

ENGINEERS POETIC

(Editor's Note: The ten poems here printed were written as regular class assignments in Mr. Wilson R. Dumble's English 412 proficiency class during the winter quarter, 1936-1937. The authors were all registered as freshmen in the College of Engineering at the time of composition.)

The Boundless Boredom

In the boundless boredom of the plain,
Where the moon now dies, now lives to die again;
Where eternal copper is the color of the sky,
Now the moon, the lived moon, slants down its pallid
pallor
Upon the ghastly glistening snow with shadows that
mystify;
In the boundless boredom of the plain,
Where the moon now dies, now lives to die again;
Where the bitter biting wind benumbing even doubt,
Now the silence, leaden silence ringing crisp and clear,
In the stillness, in the muteness where my heart cries out.

—J. E. Z.

The Airplane

Master of the sky,
Hauler of freight,
Animate and inanimate,
Soaring on high.

Roar of the motor,
Whirr of propeller,
A song of speed and power.
At night

A lonely sound above the world.
In the day
A vision of grace and shining metal.
The airplane.

—W. H. C.

The Weather

I am the weather
Of whom you mortals talk so much.
I help you with rain, sun, and wind;
But you, you fools, are not content.

You try to bare all my secrets,
And I, in retaliation,
Must punish you
With floods
And droughts
And storms
. and Death.

—R. L.

A Man Speaks

A man speaks;
His voice
Is heard half-way 'round the world.
A miracle, you say;
Perhaps. A miracle
Of wires and tubes and gadgets
Which, taken all as one,
Can capture just a bit of Fire,
A tiny Spark from a Master-flame;
A Flame which may consume the fool
Who dares to take too much.

* * * * *

A man spoke the other day.
His voice was heard ten miles.
A man may speak tomorrow and
His words may echo on the sand
Of a far off world;
Some tiny speck of Cosmic stuff
That a God once used to play with;
And, growing tired of idle joy,
Cast it from Him, as a child might throw
A worn out toy.
A man speaks!
So what?

—J. H.

Epitaph To A Book

O messenger of truth and falsehood,
Expounder of new philosophies,
You bring forth
New creations of the mind.
The interpretations of dreamers and idealists
Are found on your pages.
The world itself is your host and theme.
As voice of radical and conservative,
You are the sole conquerer of time
In your preservation of man's doctrines of life.

—R. J. M.

Originality

Can I say that what I say is good?
Can I presume
To claim my words as new,
When all I think
Or say
Or do
Is shaped upon a form
Which the whims and fancies
Of everyone I've met
Has moulded?

—J. H.

China Clipper

She floats
Swanlike
On the bay.

She stirs
Slides
Through the water.

She rises
Flies
Into the air.

She climbs
Fades
In the distance.

The China Clipper
Gone

—K. E. W.

To A Test Tube

Test Tube
Most mighty prophet,
Creator of a civilization,
Within thy narrow walls
Lie the destinies of man,
The fates of nations,
The Secrets of the world.

—W. E. H.

Strike!

White torrents feeding massive wheels,
Hungry dynamos lapping up swift waters,
In thee there is no flood of Hell;
Only power, strength and life-giving energy.

Then, there were all of these:
The vibration of wheels and men,
Colloids of smoke, dirt and oil,
Production fever, sales promotion,
And streamlined energy.

But now:
Thrice the crowd has raised its huge cry,
Mammoth wheels dead and vibrant energies dormant;
What, more terrible than the human flood
In its wrath!

—L. H.

Busy Fingers

Short fingers, long fingers;
Dirty fingers, clean fingers;
Unkempt fingers, manicured fingers;
Madly hurrying to complete their job,
Foreman and laborer alike intent on their chosen task.

Rakish cars, shiny cars,
Coupes, sedans, cabrolets,
Sport cars, business cars,
All rolling out as finished products,
The final result of thousands of busy fingers.

—L. D.