

little puffs of snow being driven up by the struggling feet of the lynx, grunts arising from the lynx and squeals from the porcupine. Up to the trunk of a large knarled fir the struggle continued and here it stopped. The porcupine was evidently becoming exhausted, the tail stopped slashing, and the lynx, with the tip of the tail still between his teeth, contemplated the great fir. A few minutes later he seemed to have his plan worked out. With slow movements, his claws tearing off pieces of the rough bark all the while, he started to climb backwards up the fir, dragging the squealing porcupine after him. He had climbed so far now that the porcupine seemed to be standing on his head. Then with a quick jump the lynx hopped back on the snow, holding the tail in his mouth for a second and then releasing it. The momentum of the lynx's jump caused the porcupine to fall flat on his back and here he remained a second. That second was enough for the lynx, he was on the unprotected spot on the stomach in a flash, tearing and biting - - -

The little den under the pile of rocks is deserted now. Sometimes a lynx trots by, sees the little heap of quills and bones, smells at the entrance of the den and remembers - - -

BILL O'FLAHERTY '56.

VISIT TO AN IDEAL THESAURUS

(Conclusion)

The introductory remarks of His Excellent Power, Mr. Reason, were brief and to the point. In explaining the purpose of the institution of which he is the executive head, he constantly stressed the excellence of each and every intellect and its products. Certainly, he pointed out, this is an illustration of the fact of taking things for granted in that the average person is totally unaware that he possesses the greatest glory of God's creation. Because of the worth of this creature, the Creator has prepared for it a share of His happiness in His own kingdom. Of course its worth arises from its being a sharer in the very life and attributes of God Himself. Is it not proper then, he asked, to conserve the products of this most excellent of God's creations, as it itself is preserved? Although the question was purely rhetorical, I was nevertheless so moved by his

arguments that I loudly and emphatically agreed with every word he said. Apparently my sudden and unexpected outburst was not according to the rules of decorum for he seemed to have slightly lost composure before he proceeded to call in his four assistants.

Rather than introduce all four, Mr. Reason presented only his nephew, His Power Mr. Particular Reason, who in turn introduced the next and so on. Mr. Particular Reason I was told was in charge of the Museum, which with the Store Room, and Dump constituted the main divisions of the Thesaurus. How my hopes quickened when it was explained that the Museum contained all extraordinary thoughts as show-pieces! Now I was nearing the end of my search for the idea which has caused the greatest misery to mankind. Mr. Particular Reason was younger and more suave than his uncle, but possessed with him an apparent keen understanding and deep culture.

After Mr. Particular Reason had occupied his desk to the right of his uncle he presented His Power Mr. Memory who is Executive Supervisor of the Store Room wherein are kept all the ordinary thoughts not considered of sufficient interest for the Museum. Mr. Memory took his position to the left of Mr. Reason and called upon the next member of the staff, Mr. Phantasy, who had the rather undesirable task of supervising the Ideal Dump. This section of the Thesaurus contained all the falsehoods thought by man except those considered of sufficient oddity for the Museum. Mr. Phantasy who is sometimes called the Lord of Falsity in the Region of Distraction, was dressed very peculiarly in that each view of his garments was different in color and in fabric from the others to make his figure and appearance continually deceiving. After he took his seat beside Mr. Particular Reason, he presented the last of the executive staff in the person of Mr. Common-Sense. This last gentleman was junior in age and station to his associates and filled the position of Controller-in-Chief of Communications. Actually this position was one of great responsibility and required a wide variety of talents. As he took his place next to Mr. Phantasy, his great composure left no doubt that he had everything well under control and was quite sure of himself.

While the Senate was in sitting to hear the merits of my case I was given to the protocol officer until such time when my request for an inspection of the Thesaurus

could be accommodated. In the meantime I was told of another rather mysterious official by the name of Mr. Volition. He was mysterious in that he was unknown to all but Mr. Reason himself. When I was conducted to his quarters in the loftiest part of the Thesaurus, it was not difficult to see the reason for his seclusion. He was an extremely busy man as he had to monitor and ratify each and every item of communication within and without the Thesaurus. Now through a special observation window I could see him and his assistants (called by the title Virtue) busy with the proceedings of the Senate conference taking place below us. Mr. Volition was second in command to Mr. Reason and because executive authority was divided for the sake of order, he had to ratify, as a matter of form, all decisions of Mr. Reason and his immediate staff.

Before retiring that night in the suite of Mr. Phantasy, I was informed that early morning should be the beginning of my tours of the various departments beginning with that of my host, the Ideal Dump.

It is difficult to explain just what the Ideal Dump is like. It is massive in size occupying the whole of the left hemisphere of the Thesaurus and contains a great number of sealed glass tanks in which are kept the falsehoods. It was a most exasperating experience to view them and were it not the first visit of the day I fear I should not have withstood the shock. By way of description of a falsehood, it may be said that it appears as anything ought not to appear. The dreadful sense of frustration and futility evident in its very form is transmitted to the beholder. This is increased many times over by what we in the Region of Distraction would consider as poor and unartistic taste resulting from the excellence of the substance from which it is made. Imagine one of our most trivial artifacts, such as a wheelbarrow, made of the most beautiful red cedar and mahogany, inlaid with onyx, pearl and alabaster, studded with gold and platinum and then poorly constructed at that! Even such a malefaction is nothing compared to a falsehood. Being the product of the greatest created dynamism, and made from the finest spiritual substances, it is indescribable in its own excellence. The use to which it is put changes all this however, and now it becomes a thing of evil and destruction, the downfall of both its originator and the thought processes of others. The terror of a falsehood is further indication by the fact that each is separately kept in a glass tank of circulating fluid. It constantly

writhes in a most piteous manner generating such heat and fetid odor that the liquid serves both a cooling and deodorizing purpose.

After two hours which seemed as long as days viewing these monstrosities, I was most relieved to be given to the care of Mr. Memory for a look through the Store Room. Compared to the two previous hours the time now seemed uninteresting and uneventful, for after the system of filing thoughts was explained there was little else of interest. The section itself was by far the greatest of the Thesaurus and was evidently planned for indefinite expansion throughout the entire right hemisphere. Every human mind has a separate cabinet containing its though products, each of which is identified as to owner, time, circumstances, originality, grade of morality, and so on. The grade of morality by the way is decided by Mr. Volition and his staff. The set-up for storage of thoughts is much less elaborate here for they are not in motion and can be stored as easily as any artifact. One interesting fact was that the sections varied in size for different people and for different classes, nationalities and sexes. From experience it can be closely ascertained what size section a particular type of mind will require. "Rarely", Mr. Memory boasted, "have we had to reallocate space!"

At last in the company of Mr. Common Sense, I was nearing the goal of my search. We first entered the Museum at the very apex of its huge dome from where we could see the entire lay-out beneath. This smaller hemisphere which partly enveloped the two larger lying behind and on either side of it, was divided into two main areas: one for the good the other for the evil thoughts. The many ideas in both these categories were arranged systematically according to the manner of two trees: the Tree of Order and the Tree of Confusion. The main ideas formed the bases of the trunks, while from them advanced others to complete the trunk and fill out the many branches until the peripheral twigs of present-day output were produced.

Down on floor-level we moved quickly along the outline of the display forming the Tree of Order. To attempt a description of the ideas would be utter folly as no words could express the wonder of these spiritual objects of such excellence that even Mr. Common Sense was ever ravished by them. Being all of the same immaterial substance they differed only according to the accidental qualities of

shape and color. At the top of the trunk of the Tree of Order, there was a most beautiful idea from which all others spring as branches: it was the idea of Perfect Love had as its author Jesus Christ. It was explained that thousands of years the pedestal had been vacant until a break in the logical progression of human ideas was found. Throughout the display there were many ideas of sin in form but none was half so pleasing. Some of the ideas on the Tree of Order were inscribed with such names as Jacob, David, Joseph, Aaron, Aristotle, Galileo, Da Vinci, Cecelia, Columbus, Ts'ai Lun, Nagovsky, Ripley, Al Capone (with his shmoo), Churchill (with his iron curtain), Freud (with his chicken's third leg) and so on.

Before going to the base of the trunk we started at the periphery of the Tree of Confusion. Here again ideas were of the same substance as previously, but of the most horrid shapes imaginable to beat even those in the Dump. Many times I gasped in revulsion at the monstrosities above such names as Eve, Mrs. Lot, Arius, Zeno, Euripides, Pope Alexander, Diderot, Dewey, Monroe, Galileo and many others. The Colossus of Rhodes was among the older masterpieces while the Piltdown Man and the Missing Link shared the spotlight of more recent times.

Coming now to the trunks of the trees which lay at the end, Mr. Common Sense led the way to the first idea of the Tree of Order. This idea was very large in size and had the general appearance of a full-grown lotus. This was the idea of "Other". Gazing upon it I experienced my first real sense of detachment so great that it was some minutes before I regained cognizance of my surroundings.

Mr. Common Sense was a quiet observer of the reaction, but when I turned to gaze upon the base thought in the Tree of Confusion, he slowly withdrew. Noticing that I was somewhat annoyed as the presence of another to share the joy of a completed mission would have been comforting. Little did I realize that what was to be seen as the idea causing the greatest misery to mankind, was none other than the idea of Self! Little more need be said. I reflected not the noblest qualities of others, but the meanest imperfections of the beholder. Naturally the junior member of the Supreme Council of the Intellectually Curious was uninterested.

J. G. S. '54.