



### GIVE HIM BACK HIS BEARD!

People nowadays are often quite ready to call a fellow an "old goat", but they would think it utterly revolting if he tried to live up to his name by growing that characteristic, foamy outgrowth, a beard. On the street not long ago I saw an old man with a fibrous, grey beard. As some people around noticed this unique individual, they peered at him intently and exchanged giggling remarks about how early "Santa Claus" was this year. But why Santa Claus? Why couldn't the beard be more closely associated with the sailor or the pirate as it was in former days, instead of with this new, artificial character? Perhaps this is characteristic of our soft, urbane age, and points to the fact that we are a less-adventurous people. The beard has invariably carried with it suggestion of the mysterious. Many of us think of the bearded bohemian that we see around today as a mighty peculiar individual. Our suspicion toward him often rises out of our conception of that supreme villain of literature, Bluebeard.

In more populous centres, however, beards are coming back into favor. More and more men are acquiring these ticklish appendages. The ancients regarded the beard as a sacred token of virility. The Babylonians considered no oath legal unless it were sworn "by the beard". Their beards were elaborate affairs, arranged in curls and stiffened with perfumed gum. The Egyptians were clean-shaven, but on state occasions the Pharaoh strapped a narrow, false beard to his chin.

There have been periods in history when the beard was the apex of fashion and other times when it was forbidden. But it was in the Elizabethan period that the beard really came into its own. The barber stiffened and perfumed the beards of the young gallants, dyed them a fashionable color, curled them and dressed them in a variety of styles. Talk about "The Rape of a Lock"! Some beards were twisted like a stick of licorice, some pointed, some double pointed, others cut square, round and oblong. Then every precaution was taken to prevent their being ruffled. A period of lapse came in and beards disappeared. It wasn't until early in the Nineteenth Century that they reappeared, this time with sideburns and mustaches. They seemed to grow thicker and

heavier as the century progressed so that even young men assumed the look of venerable prophets. By the early 20th century men wearied of them again and settled for mustaches. In their heyday, mustaches were heavy and drooping, handle-barred, and others stiffened with wax.

Today we are not very much in one direction or the other, but unless we frequent the waterfront, we don't often notice exhibits of this manly outgrowth. Only once have I seen a beard-growing contest (and that for Hallowe'en). But it is rather detracting to us that we live in a society that grows everything, but cannot dispose our men to cultivate the natural appendage, the beard. We might note that in the most patriarchal of societies when man stood for most (in the days of Imperial Rome and in the Nineteenth Century Europe), the beard was of prime importance in their conventions. It is also significant that we should look to the sea and its travellers to find the cultivation of such foamy splendour to a worthwhile degree. It all points to the fact that we are guilty of some fuzzy thinking. Are we becoming a society of male conformists? If the ladies could sport such appendages, I feel sure they would not be neglected, and the diversity of styles would reach an unfathomed peak. Who knows? Our female populous might even become a joy to behold. But, as in our noble past, it is for men to break the social shackles and to maintain their individuality and virility, despite what Mr. Gillette might have to say.

—POPEYE

### BEFORE SUMMER COMES

'Twas the week before finals  
And all through the halls,  
Many students were stirring,  
Before riding their falls.

The books were closed tight,  
Neatly packed on their shelves,  
While frolicking students  
Enjoyed themselves.

Too late they'll see  
What we all know is there,  
The writing on the wall  
For all saints to beware.

The Freshmen, God bless them,  
Are too young to know  
What happens to students  
Who let their work go.

The pride of the campus,  
Sophomores, by name,  
Will learn things the hard way  
'Cause they still act the same.

A step higher are Juniors,  
Next year's graduates,  
Who, if they don't buckle down,  
Will have the same fate.

And now for the Seniors  
Who work hard each day (?);  
This year is their last,  
They're through come what may.