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AN ATLANTIC BOOK

"Your Career in Show Business" covers every angle, and contains a wealth of information for anybody who is, or ever was, stage-struck.

● ● In the juvenile department of Coward-McCann, Alexander Klemm, famed aeronautical engineer, is the hero of the day. Klemm ordered six copies of his own book "The Helicopter Adventure." The bill came to \$10.17. He paid immediately—with a check for \$5,010.19. "Maybe," suggested Tom Coward, "the tide has turned!"

● ● In the *Chicago Review*, Harry Hansen spotted a key to Gertrude Stein's prose that should dispel for all time the slightest incomprehension of what she was talking about:

Miss Stein's fear of the future is not a panoramic phobia. It is a pained fear of the next instant. What is bad now will evolve to worse confounding. Her prose style, built upon orbicular repetition, seems designed to hold the moment in a perfect staticity—to avoid the flow into the next and more loathsome instant. Her Now holds catholically against which the future describes an impingement of cruel protest.

● ● In Philadelphia, the wife of a striking compositor helped balance her budget by taking a job in a laundry. She ironed while the strike was hot.

● ● In Toronto, a new Canadian magazine, *Here and Now*, has made its bow. It rates "A" for both content and typography.

● ● In Mississippi, the Hon. R. M. Kelly welcomed members of the state bar with this temperate appraisal:

Now, what of the ladies? When God made the Southern woman He summoned His angel messengers and He commanded them to go through all the star-strewn vicissitudes of space and gather all there was of beauty, of brightness and sweetness, of enchantment and glamor, and when they returned and laid the golden harvest at His feet He began in their wondering presence the work of fashioning the Southern girl. He wrought with the gold gleam of the stars, with the changing colors of the rainbow's hues and the pallid silver of the moon. He wrought with the crimson that swooned in the rose's ruby heart, and the snow that gleams on the lily's petal; then, glancing down deep into His own bosom, He took of the love that gleamed there like pearls beneath the sun-kissed waves of a summer sea, and thrilling this love into the form He had fashioned, all heaven veiled its face, for lo, He had wrought the Southern girl. . . .

In Louisiana, one Southern girl, at least, forgot all about sweetness,

The Saturday Review



enchantment, and the snow that gleamed on the lily's petal, when the honor of her family was impugned. On the day I visited Thibodaux, she inserted the following paid advertisement in the *Commercial Journal*:

To My Dear Friends of Lafourche Parish:

I, as a resident of the Tenth Ward of Lafourche, would like to have you know that what Dr. Barker and Mr. Richard Cheramie said after my husband, Mr. Gilbert J. Duet, are just malicious lies. Dr. Barker said that my husband killed a man, but I would like to disappoint his thought by letting him know that my husband never killed a man. One thing that Dr. Barker has to say is that my husband is a criminal and a blackjack. My friends, if there is one blackjack to be spoken of, Dr. Barker is the one. He has the dirty nerve of saying that my husband killed a man when he did nothing but good for the people of the Tenth Ward. Dr. Barker and Mr. Richard Cheramie said all kinds of bad things after my husband in their first and second primary campaign because they thought that if he supported Sheriff Ducos he was going to have a job. My friends, he could have a job if he wanted but he doesn't want one.

I am the mother of five children—one boy and four girls. My son is seventeen years old and when he heard Mr. Cheramie and Dr. Barker say these bad things at the meeting from our house he got out of the house. My daughters, Hazel, Eula Mae and Barbara Jane, were at the show and come home just because they just couldn't take what that so-called Richard Cheramie was saying after my husband. The things he said were really to hurt somebody and he not only hurt my family but my husband's mother, because Mr. Cheramie's mother and my husband's mother are twin sisters. That goes to show you how far he went into the family.

As of now I leave it up to you, the good people of the Tenth Ward, to tell me if I am wrong or right.

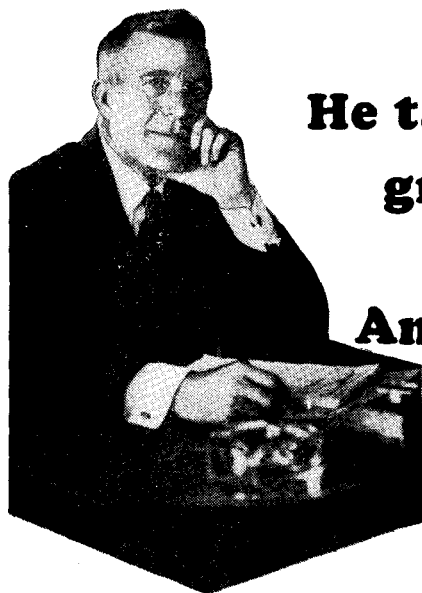
I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Very respectfully yours,

MRS. GILBERT J. DUET.

I can't wait to hear what the Tenth Ward did about it!

BENNETT CERF.



**He taught America's
greatest authors
how to win
America's greatest
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It's about Lorimer and John P. Marquand—the time Marquand went to Asia and brought back Mr. Moto . . .

It's about Lorimer and Katharine Brush—the time that one of her serials compromised its heroine between installments . . .

It's about Lorimer the bon vivant and antique collector, Lorimer the business man and advertising copy writer, Lorimer the man, the editor, and the legend.

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GEORGE HORACE LORIMER AND THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

The Biography of a Great Editor, by **JOHN TEBBEL**

At your bookseller's, \$4.00

DOUBLEDAY

Twisting the Tail of the Cosmos

Musings from the Private Letters of

JUSTICE OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

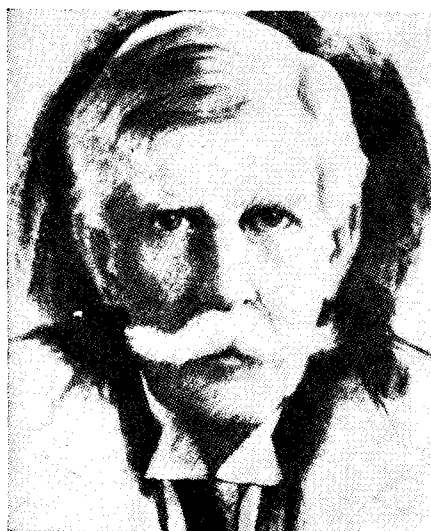
EDITOR'S NOTE: To the lawyers who stood at the bar of the United States Supreme Court, and even to most of his biographers, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes seemed an Olympian figure, great but remote. The rich human personality known only to his intimates is revealed in part by a group of seventy-eight personal letters he wrote to the distinguished American "philosopher's philosopher," the late Professor Morris R. Cohen. Dr. Felix S. Cohen, Visiting Professor of Legal Philosophy at the City College of New York and at Yale University, edited the correspondence between his father and Justice Holmes for the January 1948 issue of the *Journal of the History of Ideas*. With the permission of the editors of the *Journal* and representatives of the Holmes and Cohen estates, SRL reprints excerpts from eighteen of Holmes's letters.

I AM glad that a philosopher is interested in the law—I hardly should be interested in it—if it did not open a wide door to philosophizing—and enable me to illustrate another of my chestnuts that the chief end of man is to frame general ideas—and that no general idea is worth a straw—

I at least go on very comfortably without the belief that I am in on the ground floor with God, or that the cosmos, whether it wears a beard or not, needs me in order to know itself. I suppose it needs me as it needs any grain of sand, because I am here. And the whole, if there is a whole, would be I know not how much other, if an atom were subtracted from it, but I do not believe that a shudder would go through the sky if our whole ant heap were kerosened. But then it might—in short, my only belief is that I know nothing about it. Truth may be cosmically ultimate for all I know. I merely surmise that our last word probably is not the last word, any more than that of horses or dogs. It is our last word nonetheless. And I don't see why we shouldn't do our job in the station in which we were born without waiting for an angel to assure us that it is the jobbest job in jobdom. But we are all like the old knights who wouldn't be satisfied with your admission that their girl was a very nice girl, but would knock your head off if you didn't admit that she was the

best ever—bar the Virgin Mary, perhaps.

I have just been reading Bertrand Russell's "Mysticism and Logic" with much less liking for "A Free Man's Worship" than, I gather from Laski, you feel. It seems to me no better than shaking your fist at the sky. It presupposes a *πov στō* outside the universe. Also I inferred from our former talk and your writing that you would agree with him in thinking reason paramount to the universe. Whereas I don't see that it stands any differently from my preference



—From "Yankee from Olympus."
Oliver Wendell Holmes: "Man is like a strawberry plant."

of champagne to ditch water. It is one of my Can't Helps, and no doubt is paramount in my universe, but as a bettabilitarian, I bet there is (with apologies to the unknown for even that predicate) a universe of which mine is only a very inadequate aspect, from which my Can't Helps come and that may or may not be superior to them. I admit that it is among the *non apparentibus* as to which speculation is useless but we all like to try a twist at the tail of the cosmos.

* * * *

My father was brought up scientifically—i.e. he studied medicine in France—and I was not. Yet there was with him as with the rest of his generation a certain softness of attitude toward the interstitial miracle—the phenomenon without phenomenal antecedents, that I did not feel. The difference was in the air, although perhaps only the few of my time felt it. "The Origin of Species" I think came out while I was in college—H. Spencer had announced his intention to put the universe into our pockets—I hadn't read either of them to be sure, but as I say it was in the air. I did read Buckle—now almost forgotten—but making a noise in his day, but I could refer to no book as the specific cause—I never have read much of Voltaire and probably at that time had read nothing. Emerson and Ruskin were the men that set me on fire. Probably a sceptical temperament that I got from my mother had something to do with my way of thinking. Then I was in with the abolitionists, some or many of whom were sceptics as well as dogmatists. But I think science was at the bottom. Of course my father was by no means orthodox, but like other even lax Unitarians there were questions that he didn't like to have asked—and he always spoke of keeping his mind open on matters like spiritualism or whether Bacon wrote Shakespeare—so that when I wanted to be disagreeable I told him that he

straddled, in order to be able to say, whatever might be accepted, well I always have recognized, etc., which was not just on my part.

* * *

The other day I took from the shelves and began to read Plato's "Phaedo." I found on it my note Feb. 3, 1860. It was fifty-nine years almost to a day since I last read it! What a queer thing to hear people talk of the "inexorable logic" by which Socrates led to his conclusions. You could drive a six-mule team through the gaps—but it is wonderfully taking literature even when you rebel or rather smile at the admissions that this, that, and the other is evident from the proof.

* * *

As long as law means force—and when it means anything else I don't care who makes it and will do as I damn choose—) force means an army and this army will belong to the territorial club. Therefore the territorial club will have the last word—subject to the knowledge that if it does too much there will be a war in which it may go under in its present form. Also I am with you in your partially expressed rebellion against the notion that something particular has happened and that all our old ideas are upset—Even Pound sometimes talks as if it were a recent discovery that social considerations are paramount when you come to a final issue. I am thoroughly with your defense of the philosophic attitude, and so I might go on. . . .

* * *

Man is like a strawberry plant, the shoots that he throws out take root and become independent centers. And one illustration of the tendency is the transformation of means into ends. A man begins a pursuit as a means of keeping alive—he ends by following it at the cost of life. A miser is an example—but so is the man who makes righteousness his end. Morality is simply another means of living but the saints make it an end in itself. Until just now it never occurred to me I think that the same is true of philosophy or art. Philosophy as a fellow once said to me is only thinking. Thinking is an instrument of adjustment to the conditions of life—but it becomes an end in itself. So that we can see how man is inevitably an idealist of some sort, but whatever his ideal and however ultimate to himself, all that he can say to anyone else is—*Je suis comme ça*. But he can admit that a person who lives in a certain emotional sphere should be indifferent to intellectual justifications although he reserves to himself his advantage of believing that he can

explain the other and that this other can't explain him.

That is all that I wanted to say but I will add apropos of the acquired superiority of means to ends—that we think the statesman better than the man who simply eats his dinner, travels to and fro, and begets—yet the statesman is only a means to his doing so. Also an anecdote of when I was young—a man who called himself a juridical traveler said: We speak of the Remorse of Conscience—a thousand years ago more or less we said The Ayen Bite of Inwit—the image is the same—biting back on oneself—and is equally intelligible to you or me—but the introduction of a dead language has made it unintelligible to the man in the street—And so by the mere force of language (he concluded) we are creating a spiritual aristocracy. The answer again is that the derivation has got new roots—that we no more think of the image than does the man in the street—and that he knows what remorse means as well as we do.

I think the best image for man is an electric light—the spark feels isolated and independent but really is only a moment in a current.

* * *

Miser, saint, philosopher, painter all illustrate the so-to-speak physiological destiny of man to live to ends outside himself and so to be an idealist and a martyr, while most of the misers, saints, and the rest don't recognize that they are examples of the same thing. Of course what you say as to nature not being a prudent artisan and as to blind impulses seems to me O.K. but not quite relevant to what I had in view.

* * *

One additional word as to Spengler, to thank you and tell you how he tickles me. I read slowly as I can give only a limited time to the book and have to use the dictionary—though N. B. it is wise not to bother too much or one loses the general thought in the detail. I have read only sixty pages—but you may imagine that I chuckled at *es gibt keine ewigen Wahrheiten*. He gets nearer to being able to smile at himself than most Germans, though I doubt if he can—well, this is only a grunt after an hour, a happy hour, with this book—and now I must take my very modest constitutional walk—

* * *

This moment sees the finishing of Spengler—damn him—he has been my task and duty since I have been here—a duty not too assiduously pursued, you can see from the time taken, even though I had constantly to turn to the dictionary. The swine has given me my money's worth—for I haven't read anything so suggestive and stimulating



—Fayer.

My Current Reading

Dorothy Thompson, author, newspaper columnist, and lecturer, needs no introduction. Miss Thompson's column on current affairs is syndicated in many newspapers.

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR IN THE HUMAN MALE, by Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin (Saunders)

JAMES MADISON: THE NATIONALIST, by Irving Brant (Bobbs-Merrill)

RUSSIA IN FLUX, by Sir John Maynard (Macmillan)

THE GREAT REHEARSAL, by Carl Van Doren (Viking)

IDEAS HAVE CONSEQUENCES, by Richard M. Weaver (University of Chicago Press)

for a long time, from its abundant *aperçus* in spite of excessive repetition—I don't believe his most fundamental propositions, but I feel a lot of new light on the different Kults that he discusses. I infer that he is not so strong on the natural sciences as he is on mathematics, music, and art—Were he not a German I should be surprised at his dogmatism in statement, when his general view is so sceptical. In spite of his scepticism he seems to feel an inward demand for absolute truth and to be disappointed at the conclusion that he can't scoop up the universe. As I read I often wished that I could consult you. I don't understand his distinction between the realms of space and cause and effect and of time and *schicksal*. What is cause and effect outside of time—and what is *schicksal* if not the working of cause and effect? I don't doubt that you could explain—I am perfectly willing to believe that he can't say experimentally that cause and effect are exactly equivalent—For the matter of that, I have often said that if causes suddenly ceased to produce effects—or phenomena appeared without cause—and I was not too scared to think—I should simply say—Tired so soon? I thought you would last my time—But I make more

(Continued on page 30)