

inspiring sight nor is its effectiveness readily discernible. Nevertheless, no land battle is won unless the infantry moves forward, nor lost unless the infantry moves to the rear. Verdun is the perfect example. The Germans concentrated a preponderance of artillery and dominated the air from first to last but were unable to employ more than an equal number of infantry. Infantry on the defense has a decided advantage over an equally strong attacking force. And it was this infantry advantage which kept the Germans from passing.

Wide-spread delusions, regarding the effectiveness of new weapons, are not novel. When the crossbow was invented the same propaganda affected public opinion. And I remember as a boy reading accounts of what would happen in the "next war," wherein an old-fashioned army would be completely wiped out by a force consisting of a platoon armed with a dozen Gatling guns (the papa and mamma of the machine gun). The majority of readers can remember those inspiring accounts from 1905 to 1914 describing the awful destructiveness of air fleets of the future.

"But the situation has entirely changed," retorts the air-minded zealot. "Aviation has made unbelievable strides during the past fourteen years. It is now many times as effective as it was during the World War." This commonly accepted answer deserves careful investigation. What revolutionary improvement has materialized since 1918? None known to the writer. Minor improvements, yes. Scores of them. Planes are somewhat faster, more substantially built, will carry more load and have a greater cruising radius. (Trucks and tractors have improved to about the same extent.) But note also that anti-aircraft has advanced remarkably since 1918. Of the two, I believe the antis have gone considerably farther. If this be true, and events at Shanghai indicate just that, it means aircraft will be less effective in the next war than it was in the last.

Tanks are over-advertised for about the same reasons as aircraft. They are spectacular, can perform curious and startling feats and, in appearance, give an impression of immense power and staying qualities. Their undeniable weakness is *vulnerability*. They cannot take cover but must advance in the open. A few pieces of light artillery,

properly placed, should be able to put tanks out of action as fast as they appear. New and ingenuous defense measures such as tank traps and land mines add to their difficulties. Nevertheless, it may be said of the tank that "it is an experiment noble in motive," the motive being to aid the infantry attack. More power to them. Their real worth remains to be seen. They played an insignificant rôle at Shanghai.

Nothing herein written implies that aircraft, tanks, and other new devices and weapons serve no useful purpose in warfare. The quarrel is with those fanatics who would have the lay public believe that these new and spectacular weapons are all-important. They are not. Infantry still decides the fate of land battles, and its most important supporting arm is the artillery. Aircraft has several useful functions, the most important being to secure information. As

the "eyes of the army," from a long distance up in the air, it is most useful. As an important weapon of offense and defense it is a complete dud.

Why would it not be a wise, even if novel, policy for us to leave such matters as the composition of the army to the general staff and of the navy to the general board? They are best qualified by selection, education, training and experience to make such decisions. In practically all other countries of the world they do make them. Congress, determining appropriations, properly should decide how much protection is desired. But for laymen to usurp the functions of experts by making decisions as to relative strength of the various arms and branches, or to dictate as to classes of ships, etc., is a grave weakness in our system of administration, a weakness hidden until war is upon us and then glaringly apparent to all.

## WAR IN BOHEMIA

*By Malcolm Cowley*

THE war in Europe was hardly over, the treaty of peace was still unsigned, when a bloodless war burst forth in America. On the one side were the beleaguered inhabitants of Greenwich Village. On the other side, in the attitude of aggressors, were several of the larger American magazines, as led and conveniently typified by *The Saturday Evening Post*.

*The Post*, like a dozen other periodicals, brought heavy and light artillery to bear on its new enemies. It published stories about the Villagers, editorials and articles against them, grave or flippant novels dealing with their customs in a mood of disparagement or alarm, humorous pieces done to order by its staff writers, cartoons in which the Villagers were depicted as long-haired men and short-haired women with ridiculous bone-rimmed spectacles—in all, a long campaign of polemic beginning before the Jazz Decade and continuing through the boom and the depression probably into the six issues now on the press. The burden of it was always the same: that the Village was the haunt of affectation; that it was

inhabited by fools and fakers; that the fakers hid Moscow heresies under the disguise of cubism and free verse; that the fools would eventually be cured of their folly; they would forget this funny business about art and return to domesticity in South Bend, Ind., and sell automobiles. The Village was dying, had died already, smelled to high heaven and Philadelphia. . . .

The Villagers themselves, by no means moribund, did not answer this attack directly; instead they carried on a campaign of their own against the culture represented by the 3,000,000 readers of *The Saturday Evening Post*. They performed autopsies and wrote obituaries on civilization in the United States; they shook the standardized dust of the country from their feet. Here, apparently, was a symbolic struggle, with the great megaphones of middle-class America trying to howl down the American disciples of art and artistic living. Here, in its latest incarnation, was the eternal warfare of bohemian against bourgeois, poet against propriety—Villon and the Bishop of Orleans, Keats and the quar-

terly reviewers, Rodolphe, Mimi and the unescapable landlord. But perhaps, if we glance at the history of the struggle, we shall find that the issue was other than it seemed and the enmity less ancient.



Alexander Pope, two centuries before, had taken the side of property and propriety in a similar campaign against the slums of art. When writing "The Dunciad" and the "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot," he lumped all his enemies together, stingy patrons, homosexual peers, hair-splitting pedants; but he reserved his best considered insults for the garret dwellers of Grub Street, the dramatists whose lives were spent dodging the bailiff, the epic poets "lulled by a zephyr through the broken pane." These he accused of slander, dullness, theft, bootlicking, ingratitude, every outrage to man and the Muses; almost the only charge he did not press home against them was that of affectation. They were not play-acting their poverty. The threadbare Miltons of his day were rarely the children of prosperous parents; they could not go home to Nottingham or Bristol and earn a comfortable living by selling hackney coaches; if they "turned a Persian tale for half a crown," it was usually because they had no other means of earning half a crown and so keeping themselves out of debtors' prison. And the substance of Pope's attack against them is simply that they were poor, that they belonged to a class beneath his own, without inherited wealth; that they did not keep a gentleman's establishment, or possess a gentleman's easy manners, or the magnanimity of a gentleman sure of tomorrow's dinner:

Yet then did Gildon draw his venal quill:  
I wished the man a dinner, and sat still.  
Yet then did Dennis rave in furious fret:  
I did not answer,—I was not in debt.

Pope was a far wittier poet than any of his adversaries, but the forces he brought against them were not those of wit or poetry alone: behind him, massed in reserve, was all the prejudice of eighteenth-century gentlefolk against intruders into the polite world of letters. He was fighting a literary class-war, and one which left deep wounds. To many a poor scribbler, it meant the difference between starvation and the

roast of mutton he lovingly appraised in a bake-shop window and promised himself to devour if his patron sent him a guinea: after "The Dunciad" patrons closed their purses. Pope had inflicted a defeat on Grub Street but—the distinction is important—he had left Bohemia untouched, for the simple reason that Queen Anne's and King George's London had no Bohemia to defeat.

Grub Street is as old as the trade of letters; in Alexandria, in Rome, it was already a crowded quarter; Bohemia originated in France, not England, and the approximate date of its birth was 1830: thus, it followed the rise of French capitalism after the Napoleonic wars. The French Romantic poets complained of feeling oppressed—perhaps it was, as Musset believed, the fault of that great Emperor whose shadow fell across their childhood; perhaps it was Science, or the Industrial Revolution, or merely the money-grubbing, the stuffy morals and stupid politics of the people about them; in any case they had to escape from middle-class society into a world above and below it, a world in which they cherished aristocratic delusions while living among carpenters and midinettes. The first inhabitants of this world were the friends of Théophile Gautier and Gérard de Nerval, young men of good family with a high respect for their own moods and scarlet waistcoats and beribboned lobs; but the legend of it was spread abroad, some twenty years later, by a poor hack named Henry Murger, the son of a German immigrant to Paris.

Murger was penniless. Having abandoned all hopes of a formal education when he left primary school, and feeling no desire to follow his father's trade of tailor, he began to write mediocre verse and paint incredible pictures, meanwhile supporting himself by his wits. Soon he joined a group which called itself the Water Drinkers, because it could rarely afford another beverage. A dozen young men with no money, little talent and vast ambitions, they lived in hovels or in lofts over a cow stable, worked under the lash of hunger, and wasted their few francs in modest debauchery. One winter they had a stove for the first time: it was a hole cut in the floor, through which the animal heat of the stable rose into their chamber. They suffered from the occupational diseases of poor artists—con-

sumption, syphilis, pneumonia—all of them aggravated by undernourishment. Joseph Desbrosses died in the winter of 1844; he was an able sculptor, possibly the one genius of the group. His funeral was the third in six weeks among the Water Drinkers, and they emptied their pockets to buy a wooden cross for the grave. When the last sod thumped down, the gravediggers stood waiting for their tip. There was not a sou in the party.

"That's all right," said the gravediggers generously, recognizing the mourners. "It will be for the next time."

Spring came and their feeling rose with the mercury. One evening when his friends were making war maps in water color, Murger began unexpectedly to tell them stories. They listened, chuckled, and roared for two good hours, till somebody advised him, seriously between gales of laughter, to abandon poetry for fiction. A little later he followed this advice, writing about the life of his friends, the only life he knew. Personally he hated this existence on the cold fringes of starvation, and planned to escape from it as soon as ever he could, but for the public he tried to render it attractive.

In "Scènes de la Vie de Bohème," he succeeded beyond his ambition. He succeeded not only in writing a popular book, one which was translated into a dozen languages, successfully dramatized, candied into an opera, one which enabled its author to live in bourgeois comfort, but also in changing an image in the public mind. Contemptible Grub Street, the haunt of apprentices and failures and Henry Murger, was transformed into glamorous Bohemia. The temporary expedient became a permanent way of life, became a cult with rituals and costumes, a doctrine adhered to not only by artists, old and young, rich and poor, but also by stock-brokers and dentists craving self-expression.



The religion spread. It had new prophets, some of them English, like Du Maurier and Leonard Merrick; it had new saints, like Baudelaire, Dowson, Verlaine. Having colonized a whole quarter of Paris, it founded new bishoprics in Munich, Berlin, London,

and finally New York. It carried on a long warfare with conventional society, but at the same time was tempting more and more good bourgeois to become its adherents. By the end of the War, when the American magazines launched their counter-offensive, a curious phenomenon was to be observed—namely, that the New York Bohemians, the Greenwich Villagers, came from exactly the same social class and had the same economic standards as the readers of *The Saturday Evening Post*.

Having come to Greenwich Village to escape the stultifying effects of a civilization ruled by business, many of them entered business themselves. They opened tea shops, antique shops, book shops, yes, and bridge parlors, dance halls, night clubs, and real-estate offices. By hiring shop assistants, they became the exploiters of labor. If successful, they tried to expand their one restaurant into a chain of restaurants, all with a delightfully free and intimate atmosphere, but run on the best principles of business accounting. Some of them leased houses, remodelled them into studio apartments, and raised the rents three or four hundred per cent to their new tenants. Others clung faithfully to their profession of painting or writing, rose in it slowly, and at last had their stories or illustrations accepted by *Collier's* or *The Saturday Evening Post*. There were occasions, I believe, when Greenwich Village writers were editorially encouraged to write stories making fun of the Village, and some were glad to follow the suggestion. Of course they complained, when slightly tipsy, that they were killing themselves—but how else could they maintain their standard of living? What they really meant was that they could not live like *Vanity Fair* readers without writing for *The Saturday Evening Post*.

And so it was they lived, if they had the money. They bought houses in the country, preferably not too far from the Sound; they collected highboys, lowboys, and tester beds; they hired butlers; they joined the local Hunt and rode in a red coat across New England stone fences and through wine-red sumacs in pursuit of a bag of imported anise-seed. In the midst of these new splendors, they continued to bewail the standardization of American life, while the magazines continued their polemic

against Greenwich Village. You suspected that some of the Villagers themselves, even those who remained below Fourteenth Street, were not indignant at a publicity which brought tourists to the Pirates' Den and customers to Ye Olde Curiowe Shoppe and increased the value of the land in which a few of them had begun to speculate. The whole thing seemed like a sham battle. Yet beneath it was a real conflict of ideas, one which would soon affect the customs of a whole country.



Greenwich Village was not only a place, a mood, a way of life: like all Bohemias, it was also a doctrine. Since the days of Gautier and Murger, this doctrine had remained the same in spirit, but it had changed in several details. By 1920, it had become a system of ideas which could roughly be summarized as follows:

1. The idea of salvation by the child.—Each of us at birth has special potentialities which are slowly crushed and destroyed by a standardized society and mechanical methods of teaching. If a new educational system can be introduced, one by which children are encouraged to develop their own personalities, to blossom freely like flowers, then the world will be saved by this new, free generation.

2. The idea of self-expression.—Each man's, each woman's, purpose in life is to express himself, to realize his full individuality through creative work and beautiful living in beautiful surroundings.

3. The idea of paganism.—The body is a temple in which there is nothing unclean, a shrine to be adorned for the ritual of love.

4. The idea of living for the moment.—It is stupid to pile up treasures which we can enjoy only in old age, when we have lost the capacity for enjoyment. Better to seize the moment as it comes, to dwell in it intensely, even at the cost of future suffering. Better to live extravagantly, gather June rosebuds, "burn our candle at both ends."

5. The idea of liberty.—Every law, convention or rule of art that prevents self-expression or the full enjoyment of the moment should be shattered and abolished. Puritanism is the great enemy. The crusade against Puritanism

is the only crusade with which free individuals are justified in allying themselves.

6. The idea of female equality.—Women should be the economic and moral equals of men. They should have the same pay, the same working conditions, the same opportunity for drinking, smoking, taking or dismissing lovers.

7. The idea of psychological adjustment.—We are unhappy because we are maladjusted, and maladjusted because we are repressed. If our individual repressions can be removed—by confessing them to a Freudian psychologist—then we can adjust ourselves to any situation, and be happy in it. (But Freudianism is only one method of adjustment. What is wrong with us may be our glands, and by a slight operation, or merely by taking a daily dose of thyroid, we may alter our whole personalities. Again, we may adjust ourselves by some such psychophysical discipline as is taught by Gurdjieff. The implication of all these methods is the same—that the environment itself need not be altered. This explains why most radicals who became converted to psychoanalysis or glands or Gurdjieff gradually abandoned their radicalism.)

8. The idea of escape.—In Paris, in the South of France, in the South Seas or perhaps in Mexico, one can escape from all the complex restrictions of our Puritan culture. By expatriating himself, the artist will be able to express himself more freely. Failing in this attempt, he can erect his own isles of freedom in the shadow of the skyscrapers.

All these, from the standpoint of the business-Christian ethic then represented by *The Saturday Evening Post*, were corrupt ideas. This older ethic is familiar to most readers, but one feature of it has probably not been emphasized. Substantially, it was a *production* ethic. The great virtues it taught were industry, foresight, thrift, and personal initiative. The workman should be industrious in order to produce more for his employer; he should look ahead to the future; he should save money in order to become a capitalist himself; then he should exercise personal initiative and found new factories where other workmen could toil industriously, and save, and become capitalists in their turn. During the



process many people would suffer privations: workers would sometimes live meagrely and wrack their bodies with labor; even the employers would deny themselves luxuries which they could easily purchase, choosing instead to put back the money into their business; but after all, our bodies were not to be pampered; they were temporary dwelling places, and we should be rewarded in Heaven for our self-denial. On earth, our duty was to accumulate more wealth and produce more goods, the ultimate use of which was no subject for worry. They would somehow be absorbed, by new markets opened in the West, or overseas in new countries, or by the increased purchasing power of workmen who had saved and bettered their position.

This was the ethic of a young capitalism, and it worked admirably, so long as the territory and population of the country were expanding faster than its industrial plant. But after the War, the situation changed. Our industries had grown enormously to satisfy a demand which suddenly ceased. To keep the factory wheels turning, a new domestic market had to be created. Industry and thrift were no longer adequate. There must be a new ethic which encouraged people to buy, a *consumption* ethic.

It happened that many of the Greenwich Village ideas proved useful in the altered situation. Thus, *self-expression* and *paganism* encouraged a demand for all sort of products, modern furniture, beach pajamas, cosmetics, colored bathrooms with toilet paper to match. *Living for the moment* meant buying an automobile, radio or house, using it now, and paying for it tomorrow. *Female equality* was capable of doubling the consumption of products formerly used by men alone. Even *escape* would help to stimulate business in the country from which the artist was escaping. The expatriates, against their will, were trade missionaries for fountain pens, silk stockings, portable typewriters. They drew after them an invading army of tourists, thus increasing the profits of steamship lines and travel agencies. Everything fitted into the business picture.

I don't mean to say that Greenwich Village was the cause of the revolution

in morals that swept over the country in the decade before 1930, nor do I mean that big business deliberately plotted to render the nation extravagant, pleasure-worshipping and reckless of the future. The new moral standards had other sources—the excitement and uncertainty of the War itself; the automobile, the movies, the sex magazines, the new psychology, prohibition—but Greenwich Village was the first to adopt them. And business, though it laid no plots in advance, was quick enough to use the situation.

Thus, when women began smoking, the cigarette manufacturers foresaw the effect of the new custom on their volume of sales, but they hesitated to offend public opinion. The most they dared was gradually to introduce an attractive girl into their illustrations, sitting beside the handsome young man with his Camel or Chesterfield or Lucky. Then they took a further step: the girl implored the man to “blow some of the smoke my way.” Then—a real sensation—came the first billboard on which the girl herself was actually smoking. By 1930, when the total production of cigarettes had more than doubled, propaganda for smoking by women was appearing even in the farm journals, against the violent protests of farm readers. Instead of merely profiting by the revolution, the manufacturers were now promoting it.



Meanwhile the moral revolution had been spreading through the country. Women east and west had bobbed their hair; they now smoked cigarettes while eating lunch in black-and-orange tea shops just like those in the Village. Houses were furnished to look like studios. Stenographers went on parties, like artists and models and dress manufacturers. The “party,” conceived as a gathering together of men and women to drink gin cocktails, flirt, dance to the phonograph or radio and gossip about their absent friends, was in fact becoming one of the most popular American institutions; nobody stopped to think how short its history had been in this country. It developed out of the “orgies” celebrated by the French 1830 Romantics, but it was introduced to this country by Greenwich Villagers—be-

fore being adopted by salesmen from Kokomo and the younger country-club set in Kansas City.

Wherever one turned, the Greenwich Village ideas were making their way; even *The Saturday Evening Post* was feeling their influence. It began to wobble on prohibition. It allowed drinking, petting and unfaithfulness to be mentioned in the stories it published; its illustrations showed women smoking. Its advertising columns admitted one after another of the strictly pagan products—cosmetics, toilet tissue, cigarettes—yet still it continued to thunder against Greenwich Village and bohemian immorality. It even nourished the illusion that the long campaign had been successful: on more than one occasion it announced that the Village was dead.

Last winter its editorial page contained a sour obituary. “The sad truth is,” it said, “that the Village was a flop. None of the causes for which it fought and argued and starved ever amounted to anything. The new standards which it demanded in all the arts proved false and artificial, even silly. . . .” But most of the causes for which the Villagers “fought and argued and starved” were not artistic causes. The standards they demanded were social, and their effects are to be sought in our business and social life. Perhaps the Village is moribund today, but we can't be certain: creeds and ways of life among artists are hard to kill. If it is true, however, that the Village is dying, the reasons are not those assigned in *The Post* editorial. It is dying because it became so popular that too many people insisted on living there: the results were expressed in rents too high for the pocket-books of the indigent Villagers. It is dying because many of the younger writers and artists have adopted the hard morals of the Communists, and because the older ones, those who made the Village famous, are living in Connecticut or Vermont on what they earn by working for weekly magazines of large circulation. It is dying, finally, because women smoke cigarettes in the streets of the Bronx, drink gin cocktails in Omaha and have perfectly swell parties in Seattle and Middletown—in other words, because the whole of middle-class America has been going Greenwich Village.

# AS I LIKE IT—William Lyon Phelps

## A LITERARY DISCOVERY

I HOPE I have not completely wearied my readers by remarks on Goethe's lyrical masterpiece, "Kennst du das Land," and in any case my justification for one more allusion is that I have made an important discovery, which I have saved up for Scribnerians; and it concerns a great English poet as well as Goethe himself. In 1834, the year of the death of Coleridge, a definitive edition of the Englishman's "Poetical Works" appeared in three volumes. This contained the first stanza of his translation of the famous lyric, "Kennst du das Land." No one has ever discovered when he wrote this, but it first appeared in print in 1834. A few weeks ago I obtained Coleridge's own manuscript translation, written and signed by him, and it contains two stanzas, instead of one. To the best of my knowledge and belief, I now print for the first time a hitherto unknown stanza by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. The editor of the standard edition of the complete poems, Ernest Hartley Coleridge (Oxford, 1912), queries the date 1799 in a note to his publication of the first stanza. Not only is this second stanza now in print for the first time, but the manuscript of the first is very different indeed from the standard published version, in which editors follow the edition of 1834. Here I print from manuscript which you will find reproduced in facsimile on this page:

Know'st thou the Land where the pale Citrons  
blow,  
And Golden Fruits thro' dark-green foliage  
glow?  
O soft the Gale that breathes from that blue  
Sky!  
Still stand the Myrtles and the Laurels high.  
Know'st thou it well? O thither, Friend!  
Thither with thee, Beloved! would I wend.

Know'st thou the House? On Columns rests  
it's Height:  
Shines the Saloon: the Chambers glisten  
bright:  
And Marble Figures stand and look at me—  
Ah thou poor Child! what have they done to thee!  
Know'st thou it well? O thither, Friend!  
Thither with thee, Protector! would I wend.

Know'st thou the road?—&c—

S. T. COLERIDGE.

*Know'st thou the Land where the pale Citrons  
blow,  
And Golden Fruits thro' dark-green foliage glow?  
O soft the Gale that breathes from that blue Sky!  
Still stand the Myrtles and the Laurels high.*

*Know'st thou it well? O thither, Friend!  
Thither with thee, Beloved! would I wend.*

*Know'st thou the House? On Columns rests it's Height:  
Shines the Saloon: the Chambers glisten bright:  
And Marble Figures stand and look at me—  
Ah thou poor Child! what have they done to thee!*

*Know'st thou it well? O thither, Friend!  
Thither with thee, Protector! would I wend.*

*Know'st thou the road?—&c—*

*S. T. Coleridge*

Facsimile of the manuscript now in the possession of Doctor Phelps, containing a hitherto unknown stanza of Coleridge's translation of Goethe's famous poem. Doctor Phelps secured the manuscript in England on his recent trip abroad.

A brief and excellent new book is "Goethe the Challenger," by Alice Raphael; and it is good to see Bayard Taylor's incomparable translation of Faust in the handy form of "The World's Classics."

When Carlyle died in 1881, he had reached an apotheosis. Then came Froude's publication of the "Reminiscences," the two volumes of the "Life," and the "Letters" of Jane. The towering reputation was so badly undercut that for a time men wondered if it could re-

main standing. Swinburne published a sonnet named

### AFTER LOOKING INTO CARLYLE'S REMINISCENCES

Three men lived yet when this dead man was  
young  
Whose names and words endure forever: one  
Whose eyes grew dim with straining toward  
the sun,  
And his wings weakened, and his angel's  
tongue  
Lost half the sweetest song was ever sung,  
But like the strain half uttered earth hears  
none,  
Nor shall man hear till all men's songs are  
done;