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The Sandshark

It lay still now, its belly
ruptured by the gaff.
Like a longshoreman's hook
in a sack of sugar,
the blade had spilled it
on our deck:

a sandshark
we were killing slowly
for the touristcamera.
Going over the side
it left a dirty red smear on the deck
a little sickening,
like a dead cat on the sidewalk.

A talented director
this Death . . .
Let it live,
a little.
Let it breathe the sea again
and swim
a yard or so
but,
tie a red string to its tail.

Then the winged jackals
cautiously at first
came with yellow eyes
down the crimson deathline.
The gulls fell stuka-winged from very high
and it was like watching an old newsfilm
of a past war.

The birds fed well
on the shark we'd gaffed,
and those who'd paid
were pleased to have it all,
in technicolour.

I hosed the sandshark off the deck.

—Ken Livingstone

BEST CONTRIBUTION
1963-64

The Mitre

Vol. 2, 1963-64

prose); music (including discord); form (not much of that at Bishop's; the challenge should be met); and even one a or e or i or o or u (let alone the masculine consonants); the noncliché (that phoenix). Nearly above all, imagination (not Fancy); and, perhaps, wisdom.

From the last two issues of *The Mitre*, I battered myself down to two poems of Michael Ondaatje: *Prometheus, with Wings* and *The Sows*. It is too bad that Mr. Ondaatje used that word "demerol," but he knows how to resolve and end a poem. And so, for *Prometheus, with Wings*, the prize; and, for what they are worth, my congratulations.

—Ralph Gustafson

Prometheus, With Wings

They splayed him, scientifically,
on the rock,
so that a limping sun would blind him until noon,
and crack his lips
and eyelids, white his hair,
and harden blood on bitten lips and thighs.

The birds would come,
peck at his puckered flesh,
lick his ribs
and peel the calloused skin
until the dusk grew fat and brown
and they left frowning.

His crackled knuckles then released their bite,
and hanging, he watched sea drown half his skin,
which stinging like peroxide
dulled the senses
and gave him demerol to grin again.

Zeus,
sitting with a bunch of grapes and gods,
spat out the pips
and puzzled,
watched this man,
who with a whitened eye and hectic lust,
wooed a host of mermaids after dusk.

—Michael Ondaatje

RALPH GUSTAFSON POETRY PRIZE
1963-64

The Prize Poem

I have wondered how true it is that

*These are the days of youth
gazing
in the pale arched dome of
futility?*

And how far does the disillusion extend?

*To what purpose
Disturb the dust?
Let it pile.*

The answer to the question Mr. Eliot posed thirty years ago in *Burnt Norton*, apparently is to be: **none**.

The first quotation is far from the first poem in the first issue of *The Mitre* for this year. The second quotation is from the present issue.

Even in its small songs, *The Mitre* presents us with some sobering conclusions:

*There is death even in the spring flowers
and
pale Christs drown in their splendid truths.
Adios, mi corazon.*

Beside its timid expressions of the possibility of love and its descriptive images whose sensuous joy is quarantined within its own parentheses, *The Mitre* presents the prevailing sounds of

*Caustic laughs,
dry about their sensitivity.
Poets
in a poet's world.*

One must accept this evidence as a true witness of the world which the present undergraduate possesses. It is extremely unlikely, if not impossible, that a poet in a genuine poem can lie. No poetry would get written if the impulse behind it were toward an untruth. Such a procedure is not worth the effort. Why draw the blinds if there is no illumination? And so, we must trust these statements made on the campus of Bishop's (without which there can be no macrocosm of Canada).

This large world seems to be

*the toothless mouth cluttered
With sour tastes and bad memories.*

The world is given to youth; they have not had time to make it. And

if the world is a sorry place, the blame for this is not to be found in accusations that the young poet is myopic or his lenses morbid.

This is a sad tale. How resplendent would be our hopes if one could detect in Bishop's poets some small portion of recognition that the world is the comic world of Chaucer—terrible and corrupt and funny and deserving of compassion and affection. Or a portion of that lyricism and love that e. e. cummings found here. After all, the bomb exploded on him too.

Though there are one or two exceptions, to the poets of *The Mitre*, celebration is not worth the courage; exaltation is suspect; love is most always lost; realism is largely the deformed and the defamed; nothing is as funny as a crutch.

Canada and Bishop's must inspire more poets. Perhaps, just possibly perhaps, this immediate sampling, as our erudite statisticians are wont to express themselves, is not broad enough. Possibly, portions of our world are waiting unseen for some poet to look at them, and, presently, there are not enough poets to girdle its true circumference.

At present, at Bishop's, the world is

*Tattered and planet-eyed and far from well,
With Winter roosting in his Alpine hair.*

(E. J. PRATT)

And so, to put a thermometer in its mouth . . .

What is the best diagnosis in the last two issues of *The Mitre*? My first impulse was to give a quarter of a hundred dollars to *The Punch Bowl and the Lurch*. This was simply out of perversity impelled by the gravity which surrounded that poem; sheer prejudice on my part—I wanted the world dunked:

*I heard it gurgle, burble, hurch;
I looked again—the Lurch submerched.*

But, of course, you can't get rid of the world this way. It is always with us. So I looked elsewhere. I am sure Miss Ann Fitzgerald will understand.

My task was not easy. The poets at Bishop's are good (this statement is not in contradiction to what I have said; I am now not on the ground whether the world is happy or hopeless, but on the ground whether the poem is bad or good). What undecided me and what I like about so many of the poems in *The Mitre* is that they are not concerned linguistically with Truth and Beauty but with the puddles and clothespins of Miss Sara Allnut; and the fingersnapping sun of Mr. Ondaatje; Mr. Livingstone's six strings of a Spanish guitar; Miss Judy Banks wrapping ducks in tissue paper and Miss Gillmeister's ceramic birds; and even Mr. Starnes' slobbering tulips. Poetry is nothing if it is not concrete.

But one image does not make a poem. There are such things as total structure (no different from what it contains); rhythm (not broken

Mr. Tracy graduated from Bishop's in 1928, and now lives in Lennoxville. His poems were read at the poet's conference at Knowlton Que. last fall.

Afterwards

She came to me in the dusk
Her eyes wise and sad as sorrow;

—How of tomorrow;
I have been with you from dark to dark
From the cutting of bread to the drinking of warm milk;
From the milking of cattle to the dog's latest bark;
I have walked with you from the turning of sod,
To the judgment of God;
From the sowing of corn, from the seed to the silk,
From the seed and weed, to the sheaf and fallen leaf:
May to December . . .

Do you remember the willow mist, the locust musk,
The stink of dung on the grain, under the rain,
Little snakes like green fire, the song of stone
on the scythe, in the hay?

Do you remember the sun all day,
The reapers in straw to the loins,
The brown girls who sang to the flails,
And cheese, and cakes, and cider in pails,
And at evening the whispers, the sighs, and the clinking
of coins?

Do you remember me, the barefoot, the bearer of cups and
plates,
The holder of bridles, the swinger of gates?

I do not remember.

—Neil Tracy



Edges of Another Day

No matter how tight is the seal on yesterday
there is still that sudden stopping on the stair
when you must go back to the place
where the stars were low enough to swing from
and the clouds deep enough to walk on
and oh, the spell of the moon gave two people wings.

* * *

In my fear of the silence in the house
I asked you to come and share what was left
Of the heart I gave away one summer's day
When the world had forgotten the rain and
Knew only of the light-footed wind and of
Two people who slept just below the stars.

We borrowed wings from a pawn shop
that young day and in our haste to find
the top of the rainbow
we dropped our tickets in the wind

* * *

Do you think we could go back to our beginning?
Surely it is not too late to open the doors and
windows of the little house
and let the canaries fly out into the sun?
Remember that spring day when the trees were yellow with song
and we said forever
watching the water smooth stone faces we said
forever
and promised the world a song
forever
Remember there were so many birds that we rented the sky
for a day
and turned all rooftops into bleachers
and invited all the neighbours to stay
for lunch and for tomorrow,
for tomorrow, and for tomorrow.

—Judy Banks

Pat Starnes - 2 Poems

It is then at the noisy hour,
 When the city belches its violent sounds
 and the sky full of whispered obscenities.
 Yes it is then that I long for the calm
 serenity of the Greeks, and the terror of the mountains
 at dusk, violet and pink in the gathering gloom.

Faces old and wrinkled or young and eager
 melt into the grey tide; brave in their
 studied ignorance. Erotic throbbing music
 swirls stupidly, carried in waves by sticky-sweet
 oil and fuzzy, cheap paper.

A shiny olive culled from some far-off dusty
 hillside is held for one tremendous moment,
 at the brink of a too-red mouth, and then devoured
 to make love to a tarnished lead;
 reluctantly.
 The rape of the olive.
 The violation of mankind.

'Embrace the star' they say.
 And the toothless mouth cluttered
 with sour tastes and bad memories?

Refusal

The train moves through the static morning,
 and I encased in steel am like a fly
 skittering over a prophetic still-wet painting,
 marring the acrid clarity of a November sky.

I do not understand, can only feel
 each individual leaf and stone, each you
 and me. Each glaring instant can only reveal
 the cold stupidity of time past, and then continue.

'Life is a pendulum swinging between pain and ennui.'
 Un coup de des jamais n'abolira le hasard!
 Nerval's gleaming tower was but a dream, and tea
 will be served as usual, after the church bazaar.

Lovers in the pale warmth of a sun-tinted
 room, push Poe out of bed, and turn
 languorously to each other.
 An acorn seed falls outside and nestles
 in the moist earth between two
 cement slabs.

The Warning of the Prophet

BOMARCK

CHAPTER I

the announcement of the decree and the signing thereof.

And there went out a decree from Jonathan the Chief Baker that the Arrow be abolished; and this abolishing was done since the Romans had designed a new catapult.

2 For the Romans had promised any land of the north that this catapult was to be used in defence against the wicked Leninites of the Bear Country.

3. And Jonathon the Chief Baker accepted the new catapult on the condition that no boulders be used as projectiles, but instead logs of the cedars of Lebanon.

4 And it came to pass in the next year that Jonathan passed on to better things, and the people hailed Lester the High Priest as their Leader.

5 Then spake Lester the High Priest, 'men, brethren, and fathers hearken. Who are we, to give conditions to the Romans, who are our friends?

6 Great Caesar, and his minister Namaras, have our welfare

(a)
Bom
11

see
(d)
Macc
11, 13
2

(b)
Macc
11

(c)
Macc
11

in mind—the servant is not greater than his lord.

7 The wicked Leninites to the north have allied with the Tajikites, and Georgians, Azerbaijanians, and Kozakhans, Siberians, and Turkmans, and a host of heathen hordes.

8 Their leader, Herod the Idiot, has made a vow to shed the blood of the Romans and their northern allies.

9 We must henceforth defend our promised land with this new catapult, but boulders must be used instead of logs of the cedars of Lebanon.

10 Thus spake the High Priest, and all who heard it were reduced to tears!

11 So when they had taken long advisement thereupon (as is the custom of the fathers, and the captain had made the multitude acquainted therewith, and it appeared that they were all of one mind, they consented to the covenant.

CHAPTER II

the Roman embassy and the installing of the catapults.

And it came to pass that the Romans sent an embassy to the

The Mitre

capital city of the country of the north, and that city's name was Otterico.

2 Then spake the centurion Ruskodius unto the inhabitants thereof, 'verily, verily I say unto you, O barbarians, that you have not acted unwisely. We the Romans are here to defend you against the wicked Leninites and their allies.

3 We are your strong rock and your defence on your right hand.

4 And those who heard him were touched at the heart so that they signed the covenant sine mora, which is in translation, on the dotted line.

5 And lo, several legions of Rome entered into the country of the north with a host of chariots and elephants and many great boulders for the catapults.

6 And Lester played Bowles while the Armada approached, and would not so much as lend himself to the supervision of the operation to protect the sovereignty of his country.

7 Thus the defence of the Romans and their satellites was secured.

CHAPTER III
the dissenters are hushed

But there were those who dissented from the decision of

Lester the High Priest. 'Look', they said, 'at the quinquiremes which the Leninites have placed around the coast of this land under a pretence of fishing.

2 These are armed with mighty catapults, and any we have are useless against them. If the Leninites attack with many boulders we will perish just the same.

3 Namaras has said himself that no guarantee can be given that the new catapults are invincible. We beseech thee therefore, O High Priest, to undo this covenant with the Romans.

4 But Lester rebuked them saying, 'O foolish humanists: ye of little faith: let us trust in the protection of great Caesar; for we are helpless without him.

5 Our land is in a strategic position of the Empire, and it is our duty to do what great Caesar commands.'

6 Thus the dissenters were hushed for no one dared to speak his will.

7 Howbeit some decided to act as it behoves them to act that are resolute to stand out against such abominations as are not lawful for love of life or for humanity.

—DAVID ANIDO

see
(e)
Macc.
11, 6
20.

Amidst sea-beached clouds
Borne on a tidal wind
Moans a rock-bound moon.

Streetlamps spray,
Lighthousing
Fugitive fog-misted breath
Through echoes of silence.

—Ross Lemke

* * *

Mi amor, the wind is blowing
In the temple of my soul.
It shakes me and I tremble
To know that you must go.

You strum a serenade,
As you embrace the setting sun,
Leaving me now all alone,
Adios, mi corazon.

—Lynn Holden

* * *

In every room where you are
Faces are touched with candlelight
And sunsets happen at any time
Even at midnight
The most beautiful sunsets
Happen at midnight . . .

—Dot Gillmeister

Of a summer afternoon

Spider with web legs
Runs on water skin

•
Soft blue aster
Grows high as the fir
To see the sun

•
Two beetles
Shimmering blue
Cross the needle floor
Their bodies clasped

•
A quivering mind
In black squirrel eyes.

—George Siber

Aesthetics

A slim girl
stretching to smooth her hair
is

taut lines
creaking spars
and the run of sea and wind.

In the mirror,
her narrow thighs
and long back
are

high masts
fast keels
and the tension of flat water at evening.

Her moving
is the suddenness of swelling canvas
and her mood is the sea.

To the Greeks
these were sensual things:
women and the sea.

Seeing her naked in the mirror,
I would add
the eyes of a black cat
cornered in an alley.

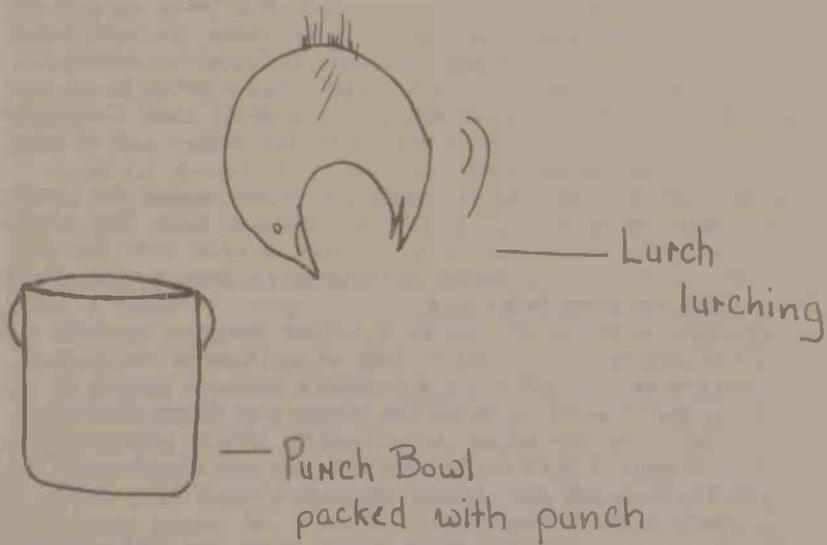
Corrina

She was like the second present
under the tree,
opened
then placed to one side
unremembered amongst
the silver paper
and little green needles.

A little girl
on whom the world had gazed,
in a moment of distraction
a young apple
crisp from her blossoming
bitten
and turning brown
but

O how proudly
she displayed
that ugly kiss.

The Punch Bowl and the Lurch



All through the Hills the Lurch did search,
 Looking for the perfect perch
 To make a workin' Lurch's furtunes,
 And raise some little Lurchin' urchins.
 It lurched into a bowl of punch,
 'Twas soon this Lurch was "out to lunch."
 I heard it gurgle, burble, burch;
 I looked again—the Lurch submerched.

—Ann Fitzgerald

Ken Livingstone — 3 Poems

On Seeing a Crucifix in a Schoolroom

The nail-heads fill His silver palms
 so that the fingers stick out
 like crushed spokes
 from rusty hubs.

His feet too
 are neatly skewered.
 He looks thoroughly unhappy
 and
 the three nails are so large that
 He would undoubtedly tear
 if His skin
 were not
 silver-plated.

How sick the portrayal!

I'm told the Galilee
 is a rock land
 and You could sweat
 for it's a salt sea
 and a full net stings
 the fisherman's arm

a man
 needs a strong arm
 to haul a net,
 or hammer spikes
 into heavy planks.

If it dropped from the wall
 He'd shatter—
 the analogies
 are painful
 but
 maybe it's only my imagination
 or a smudge on my glasses
 that makes me think
 it's just a little crooked.

Murcheson's slow nod brought a quick, grateful smile from the young hand.

"Thank you, sir. It means a lot . . ."

It was obvious that the pilot of the German reconnaissance aircraft had begun his dive well above the low, clinging mists that shrouded the sea, and then had levelled out, roaring along at three hundred miles per hour towards the looming grey hulk of DANCER. It was obvious because his speed brought him upon DANCER and past before startled gun crews could bring their barrels to bear, before Murcheson and young Campbell could duck away from the violent stitching of cannon shells that tore over the bridge, before exhausted men in hammocks felt the slam of an explosion as a bomb engulfed the after gun turret in a dirty gout of flame and smoke.

DANCER sheered off to port, helmsman slumped lifeless over the wheel, her superstructure lost in the reeking curls of cordite and oil-fed flame that billowed upward to catch the first rays of a cold, faraway sun.

Murcheson lay sprawled in the far corner of the bridge, shoeless, head bare, a trouser leg ripped by a sliver of flying steel. The inkiness of unconscious faded into awareness of the ruptured steel beneath his body, of the muffled thumping of booted feet and distant shouts.

A Damage Control aidsman scrambled up the twisted ladder in time to flash a lamp in the blackened face of a dazed sub-lieutenant, slowly pulling himself to his feet.

"You all right, sir?"

"Yes, yes, thanks. Look at young Campbell there, will you?" Murcheson fought the incredible pounding within his head.

The aidsman stepped over to the prone form of the young sailor and began to work swiftly at a deep wound on the youth's temple, talking as his hands deftly moved.

"What happened?"

"Looks as if Gerry caught us napping."

"Probably lucky he spotted us, sir. Chewed us up proper, but we'll do, I'd suppose?"

Murcheson looked aft to the smoking turret. "Can't say yet." Turning, he shouted down the wheelhouse voicepipe. "Everything under control below?"

"Aye, aye, sir. Helmsman's bought it, but the Cox'n's on it now. The after four-inch turret's done, with the gun crew, but not much else besides, sir."

Murcheson was unnerved by the man's detached coolness that made his report sound like a report of stolen beer stores. "Ship on course and watertight integrity secure?" he asked.

"Far as I know, sir. We've regained original heading."

"Very well. We'll remain at action stations. Is the Captain up top?" Murcheson felt the return of self-control.

"Aye, sir. I'll tell him you're all right."

"Very good." The officer turned to the aidsman, still bent over the prone form of Campbell. "How is he, A.B.?"

"I'm sorry, sir. He's dead." The A.B. drew a corner of Campbell's torn duffel coat over the sailor's face.

"I—I see. Thank you. You'd better get aft and see what you can do to help on the turret."

"Aye, aye, sir."

The aidsman disappeared down the ladder. Murcheson stood in the swirls of smoke, now tinted orange by a far, rising sun, and looked for a long, silent moment at the inert form of Campbell's body.

And it was then that Murcheson realized that, clutched in his now blackened and dirty hand, he still held the letter from Campbell's girl, it's pink stationery now stained with the darker tint of what could only be the boy's blood.

Slowly, as if with great difficulty, Murcheson opened the small, flimsy sheet and held it up to the cold morning light. The wind's endless humming in the rigging of the mast mingled with the clink and conversation of the damage controlmen to form sounds which fell unheard on Murcheson's ears.

and besides Jimmy it's not as if I don't love you anymore but it just really isn't fair to both of us. I mean you're so far away and all and a girl just doesn't have any fun at all if she isn't free to go to all the parties and things. Besides a lot of fellows are asking me out and it's silly to be chained down. I mean, I don't really know if I love you. You know, a girl has to watch her chances these days, so I know you'll understand and realize that

Murcheson crumpled the blood-stained sheet and flung it into the wind, which snatched it away and swept it high over the funnel, over the smoking metal over the after turret, on over the stern, where it settled like a gull on the white foam of the ship's wake.

The officer stood, gripping the bridge railing with whitened knuckles, watching the ball of paper bob and toss behind the ship, until it dwindled and was lost in the swell of cold blue that rose away to the thin line of the distant horizon.

Then he turned and went below.

—Vic Suthren

The Letter

The destroyer knifed silently through the grey chill of a pre-dawn sea, the pounding of the great pistons deep in its steel belly mingling with the hiss of the sea parting beneath the bows. It was several hours before sunrise, and HMCS DANCER swept along in a chill quasi-light of mist and wave that left uncertain the dividing line between DANCER's lean outline and the dim world through which she moved.

Sub-lieutenant Murcheson, on the open pilotage position, glanced at his wristwatch by the dim light of a pen flashlight, then shrugged deeper into the meagre warmth of his duffle coat.

Dam. Two hours left in the watch. Murcheson stalked over and poked into the wheelhouse voicepipe.

"Check ship's head by gyro, please."

"Check ship's head by gyro, sir." The young officer smiled momentarily at the startled sound of the helmsman's reply. Probably forgot there was anyone alive up here, he mused.

"Ship's head by gyro zero one five, sir."

"Very good."

Off to starboard, Murcheson knew, somewhere behind the drifting curtains of mist, rose the granite headlands of a Norwegian fjord. Had there been light, he might have seen the high, snow-dusted peaks that rose in rugged grandeur out of the icy Atlantic waters. But, blinded by weather and the gloom of night, he could only feel his way along by depth sounder, sensing rather than seeing that massive shore that by a moment's carelessness could become DANCER's killer.

It was at times such as this, when the ship's safety and the lives of the sleeping crew below depended upon his judgement, that Murcheson felt the turbulent mingling of emotion most keenly. His outwardly uncomplicated nature hid beneath it a profound ability to mask his thoughts and feelings, and to any observer Murcheson would have looked at the moment like a somewhat green but determined young officer carrying out his duties with a minimum of fuss over the matter. Yet below his calm exterior, Murcheson fought a constant battle between deep pride in the role he was playing, and a torturous fear that when the chips were down he would fail. The slender gold braid of commissioned rank hung heavily on his sleeve.

DANCER was nearing the Nofoten island group, on one of those long, wearying patrols that seemed so much a part of arctic sea warfare. Officer and man alike felt the strain of prolonged routine in cold and friendless seas.

The captain had mentioned in his last visit to DANCER's wardroom that German forces were marshalling in Denmark and along the Baltic, apparently grooming for a thrust into Norway. Yet here, the isolated

world of ship and sea soon became one in which war and the violence of men was a foreign and near forgotten element.

Murcheson heard the scuff of seaboots on steel behind him and turned to see the starboard lookout, a young seaman, standing near him. The youth's face was indiscernable in the darkness, however. The officer sensed an air of distress in the muffled figure before him.

"Sir?" The lookout's voice was distant.

"Yes?"

"Sir . . . do you think we'll be going back soon? To Canada, I mean." The young sailor spoke hesitantly, and Murcheson recognized the voice as that of Campbell, youngest hand on the watch.

"Well now, I don't know, Campbell; I suppose that's something we all like to think about, isn't it?"

"Yes sir. I—I suppose so, sir. I meant, do you think it'll all be over kind of soon?"

Murcheson reflected. "I'm afraid not. Things are a bit tacky for us now, to say the least."

The young hand was silent, and momentarily the only sound was the hiss of a swell along the destroyer's grey flank. Murcheson felt for his pipe deep in the duffle coat pocket.

Campbell spoke again after a long interval, faintly. "Have you ever been in love, sir? With—with a sweetheart back home?" Murcheson, startled by the directness of the question, felt that the youth was regarding him intently.

"Who, me? Yes, I guess I have." The sublieutenant thought briefly. "But that was rather a while ago. Why do you ask?"

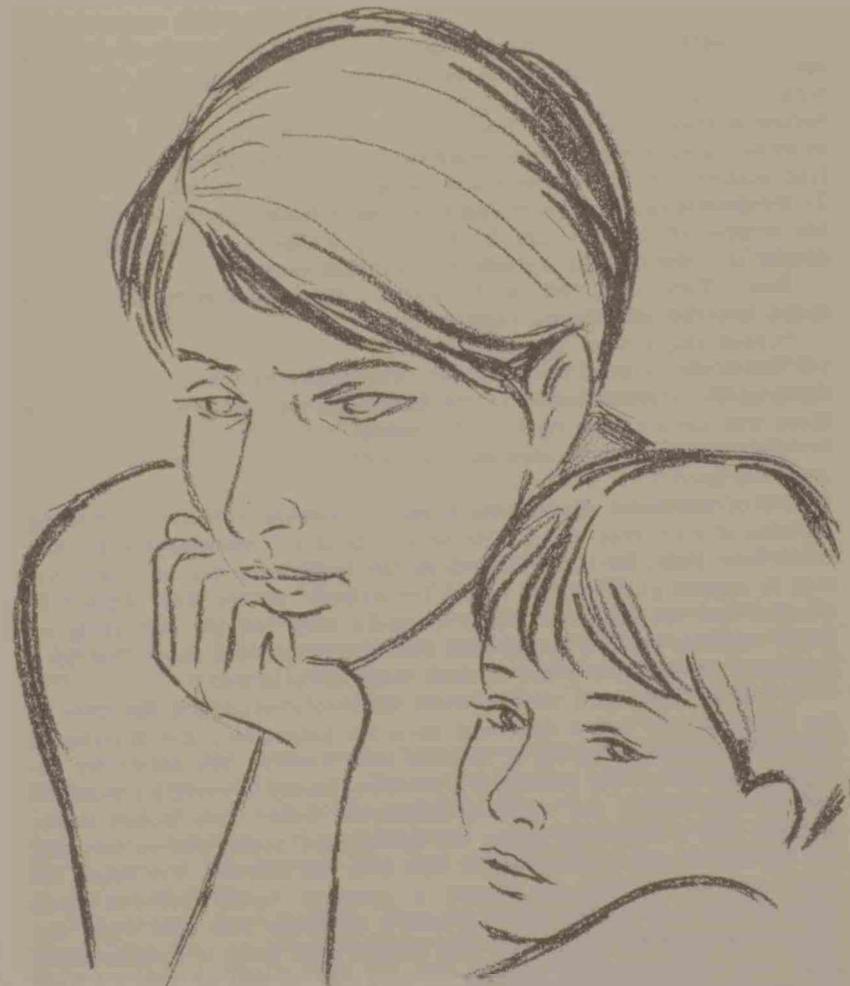
"Well, sir, it's just that—it's just that I'm not quite sure what to do. I don't want to bother you, sir, but my girl—back home—she's almost everything to me, sir; Lord knows I—I couldn't love anyone else like I do her—but we've been out here so long that I . . ." His voice trailed away.

"We've all left someone at home we miss very much, Campbell; you're not alone in that. But it's part of being a sailor and part of this bloody war so we've all got to make the best of it." Murcheson did his best to say it gently, feeling stirrings of sympathy for the boy's distress. He glanced at the horizon. The east was beginning to blush into the pink glow of dawn.

The sailor's head nodded. Then he spoke again, in a small, quiet voice. "But sir . . . it's just that—well, she's not waiting for me, sir; anymore that it. That's what she said in the letter, sir. Here . . ." The youth's mittened hand pulled a small, crumpled envelope from his pocket and held it out towards Murcheson.

About to decline, the officer perceived, in the gradually brightening light, the uncomprehending look on Campbell's wind-burned face. He reached over and took it.

"Perhaps if you'd read it, sir, you could understand it all and help me decide what to do. That is, if you could find a moment or two . . ."



A Day

I lived and lusted for life. This morning all is placid, no yearning, no beckoning, no desire. Only the apologetic flickering of the sunlight through my half-drawn curtains tells me that I am part of this wandering world. Each day starts with a morning and each morning is a mental dress rehearsal. Saving my fanciful dreams for another night. I go outside. A thrashing in the far reaches of my unconscious mind tells me that something is amiss. No sound of any minute degree disturbs my mental wandering. Only a piercing of peace by apprehension sounds the trumpet of its approach. Darkness in the midst of morning light surrounds my every part and, diffuse though it is, weighs me down with foreboding. Fighting with unnecessary valour, I push back the fleets of fear. Confusion besets me from every side, glazed at times by the spying prisms of timbered light. Alas, an answer to this cryptic fear rushes to my thirsting brain. A great feeling of power and for the control of my destiny floods through me. I imagine myself as victorious David towering over slain Goliath. Turning my back on the newly conquered world, I go in to my breakfast.

* * *

A soft down of dew and misty dust blankets the earth. Slow sounds move fitfully through the trees then gush forth into the opening I occupy. Hushing the wind, I watch intently. A glistening snout pushes through the fallen foliage and ascribes a hasty circle of watchful precaution. Rising on four bandy legs, the mole enters my world. With much aplomb and carriage it moves out of the opening and down the tree studded path. At each tree it stops, looks carefully around but does nothing. In this fashion it continues for about forty yards and in this space about forty trees. With awful deliberation and trepidation I follow, unseen and unknowing. Finally the mole trips and falls. Slowly it resumes its dignified pose. It looks around and not seeing its delinquent audience, dies. Arriving late, I bury the mole. Then I continue on down the tree-studded path, pausing every now and then to look around and search for them.

* * *

I sit uncomfortably in my chair, alone. I watch lovers passing by, laughing, touching shoulders and hips and laughing. I appear intent on watching a little bit of nothing disappear into the deepness of the

clear blue sky. It is a lovely day and I find a certain solace in this because it is lovely for me as well as for the lovers. My hands are foreign to me. I know that they should be doing something so I light a cigarette, smoke it for awhile then wonder why I lit it. Something wrong is happening in front of me. A pretty girl comes and sits. I stare at first but she notices me. I wonder if she knows that she is pretty or does my staring tell her that. I walk slowly to where she is sitting. She glances up at me and I wonder if her eyes say: "Hello." or if they say "Hi". Sitting down I say: Hello. She makes her eyes smile and says: Hi. We talk for awhile about the weather, about school, about God and about love in a distant way. I can see that she likes me a little. She is not so pretty now that I know that she likes me. She says that she has to go downtown and her eyes form a silent invitation. Now I notice that her mouth is too small and that she has quite small breasts so I make an excuse and we say good-bye. I go back and sit down again. I light up a cigarette and think about her for awhile. The picture of her face is blurred but I know that she was pretty.

* * *

At night I get restless. My mind and body seek expression but cannot write, the world and people seek but cannot search, God and the Heavens love but cannot love. Only the river keeps on flowing. Soot and sewage, filth and findings clog the gentle passage of the glimmering light. Soft sounds fill the space around me and I try to rationalize them into inactivity. The moon breaks through with a banner of light and a shiver of cold touches my spine. I turn to the girl and kiss her gently on the lips and on the cheek and on the hand and she says: Hello. We take off our shoes and wade into the river. She slips and I hold her and touch her wet hair. Holding hands we walk together. The moon dips below the skyline and the sun shines on her hair. The birds sing their musical farce and we say good-bye. The heat dries up the down of dew and brings the morning on four bandy legs and alone.

—Neil Hastie

Another Summer Day

There were two of them, two boys not even seven or eight years old, and they were stealing.

What do I do now, thought the girl behind the cigarette counter. Gently tell them to put the candy and comics back? Scare them out of their minds by threatening to tell their parents? Or should I ignore it. That seemed best. She turned to put out some more Craven A's. Suddenly she remembered another summer day. Three girls stealing from a drugstore. God, I'd forgotten all about that, she thought. Did we get caught? It seems so vague and far away, like a dream. Why would I steal? Something from another life.

"Ruby, watch the cash please," she said. "I'm going to take my coffee break."

She stopped them as they were going out the door. They were very frightened. She felt like saying 'It's all right, guys', but didn't. They sat on the cement around the withered flowers that some good, civic-minded people had planted to beautify the shopping centre. She didn't know what to say. The sun was so hot, so relentless. The cement was burning.

Finally, "I saw you stealing." That will save them from lying, she decided. They were sheepish and silent.

"Why did you steal?" They looked at each other, then at her.

"We wanted some comics and stuff," one said miserably, preparing to cry. She studied them for a moment.

"Both of you are given enough money, too much probably." Shouldn't have said that, she thought. "Couldn't you have sold some old comics, or made some money somehow, or asked your parents for some?"

Silence. I am Medusa and they have turned to stone. Time had stopped.

"Forget what I just said." It was very, very stupid. "Tell me this, do you think it is wrong to steal?"

"Yes," said one. The other nodded.

She wanted to kill them. "Wrong because there is a law against it?"

"Yes."

"Wrong even if there wasn't a law against it?"

"Yes."

The Mitre

"Why?"

No answer. Of course, no answer. The sun is beating down forever. It is so simple for them, with their Sunday School minds. She wondered if she was going mad. She wondered if she should tell them.

Instead, "Then why did you steal?" They were genuinely puzzled.

"Because we wanted things." It was more a question than a statement.

"You could have got them some other way. Did you just want to do something wrong?"

No answer. Nothing.

"Go home boys. Keep the things. Don't do it again if you think it is wrong."

Everything had stopped.

—Judy Mason

Now had only (embarrassment)
 To cover my nakedness.
 But i will find clothes
 in music.
 and adorn myself
 With bus tokens, flowers,
 and fresh spring clover,
 And Solomon in all his glory
 Was not arrayed like I will be!!

* * *

White Rum

Bare feet,
 And mud embalming
 The split skin
 And ripe sores—
 Food for the flies.

A filthy body
 Manacled by rags,
 Seeped in the constant perspiration
 Filtered through withered skin.

A palm outstretched . . .
 White rum on his breath,
 And world oblivion
 In two eyes
 Raped of expression.

—Gillian Palmer

Poem For Elizabeth

Last night I said goodbye
 to one I love
 through a black box held in a sweating hand.
 Across the city she stood in a blue room
 and said goodbye, we hate goodbyes,
 goodbye, we won't say goodbye,
 goodbye.
 I sat on a hardwood floor, and
 whispered through my phone, and
 days that never were came there, goodbye,
 we'll see you, goodbye, in New York
 on a foggy night, hello.

Last night I said goodbye
 to one I love,
 and thought of foggy streets
 of night, and amethysts,
 and rocks, and lanterns of Japan,
 and blues and yellows, and stars
 and Deaner.

Today is sunny, and last night
 was dark,
 and I said goodbye to one I love.
 Last night dark water swirled around
 craggy rocks,
 today that water swirls, and I forget
 it does.

She still will paint, and write, and walk,
 and laugh, and swear,
 and dress for dinner . . . and so will
 I.

—Lee Beach

"Pop Poetry"

When people complained of the obscurity of modern art somebody invented "Pop Art" which looks as though it were dashed off in someone's kitchen. So, in answer to similar criticisms of contemporary poetry, the Mitre offers a poem that was in fact ad-libbed during a coffee break. Our thanks to the girls from the annex for our first, "Pop Poem."

Epic Poem 1

Kats are kool —
 And Kool is a
 Filter tip . . . mentholated.
 And butterflies & buttercups
 Don't make sandwiches.
 But just add raindrops,
 And let us go and shit
 On the brotherhood,
 And the fraternity pin is a
 Bent bus token:
 Important only worn under
 the collar,
 And all my brothers smile at my
 Underthecollarbentbustoken.
 But one day it flipped into
 my soup
 Lost between a K and an X.
 Without my importance
 i am lost
 I find myself among
 the decayed animals,
 Searching for a spore,
 The Elixir of Life;
 But which one is marked with
 my identity?
 But then i remembered that
 Whisk is concentrated —
 Whisk?— concentrated Whisk?
 Could that be MY Answer?
 I, suffering the pangs
 of a guilty Conscience,
 Crept throughout the cobwebs
 of the crowded attic.
 Must i be like another spider
 From this musty mass?

—Yes— I think I WILL!
 My Will is to be the Conqueror
 of my lost importance
 Death.
 But the dirty man swung the
 Pick-axe in a rainbow arc,
 and fling flang,
 the Merry-go-round
 the Merry-go-found
 is struck again.
 My chance, My chance!
 The world has stopped —
 i'll get off!
 I got off — and
 the
 man
 said
 "The Show is over!"
 A plague upon thee who eateth
 not of pig.
 Do not throw your pork chops
 in the dust bin,
 But taste of the wild clover
 Rampant in the drifts of snow
 that hide.
 Spring's bursting!
 But the winter wind blows wild,
 Yet bids farewell
 To the lilac-flavoured strains
 From the West.
 The life of man
 is oft suspended.
 And love passes . . .
 Where, — oh Why? — have all
 the flowers gone?
 And I alone beneath
 the sinking
 sun
 Rode off into the night
 with nothing on but my orange
 Cellophane Socks.
 Into the night-like darkness
 of Life,
 With nothing but my Whisk-washed
 orange cellophane socks.
 I who once was clad like Solomon,

Silkie

(The Silkie, a creature of Nordic mythology whose home was the remote Skule Skerry off the north coast of Scotland, was able to take the form of a man and court a girl from the mainland who bore him a son. Unable to endure the land, however, the Silkie returned to the sea.)

My head grows grey each lonely summer now;
my pliable bones, weak consolation
for my final days, become stiff and cold.

When young, my hair shone wet and dripped my sex;
my form was the result of ages' tilt
with the line of trees and ooze of serpents
and the green of my lakes; and my low voice
could whisper and roar like an unstrained wind.

In my seas I grew on summers and spring;
my light bones flailing would jump the froth waves,
and I would swim with rough surf at my teeth
and its cool on my jaws, and there I had danced
in foam to humming of sea down below.

And then my bones crawled into new angles
till one night I stood on the passive beach;
I stood bewildered with moonlight and moon
and a cool breath of trees in my green eyes;
and mocking man's lean I stunned a woman
and with her form I created a son.

So I lived a while away from the sea,
but her dry world grew closed, her winds stayed dead,
and at night I sat on the chafing shore
and felt the thin waves lick at my two feet.
My bones I wanted to churn back again,
I longed for whispers of splattering surf
and the waves' rhythm exiled in the night,
and there I prayed to the sea for my form.

One evening wind thumped my body and face,
it crazed black trees and burst open the night
and rain on the hillside crackled the dark;
and the sea lay there still, while the rain and the wind
carved out my dry flesh and ruffled my fur
until I roared, hit, and starved the green wet.

* * *

Sows, one more time

Sunlight on pigs.
A herd of fools for Lear.

Warm saints milling round the cross,
waiting for the weather to break.
Speaking gently,
appreciating the day.

Wearied intellectuals in the sun:
Shelley and others on the Poet's coast,
taking in the view or lack of grass.
Caustic laughs,
dry about their sensitivity.
Poets
in a poet's world.

Michael Ondaatje — 3 Poems

Over The Garden Wall

*We've been watching you over the garden wall
for hours,*

*The sky is darkening like a stain,
Something is going to fall like rain
and it won't be flowers.*

My mother, while caressing camels,
had her left breast bitten off.
So I was weaned on half a body.

In spite of this I've no objections
to camels, one hump or two,
and I like their quivering jaws
that crunch bones
and stones with equal ease,

while the Canadian wolf
with his flailing
double-jointed legs
is to my mind
the most awesome beast on this continent.

My appreciation includes several breeds:
hornery skinned buffaloes,
oozing leopards,
scattered crows,
black-magic spiders,
and Dodo birds.

The Mitre

When taking in a zoo therefore
it seems absurd that these beasts
who look intelligent enough for civil life
are made hostages in our society.

I mean
the infamous camel
would not look ridiculous in a felt hat;
pigs could trot like angels down a high street;
a leopard in a two-seater
would look just as refined as Hugh Hefner;
and their gawdy, glorious Elizabethan-like dress
would certainly liven up our major cities
and impress visiting communists no end.

But instead, in this day and age,
in spite of warnings by Daphne du Maurier,
we find the 'potamus barred from public swimming pools,
and a vulture calmly resting on a traffic-light
would undoubtedly be shot, very messily,
by the first policeman who spotted him.



Le Soir Qui Penche

Musique douce et mélancolique,
Puis éclatante, diabolique.
Rythme éphémère et céleste,
Le soir penche
Sur l'ivre solitude du pianiste.

En l'an trentiesme de son eage
Le poète abandonne sa rage
De tout vivre.
Le soir penche
Sur le poète ivre.

Malgré sa faim l'artiste peint
L'espoir d'un lendemain.
Le présent était l'avenir.
Le soir penche
Sur l'artiste qui délire.

Le génie pressent sa mort.
L'univers pleurt son sort,
Symphonie inachevée.
Le soir penche
Sur un monde résuscité.

—Kay Anderson

November Song

A dreary month, this November
 The flaming maple on the terrace
 Has ceased its viva voce cry
 (And inside, too, a new silence)
 The earth hardens in the garden.
 Her roses are dying.

What have I
 To do with roses?
 Let them harden.

There is no dust on the coffee-table —
 They see to that.

But in the evening, where I sit,
 No one is lying
 No one on the couch, smiling,
 No reason to come home.

To what purpose
 Disturb the dust?
 Let it pile.

Meanwhile in another yard
 My birthday gift, a wreath,
 Lies on an unweathered stone.
 No laugh, now, for gift of jewelry or scent.
 The snow begins to hide the rift
 And I will be glad of another death.

What do I want
 With spring?
 Let snow sift.

—Dot Gillmeister

The Bishop Visits the Monastery

Enter to the fall of silk on stone floors,
 Worn to a penitent — smooth by brother monk.
 Crook your back to the old pontifex,
 Trailing the crimson of Apostles
 From shoulders stooped with blessings.
 Mark well the feeble old shepherd
 Striking the altar with the word of God. —

Marvel at the power
 Unleashed by dual fingers
 As they rend the smoke,
 Sending of seven doves
 To brood over the bowed heads
 Of hooded silence.

—Jack Rose

* * *

The Devil and I

The devil came last night
 and seduced me.
 I sold him my soul
 for a caress
 and a kiss.

He spoke with great cunning
 of poisonous grapes
 and convinced me
 I'd like nothing better.

His eyes narrowed
 and his lips grinned
 as his hand touched my cheek.
 And I sold him my body that night too.

—Dagmar Wiss

Chapultepec

In the grasshopper palace
The children run:
Chewing gum on the patio
Where Carlota danced.
The tourist stands with open guidebook;
Around his neck his expensive camera bounces
(German or Japanese).
He swells with his understanding of History
 Opals for the Empress from the Esperanza mine
 No hope for the mad Empress, though
 Or for her gentle husband.

Maximilian's gilded coach ages badly,
Looks ostentatious in the iron-barred room
Even a bit cheap
(But see the silver gleam where a childish hand rubbed
Ignoring DO NOT TOUCH in three languages.)
The Mehicanos gape
And try to remember which revolution.
 On Sundays we all went to Cuernavaca
 Maximilian on horseback looking less the dreamer
 Carlota used to smile from her coach.

Over Carlota's bath
The little ceramic birds still silently sing
While the tapestry fades
Where her ladies played cards.
The tourist peers into Carlota's bedroom
And wants to know where Maximilian slept.
A crude joke and another peso clinks in the guide's pocket.
 *On the mountain stands a tourist
 Who he is I do not know.
 All he wants is scotch and soda
 All he wants is a nice young . . .*

The American tourist rubbernecks from the lookout
At the city laid out beneath him.
The rocks below him which held young bodies
Dashed there by the Mexican boys who leaped
After Yanquis captured the castle.
Half a mile away his children run about the zoo
Waiting for Mom and Dad to get culture.
The Mexicans spread their lunches on the grass.
 In his cage the toothless lion roars
 And bites the stick waved at him by the whores.

The tourist walks through the gallery
And meditates that Eugenie wasn't bad looking.
His wife thinks palaces might be dirty,
Dreams of chlorinated water from celestial silver taps.
On the rail sit Jose and Maria
Happy with a rail to sit on.
 The gay grasshopper in the centre of the fountain
 Never notices another rainy season.

—Dot Gillmeister

Small Songs

The dance of tiny grasses beneath my feet
comes softly stirring in a singing.

The moon man tells a fairy tale
of gypsy loves and summer-seasoned tears.

I have heard the enchanting laughter of two rivers meeting
and knowing what the seas have not told men.

* * *

After a storm one afternoon
you sit hunched over,
quietly spreading your tears
on the window pane—
as if so much depends
on the way the rainbow ends.

There is no speaking of it
when the last sun
flies the dying fields
and castles crumble to the shore—
There is death even in spring flowers
and weeping in the echo of a song.

* * *

What gods have I sacrificed
for the following of roads leading to flowers
and the beauty of a child's singing.

There is no quiet in the greatness of worlds
where pale Christs drown in their splendid truths.

I care more for the melting of rivers in spring.

—Sara Allnutt

Editorial

The **Mitre** is no longer free. Why? The answer is simply that the cost of publishing a magazine of this size, in sufficient quantity, and with the highest possible quality, has become prohibitive. We feel that by reducing the number of **Mitres** printed, and thereby the cost, we can produce a magazine of a considerably higher quality. Consequently the **Mitre** has gone on sale.

Our second issue comes close on the heels of severe criticism, in the campus newspaper, of modern poetry in general, and the **Mitre** in particular. Where this criticism seemed valid, we have taken it into consideration in the preparation of this edition. There is quite a bit more art and more humour. Again we attempted to print more prose, however what little we did receive did not match the poetry, either in quantity or quality. While the **Mitre** poets seem ready to tackle just about anything, and with an intensity which, though it may not be equalled by their artistry, is nevertheless genuine, the prose writers seem timid. The **Mitre** needs more prose but before it can be forthcoming its writers must demonstrate that essential "extra effort."

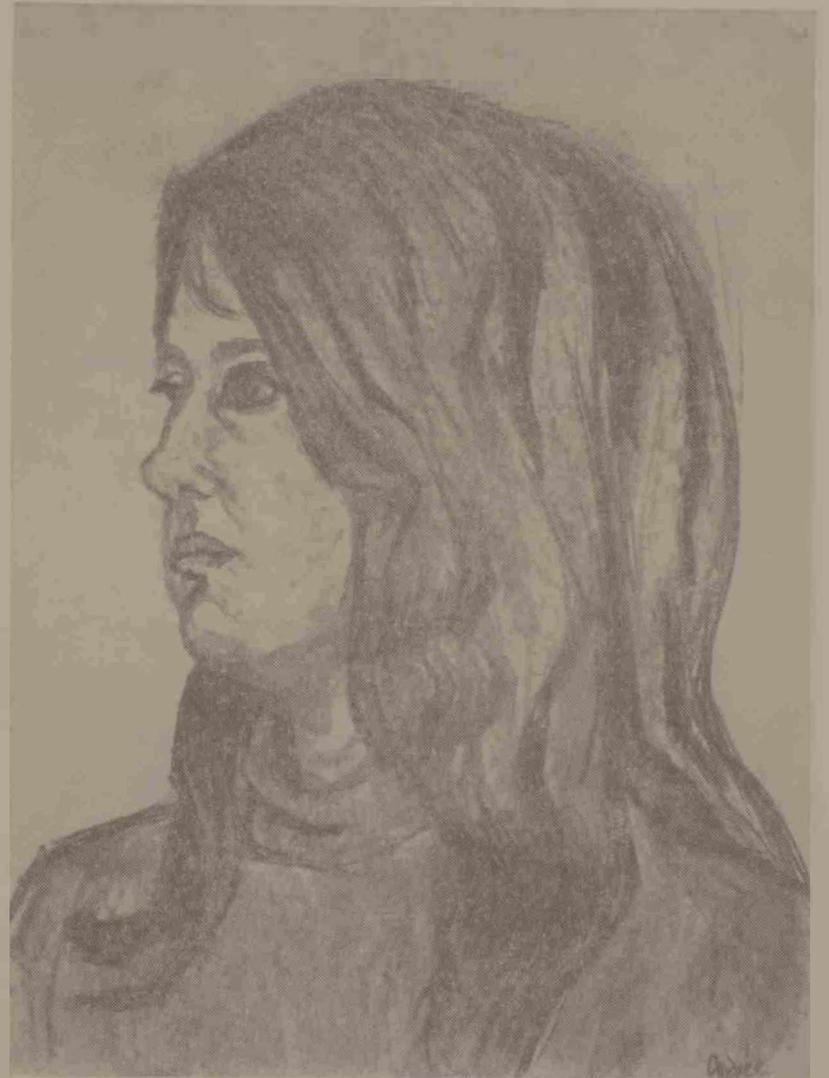
With regard to the poetry in the **Mitre**, Mr. Gustafson's article is critical of what is lacking but points towards that which is good and important. Student poetry, when viewed in the proper context, is not "amateurish, formless, meaningless, and obscure." It cannot always be compared with the accepted standards because it is the young writer, in this case the student, who must experiment beyond the "tried and true." For the few who succeed acceptance must eventually be their reward, as for those who write for the **Mitre** now and never write again, they and their readers can only have benefited, to some degree, from their attempts.

Perhaps nowhere does what remains of the "cloistered Bishop's" show itself so strongly as in the resentment and indignation shown by a large part of the student body to the predominant themes in **Mitre** poetry. Such critics are referred to the current literary issues from some of the larger urban universities. If student poetry is truthful and if the poets are indeed, shaping their own experience, such themes must be accepted and their importance, to the writer at least, recognized.

Mr. Ralph Gustafson awarded the prize for the best poem of the year to Michael Ondaatje. The best contribution from either issue this year was chosen jointly by Mr. Gustafson and Prof. Gray, Head of the English Department.

It remains for the **Mitre** to be judged on its own merits. For us, the **Mitre** continues to matter.

THE EDITOR.



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“ . . . To write a poem—a story or an essay—requires an extra effort, I admit, and the student may not feel that it is worth the extra effort just to see his name in print or to feel that he is mixing with the literati. In all probability he is also justified in thinking that his contribution to the Mitre will never appear in an anthology of Major British Writers or even Major Canadian writers. But such motives for writing, if not altogether rare, are irrelevant. It is not for these reasons I would suggest more students write.

To write a poem one must give one's experience shape, and to do this one must, to some extent, come face to face with one's own inner life. Such an encounter is always worth a little effort, and in an age such as ours, where men and women are notoriously out of touch with their inner lives, it may be worth double the price . . .

There was a time when a man of parts was expected to manage his voice as well as his horse, to handle a sonnet as well as a sword. As a rule, today, he can handle neither. He tends to take more pride in what he can possess than in what he can do. And rather than write a line on his mistress, he prefers to pay the copy-writer for a quatrain on soap. It may be easy to let others define the shape of our experience for us, but I submit that in the long run it is cheaper to write.”

(The Mitre, Vol. 2, 1963)
D. G. Jones

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THE MITRE

established 1893



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Assistant Editors • Judy Banks
Michael Ondaatje

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