



By E. G. Whitney

In this hurried life of ours we have little time for analysis of our problems of truly logical thinking on any subject. For example, I am trying to rush through this column in order to tackle another job. Since newspapers and magazines try to 'boil down' their copy for quick reading why not apply the same principle to our every day existence.

We could prepare, during one of our rare leisure moments, form letters dealing with bank overdrafts, delinquent bills, invitations and whatnot. Take the man who received a letter reminding him of a long overdue account. He replied: "Yours of the 22nd has been received. We list our creditors (1) Those who will be paid promptly (2) Those who will be paid sometime (3) Those who probably never will be paid. In view of your friendly letter we are pleased to advise that you have been taken off No. 3 listing and promoted to No. 2 classification." This man could quickly revise this form letter to meet any insulting demand.

Now for my own idea. Why not have ourselves gone over by a psycho-analyst with a lie detector machine as a double check and print the results on a card which we could carry around in our pockets. When we applied for a new position, accept a "sweet young thing" to marry us, try to swing a big business deal or sought membership in the swankiest golf club in town we would be spared time and effort in telling another world our ancestors came over on the Mayflower and were the original social and business leaders of another century.

This idea (copyright, 1937) could be taken further. A federal bureau could be established and these "personality cards" could be filed under your name and fingerprint classification. Then when a large company needed, for instance, a newspaper or publicity man they could look up the card and find out exactly like this: Age, 30. No criminal record—yet. Skinny. Nervous. Full of handle and subsides quickly. Propensity for bridge and baseball. Married, has three children to date (1937). Skidded through college with major in journalism. Prolific talker. Continually sticks his nose in other people's business. Likes chocolate milk shakes. Says he is adept in writing all kinds of stories (the detector differs here). Likes flowers, hates to shave regularly. Has marked fondness for children. Claims he is hard, conscientious worker (detector exploded at this point).

By Jane E. McClellan

If and when the people and the organizations in this town cease keeping up with each other, there won't be anything for us to make up a column with. . . take for instance the challenge issued the sisters of D.B.S. by the Coronet girls. . . they'll let no boy's team have all the honors in baseball so they are going to have themselves a Monday Day football game. . . there'll be much ado in some field here in town next weekend, so plan to be there to root your favorite friend around the bases. . . Fred Boynton and Harriet Brelford got together over the week-end to make a plan for the Michigan State to be at the second annual Fry dance at the Michigan Union with Fred who was one of the committeemen for the affair. . . Bill Cobb's greatest ambition at this point is to emulate Maxwell "Bud" Bassett, the best model aeroplane maker in this part of the country. . . and speaking of the Cobbs, do you know what Louise reminds us of when she laughs? Someone crying in the next room, or down the hall. . . In a burst of physical energy, brought on perhaps by the round of parties they have been attending in the last ten days, Ellie Wrey and Elaine Cree threaten to take a canoe trip about Querton Lake.

The Society Department, (all two of us,) was dissolved in tears last week after reading William Maxwell's new "They Came Like Swallows." The book is at the library and is well worth reading immediately. Mr. Maxwell was only 23 or 24 when he wrote it, but he has the touch of a genius and the unswerving vision of the two little children of which he writes. And, while we're writing in this Fine Arts vein, why don't you treat yourselves to a good movie? "A Star Is Born" is the best that these old eyes, (in the words of Woolcott, another good critic), have seen in many a moon. Janet Gaynor is not the sickeningly sweet little number that she has always seemed, but is a well-turned out mature actress, and Frederic March, our answer to many prayers on the subject of men, is perfect. The whole thing is done in Technicolor and seems worth seeing at least twice.

Just in case you're curious, . . . one in the editorial dept. of this here now paper conceals the homespun philosophy which numbs our readers in the column "Back Fencing."

By Carol Dweley

Once upon a time we thought our way to fame and fortune lay in authorship. Writing books seemed an easy career: just putting your thoughts on paper and getting paid for it. Now that we know a little bit more about it, we still like the idea—but we know it's work. Best-seller writer Dorothea Brande once whipped together a manual of practical instructions to aspiring authors, and called it "Becoming an Author." Two of her many rules are astoundingly simple. Her first is: Never talk about what you're going to write. People feel it their duty to ask a beginner to outline his latest plot. If he consents often enough, his work will be stale before it's even finished. And he will find it hard to maintain a fresh viewpoint on something he's heard so many times. Her other command is: Set a time every morning, and say, "Precisely then I'll write for 15 minutes (or more)." Mrs. Brande advises varying one's starting point, often, to make the self-made appointment as difficult as possible to keep. This, faithfully adhered to, the affixes, will soon teach the embryo author to get a lot of work done in a short time, and will also make him feel that he can suffer any inconvenience rather than be untrue to his work.

This winter we met a lady who gives herself—and right well, too—by writing fiction, and who supports a few creative writing courses on the side. For no man sun she guarantees to deflate the most stubborn egotist, in one easy lesson. Her chief grudge against novel authors is that they don't maintain a constant point of view. She says that even if the reader doesn't realize the fault, it will go against his subconscious grain to see the author jump from the brain of one character to another, because it is impossible. Even the most fantastic tales must be based on logic. For instance, Noel Coward's crazy characters are accepted by the reader who might shudder at the thought of doing some of the things they do, but he may have often longed to, subconsciously. He will be honest enough to admit this and concede that, crazy or not, these are real people.

A very popular expository writing professor in college had his pet idiosyncrasy as well. He said he would never respect an author who condescended either to his reader or to his characters. "Give your reader credit for a little intelligence," he used to roar, pounding the desk. "Never, never, NEVER say a girl is pretty—describe her blue eyes, blonde hair and gorgeous coloring, and let the reader decide for himself whether or not she's a honey. For all you know, he may prefer brunettes." The same man continually drugged this into his classes. "Write contemptible characters so that the reader can hate 'em without knowing how you feel about 'em. Let things happen, but don't express your own opinion. After all, you're only the guy who wrote it."

These are only a few of things on which instructors insist. Now add to these prerequisites, the priceless quality of timeliness, and careful consideration of the trend in reader interest, as well as your native talent. Writing's an easy career; just write down anything that comes into your head and get paid for it.

It was a thrilling story that Smith had to tell. "I had lost all hope," he said, "as I sank for the third time, my past life rose up before me in a series of grim, realistic pictures."

Impasse Mrs. Williams could only find two seats, one behind the other. . . .

Without even turning his head in the slightest, but twisting his mouth and shielding it with his hand, he muttered, "Cut it out sister, cut it out the wife's with me."—The Wall Street Journal.

Looking Forward Mrs. Justwed—"When was it we were married? I have almost forgotten the passage of time, dear!" Mr. Justwed—"It was Sunday, and how this Tuesday." Mrs. Justwed—"Only think! Twenty-five years from today before yesterday will be our silver wedding anniversary. I hope we'll get a lot of presents."

Paul Verdier, head of the City of Paris store in San Francisco, will be ambassador of good will from the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition to the Paris, France, 1937 Exposition of Arts and Crafts.



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