harp that Once through Tara's Halls." 17. Lyre. Shelley: "Ode to the West Wind." 18. Guitar. Lear: "The Owl and the Pussycat." 19. Tambourines. Lindsay: "General William Booth Enters into Heaven." 20. Pipe. Browning: "The Pied Piper of Hamelin." 21. Cellos. Robert Nathan: "At the Symphony." 22. Cymbals. Louisa Fletcher: "Mandarin Red." 23. Barrel organ. Noyes: "The Barrel Organ." 24. Chorded shell. Dryden: "Song for St. Cecilia's Day." 25. Kettle drums. Scott: "The Doom of Devergoil."



ciation of which Clara Catherine Prince was founder. She is at present editor-in-chief of *The American Poetry Magazine*, official publication of the association.

\* \* \*

For information concerning a poetry awards project on a non-profit basis with funds already guaranteed, you should write to

The Editor, Poetry Awards  
1420 East Mountain Street  
Pasadena 7, California

Its advisory editors are Lionel Stevenson, Hildegard Flanner, Norreys Jephson O'Connor; the managing editor is Joseph Joel Keith, and the editor-in-chief is Robert Thomas Moore. The details of separate awards and the conditions are too detailed to give here.

\* \* \*

**HAND ME THAT CHISEL**

He wrote like Spenser, archaic to his time:  
He thought like Darwin, shocking for his day:  
He walked like Dante, touched with the sublime:  
At night he got undressed and hit the hay.

DAVID McCORD.

\* \* \*

**CUPID & CO.**

The woman living down the hall  
I practically don't know at all.  
  
The other neighbors (same address)  
I know considerably less.  
  
Their lives are like a secret book  
Wherein I've scarcely had a look.  
  
The trouble seems to be, they're shy.  
As luck would have it, so am I.  
  
Yet with what cold, detached an air  
We pass each other on the stair!  
  
But what a change comes o'er us when  
We con such personals (for men)  
  
As "Heiress, young, attractive, hale  
Seeks correspondence with bold male."  
  
'Twas some such item (may as well  
Confess, 'twas in the *SRL*)

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S  
DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 751)

MALONE:

JEFFERSON THE VIRGINIAN\*

No historic American, except possibly Benjamin Franklin, played so notable a part in so many important fields of activity and thought as Jefferson: government, law, religion, education, agriculture, architecture, science, philosophy.

\*The first of four volumes planned by Dumas Malone, titled "Jefferson and His Time."

That led me on a merry dance  
From Flatbush all the way to France,

And took a lot of expert sledding  
To save me from a shotgun wedding,

Though, crossing back on the Atlantic,  
I got—all over again—romantic!

\* \* \*

The moral? Double your resistance  
To making passes by long distance

(True, underwriting Cupid nearer,  
May often prove, on balance, dearer.)

The best prescription, you will find,  
For easeful sleep and peace of mind—

Your skittish charmer's and your own  
Is, leaving well enough alone.

GUSTAV DAVIDSON.

\* \* \*

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

**The New Recordings**

COMPOSITION, PERFORMER, ALBUM NUMBER, NUMBER OF RECORDS	ENGINEERING		PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT
	Recording Technique	Surface	
WEBER, KONZERT-STUCK, IN F MINOR (1821). STRAUSS, BURLESQUE IN D MINOR. (1886). Claudio Arrau. Chicago Symphony, De-fauw. RCA Victor DM 1216 (4)	A fine, romantic (empty hall?) resonance, good balance, adequate highs; very thin in bass regions. Generally suits the music, with bass boost to help it.	A	(See below.) A brilliant performance; Arrau is impeccable, perhaps a bit steely cool in his fire. Good for Strauss, not quite as fine for Weber. An enjoyable recording.
DEBUSSY, QUARTET IN G MINOR, OP. 10. Paganini Quartet. RCA Victor DV 17 (4 plastic)	Excellent liveness, but very restricted tonal range (6,000 or so); often fuzzy (my copy) in loud passages.	AA+	A splendid performance of major early Debussy, French-toned, alive, well-colored, atmospheric.
RAVEL, PIANO MUSIC. Gaby Casadesus. Vox 610 (2)	Good piano, somewhat level, less presence than Vox's best. Probably due both to music and performer.	A— to B+	Straightforward playing of "Pavane," "Oiseaux Tristes," "Jeux d'Eaux," prelude from piano version "Le Tombeau." Good collection.
KODALY, DANCES OF MAROSSZEK. Andor Foldes, pianist. (Vox 609 (2)	Excellent piano, as fine as it comes. Both Foldes, Kodaly suit the Vox mikes.	A—	A modern "Hungarian Rhapsody"; based on a simple folk song, plenty of piano drama, scintillation.

**YOUTHFUL STRAUSS AND WEBER**

IN the new Arrau album (above) are two men, so different at first thought, one at the very beginning, the other at the far end of the romantic era who, as youthful pasciccio writers for piano and orchestra, turn out to be not unlike. Both are exuberant, both instinctive musical dramatists, both are prodigal in pianistic whirlwinds of the gayest and most sparkling sort, both write here non-official piano concertos, avoiding the formality of the concerto itself.

Yet what differing musical symptoms!

The Strauss is outwardly pre-Strauss; its melody is strongly Brahms, its harmonies of a Dvorak, not a Strauss, its exuberance untainted mid-romantic. Except—that already there is a too-muchness. Too much piano, too florid. Too much exuberance, to the point of

insincerity. A studied Brahms, without a trace of the concomitant humility, the severity of discipline, the economy of development of the real Brahms. Too long, too thick for any burlesque.

And Weber—"I detest all tone pictures with titles," he wrote; they naively announced a lengthy program for this work beginning, "The lady sits in her tower; she gazes sadly into the distance. . . ." It is that kind of music. Superficially like the Strauss, but here the bounding youthfulness is that of the romantic movement itself, with the utmost sincerity and freshness. One's impulse is to think happily, how enormously more of a person is this Weber, how true a romantic! Beside this, the everlasting youthfulness of a whole art, Strauss seems old at twenty-one.

EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.