
THE UNDERTAKER

His face is white as a snow-swept lane
His hands are withered and blue,
With his skin transparent like a window pane
And his nose a violet hue.
There was something about this man so old
He was neither big nor was he small.
His hair was gone from his forehead bold
And his eyes were like a vacant hall.
He wrapped his patients in a linen sheet
And never a word he said
As he laid them in their coffins neat
And gently covered the dead.

—JACQUES ASCOLI '60.

GROWING UP

The anticipation of the first day of school had my little mind in a state of furor. Then a child of only five years of age, I never had to think for myself as I always followed by brother Tom. He was three years older than I was and already had two years' experience in school. Tom had persuaded me not to start school on the next day as my troubles would then begin. We were sent off to bed every night at seven o'clock just before our neighbours would gather to talk over their boyhood days. However, Tom and I never failed to hear their discussion as we quietly lay face-down on the floor beside a ventilating hole in the ceiling. Many a night we were found asleep by the same hole after the sand-man had conquered the echoes of our neighbours' laughs. On many occasions, I overheard the neighbouring people tell of the school-master who had broken six or seven whips over each of their hands. The fear that I had of this old school-master was to become a reality on the morrow.

The first day was sunny as we left the house to carry out Tom's plans with our slates under our arms and a lunch in our pockets. From the house we could see the old, black, tarred roof of the school with a long pipe high in the air. Between the house and school, the village which I had seen with its slow and steady activities was to be observed more closely now by my more active senses. As we travelled over the hill we were deciding where to spend

the day in enjoyment and safety. We feared the watchful eye of our parents and the tattling of my brother's play-mates. The tinkling of the blacksmith's hammer on the anvil, horses going to and fro, the other boys and girls on the way to school, the apples in the orchards, the dogs barking at one another, the milk wagons, the leaves flying with the wind, all made me feel so excited that a feeling of coldness ran through me. Tom decided to go down a line to a near-by woods in the midst of which we encamped. After constructing a little house from the broken stumps and dried-up branches, Tom decided to teach me how to draw. Most of the day was spent in drawing these new animals and objects that I saw. The singing of birds, the charring of squirrels and the horns of automobiles echoing in the woods made a sweet harmonious music. We decided to light a fire to the dried red leaves that had fallen from the maple tree, but discovered that neither of us had a match. We were both becoming very tired as Tom had to answer all the questions that I asked him. I remember asking, "Why is that a tree?" When we heard the yells and cheers of the other boys going home after their first day in school, we went along too, after I was sternly warned not to tell where we had been. I was too tired to be afraid of what I had done or even to eat my supper.

The next morning I woke up later than usual although I had slept soundly all night through. To my surprise I saw water on the window pane, and it was still raining. The fear of the teacher, the truancy of yesterday, the distrust I had of my other play-mates, were called to my mind again as my father said in a kindly voice, "We'll drive you to school this morning." Tom insisted that we would walk and won the argument. The rain had ceased and the sun was peeping through the clouds when we set out. The sights were familiar to me so I was not as greatly excited as I was the day before. Although I feared the school-master, I was curious to see him. As we were in the valley of the village, the master was walking on top of the other hill almost at school. All I could see of him was his strange hat and long black coat. Tom told me that we would not go any closer to him as he would recognize us. We stopped off where the athletic promoters of the community were constructing a hockey rink. There we spent the day doing small jobs for the labourers, such as holding nails and carrying water. In return we were offered smokes which sickened us so much we returned home and

went quietly to bed. I also managed to get my new rubber boots filled with water and expected to be punished. Mother not only omitted the punishment, but taking pity on us, said that we would never walk to school again. I woke up during the night and heard Tom saying in his sleep, "The third time never fails". I then figured out that school days would begin tomorrow.

We awoke very early the next morning as the sun glittered in our eyes through the old arch windows in the centre of our room. The third day didn't fail. I put on the shirt that my mother had so artistically made. It was of a faded blue color similar to my short trousers. We jumped into the wagon and held on as the iron wheels rolled over the rocks up to the ancient school door. We had to enter the school although class had already begun. I trailed Tom through the long porch and then into the classroom. As we entered everyone turned around. Then the big square-shouldered school-master gave a sudden roar with strong, sharp nasal voice, "Turn around, sons and daughters!"

I stared at him in fright as he had a strap in his right hand. Everybody jumped in their seats and immediately turned around. He started at me with his black lustrous eyes. I stood trembling. I kept staring at him and at last he seated me with a small girl in the front seat of the class. Not daring to disobey, I sat down on the edge of the seat. Turning my head slightly towards the little girl, I kept one eye on her and the other on the teacher. At the same time I had my left forefinger in my mouth and my lower lip sucked in. My face was burning with a bright scarlet glow. When the bell rang at noon I kept staring at the stern school-master and did not move until Tom came and said, "Come let's go out on the grass and eat our lunches". During noon hour I occupied myself by picking up small bits of coal ashes that surrounded the school.

The afternoon classes began with the ringing of the school bell. I followed Tom into the school and proceeded up to the front seat to bashfully sit with my companion. The tension was diminishing little by little as now I could observe some objects in the class-room. The King's picture hanging over the schoolmaster's desk, the master's queer hat sitting on the right-hand corner of the desk, the library in the front right corner of the room, the box of chalk above the books, the experimenting table filled with

sand in the front left corner and the master's big black shoes sticking out from under his desk, were all objects that I saw for the first time. I had printed three lines of block letters on my slate before the bell rang for recess. Tom encouraged me to participate in a game of ball at recess and I thereby became acquainted with my schoolmates. A new sensation overtook me as I was now confident that I was one of the boys. I cheered and laughed with them and went into the school after recess quite settled for the first time. I no longer concentrated on the watchful eye of the schoolmaster but worked steadily at my slate.

On my way home from school I romped and laughed and played with the other boys. As I turned into the lane leading up to the front door, I saw my mother standing on the threshold awaiting me. I ran all the way up the lane and threw myself into my mother's waiting arms, exclaiming, "Mother, I like school".

—LLOYD GAUDET '55.

THE BANE OF RESIDENCY

Recently a survey conducted among United States college students shows that too much time is spent on sports. This is not an alarming conclusion, at least in the sense that it is what one would expect. In commenting on the results of this survey as applicable to Canadians, a prominent Maritime university president points out that athletics are not our disproportionate time consumer, but rather our main fault lies with the habits of resident students. In his opinion, resident students in their long drawn-out discussions over trivialities, are the most lavish spenders of that all important element in College life, time. From our own experience we can easily find reasons other than politeness for agreeing with him.

For two main reasons our environment is especially conducive to this fault. Firstly, as a group of students we are probably more closely knit than any other in Canada, so that our "one, big, happy family" gets extremely involved in brotherly affairs not always identifiable with a College as such. Secondly, because of High School association, many friendships and bonds of frivolous camaraderie are carried over into College years as an unfortunate hangover from days when such things were excusable.