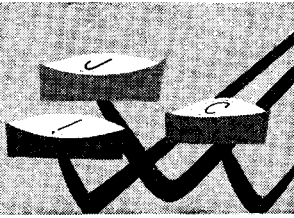


# Manner of Speaking



**Long Water Going:** There is a man at a ship's rail looking down, and one by a waterfall looking up, and another on one bank of a long water looking out. They will not stay there forever, though someone will always take the places they leave. No matter how many times man leaves his place by running water, it will be there again and fresh and first for any man's return to it. A man is deeper to himself when he stands there, partly lost when he leaves, and always closer to his own first of things when he comes again.

Always there is something about the unchanging changefulness and about the changing constancy of water that lures him. Water, perhaps, was the first timekeeper. Or, perhaps, it was the first real metaphor for time. Or, perhaps, it is the most endless reminder (along with the stars) that time is longer than anything that enters time.

This talk of the long waters is toward magic, of course, for we do live, in part, by magic, though we have lost most of the vocabulary for it. We have been taught unreasonable vocabularies of reason—unreasonable because they are not languages our feelings can live by even when our proprieties try to. Watching water go, we touch magic again, and are left dumb by it.

I know a stream in one seam of Bread Loaf Mountain in Vermont. In that stream there is a boulder I have been watching for twenty-five Augusts now, and for twenty-five years the same roil of water, about the size of a lock of hair in a curler, has been standing off the east lip of the boulder.

A statistician could study the gradient of the streambed, the stream's drainage area, the mean annual precipitation, and the angle at which the boulder meets the flow. He could compute then—perhaps, he could—how many millions or billions of gallons of mountain water go annually into keeping that one roil in constant position. I shouldn't be surprised to have a statistician tell me that all of Lake Champlain (which is to say, as much water as there is in all of Lake Champlain) has gone into and through that one roil since the glacier dumped my boulder and the stream shifted it into place.

But why should I care? Statisticians are dull fantasizers. They make a busy profession of gathering fact, but only to change it into something irrelevant or unreal. I prefer to take that one unchanging roil of the long waters as its

own mystery of fact, equal entirely to itself, and therefore equal to nothing else. It waits for me there—which is to say I wait for it—year after year, a constancy beyond all else.

I am, of course, fantasizing as recklessly as any statistician. When I say I have been watching one unchanging roil for twenty-five years, I mean only that for twenty-five years, always in the same two weeks of August, the roil has been in place exactly as I remember having left it. For all I know, my roil may be drowned in spring, or it may sink away from the rock during a drought, or be frozen shut in winter. I must go there sometime in winter to see if the water freezes in the shape of my roil. I doubt that it does, but it would please me to learn that it did.

**A**S water flows, twenty-five years is not, of course, any measure of constancy. Mark Twain returning to the Mississippi after something like twenty-five years was almost ready to think he had found a new river. And perhaps he had. But not a new water and not a new force and principle. The flow still came from a first of things, changing what tried to contain it, but never itself. A man had only to look over the rail to see the long principle going, always the same and forever shifting.

Even Niagara Falls has lost much of its edge, the rim rocks of the American Falls slanting to talus and threatening to change the falls into a chute and the chute into rapids, unless the engineers get titanicly busy and restore the sheer drop the explorers discovered there. But even as a gat-toothed and stone-choked thing the cataract keeps its power over the tourist. His reasons for going there may be as tawdry as his jokes about not having (thank God) to pay the water bill, but no one can stand there unstirred. A man may resist the mood of such water; he cannot escape it.

There is a gypsy song whose English version, as I recall it, begins, "The world is old tonight, the world is old." That song, in its own florid and over-trilled way, tries to say what the long waters say to all of us with something like the first and last simplicity. Standing by those waters, a man cannot help being deepened to a sense of how long everything has been going on.

Somehow that deepening serenifies him, though simply to be reminded that we are ephemera is hardly an experience in

serenity. The serenity, I think, grows out of a sense of unchanging principle. Small we may be, but the long waters tell us we are attuned to something like a permanence, and somehow that sense of attunement is one our emotions can rest in, even when we notice how the waters are eating away the bounds that keep us.

And however much the inland waters may change banks and slopes, there is always the sea, always constant to its changeless changes. A man watching the sea from anything that floats is forever at his own first again.

In a small way I was playing this watch-the-sea-game not long ago as I rode the Newport-Jamestown Ferry across Narragansett Bay. It was a raw and a rainy day, however, and I was doing my watching through a window of the upper deck cabin. It is only a twenty-minute crossing there, but this mood comes at once. I watched, instantly hypnotized by the same restlessness of green water men have known from their first day's sailing.

Then a piece of sodden cardboard drifted by, then a bottle, then another piece of cardboard, then some sort of paper wrapper. I began to look for any stretch of clean water and could find none. Failing, I tried a game. Holding my head still, I kept my eyes on just that flow of water that came and went within the frame of one windowpane. I would win my game if at any time in the entire passage, my windowpane framed a piece of sea in which there was no floating refuse.

**I** LOST my game. We all lost it. As we are all losing our game with the first of things.

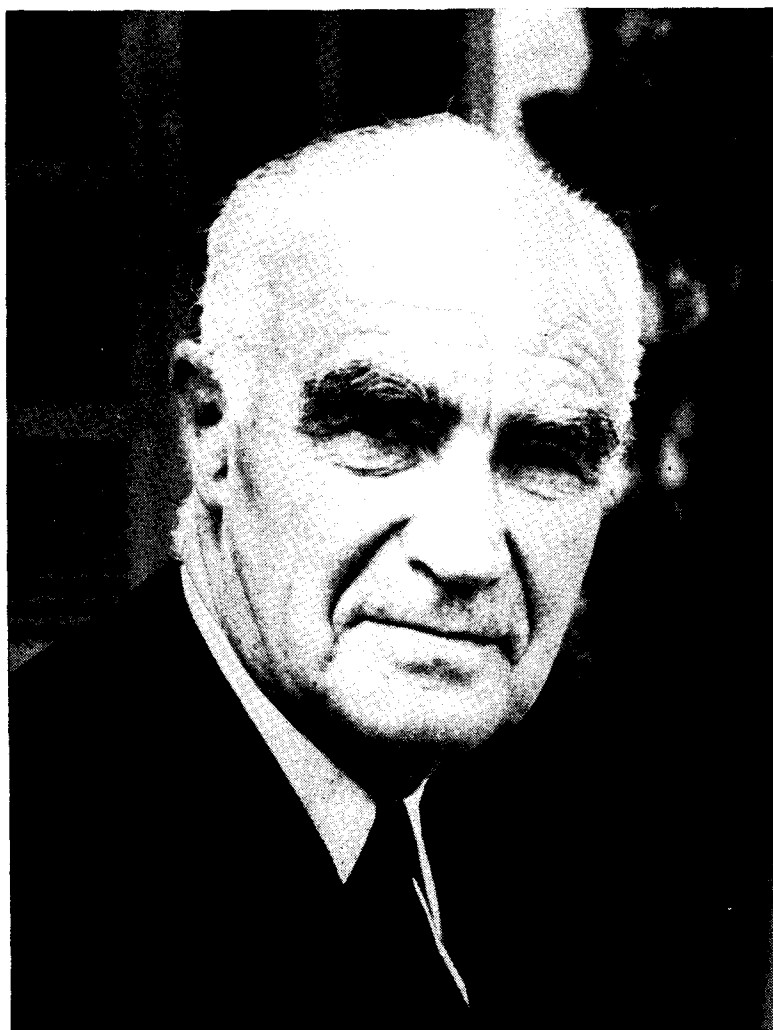
What can any man, or all of mankind, do with a dirty sea? By the time we have finished poisoning every first thing, and thereby ourselves, all games will be over. Will it be any solace then to know that in time the waters will purify themselves again? The waters can only lose for a while. But we can lose forever, damned by our own flow of refuse.

Were you to go look at your own chosen water flowing, what would you see there? Will it be the first of things again, or the last coming? Will it be elements or slopes?

I know that if the day comes when I walk my stream down Bread Loaf Mountain and find my chosen roil frothing detergents or clotted by the junk of someone's picnic, on that day I shall swear a damnation on the human race as unfit to occupy any planet.

Not that my damnation will matter except as it gives me a release of feeling. The race will have damned itself. As it may already have done.

—JOHN CIARDI.



—Wide World

# HENRY R. LUCE

1898—1967

By HERBERT R. MAYES

**H**ENRY R. LUCE brought a new light to publishing, and cast no shadows on it. No man in our time made as forceful an impact on magazine journalism as he did. His principal achievements—*Time*, *Life*, *Fortune* and *Sports Illustrated*—entitle him to recognition as one of a small handful of publishing geniuses.

As a fellow editor, I have not always been enchanted with the occasional unobjective presentation of news in *Time*. But I have never failed to read it or to

Herbert R. Mayes, *SR* editor-at-large, was a contemporary of Henry R. Luce in his career in magazine editing and publishing. Mr. Mayes is former editor of *McCall's* Magazine and former president of the McCall Corporation.

be stimulated by it. *Life* wasn't the first to offer itself as a picture magazine—Germany and Italy had published highly successful visual periodicals for many years—but *Life's* approach to pictorial journalism has been unequalled anywhere in the world. *Fortune* revolutionized the reporting of business to business; the writing is incisive and the visual concept magnificent. *Sports Illustrated* ultimately confounded its skeptics and became profitable.

*Saturday Review* (then *The Saturday Review of Literature*) was originally published by Time, Inc. Both magazines shared a small office atop the remains of an old brewery at 236 East 39th Street. The relationship grew out of the fact that Henry Luce (known as "Harry" to his friends) had been a student in Henry Seidel Canby's literature

class at Yale University. When Dr. Canby and his associates decided to publish their New York *Evening Post* weekly literary supplement as an independent magazine, Canby went to young Luce, who immediately offered to share *Time's* modest publishing, subscription, and distribution facilities. Amy Loveman said that the serious young editor of *Time* made himself available at all times for *SRL's* problems, but his consuming preoccupation was with his own magazine. After a year, each magazine went its own way.

Not every venture launched by Henry Luce remained in the family or was robustly successful. He was not unacquainted with frustration and occasional failure. He introduced *Tide*, a magazine directed to the affairs of the advertising business. He sold it. He began publica-