

The Knowledge Bank at The Ohio State University

Ohio State Engineer

Title:	The Engineer's Bookshelf
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Issue Date:	Jul-1939
Publisher:	Ohio State University, College of Engineering
Citation:	Ohio State Engineer, vol. 22, no. 7 (June, 1939), 9.
URI:	http://hdl.handle.net/1811/35635
Appears in Collections:	Ohio State Engineer: Volume 22, no. 7 (June, 1939)

THE ENGINEER'S BOOKSHELF

By WILSON R. DUMBLE

THIS issue The Engineer's Bookshelf is written by some of my students, for I am presenting for the first time some of their poetry; and that, I believe, demands a bit of explanation.

During the last week in English 412 and 414 I plan to devote a recitation period to modern poetry. The idea is talked over with the students, I read to them some of the poems of Robert Frost, of Carl Sandburg, of Alfred Noyes, of Dorothy Parker, and of others. Students are asked to use some of those poems as models and to try their own hands at singing in verse the glories of the mighty atom, for example. Nothing is compulsory about the assignments; I suggest that if the muse strikes, a few words should be put down on paper. I admit that not every student in the classes writes a poem; and I admit that every poem handed to me is not startlingly good. But, apparently, the effort has been made, and the results in some instances are rather amazing.

The following poems were written by members of the Winter Quarter classes of English 414. With exceptions of some initialing, the poems are unsigned.

« • »

Supplication

We who have fought, and fought in vain
Ask you never to fight again;
No matter what your cause may be;
Heaven, Hell, or that you may be free.
For what did fighting do for us;
We who died because of another's lust,
We lost our lives, our eyes, our hides
Just to satisfy the prides
Of some other men who had their cash
Behind the fields of our last dash.
Our wives and children have not gained
Just because some of us were lamed.
The world is not a better place
Because of a worthless selfish ace
Some tyrant held in his hand
In order to expand his land.
But worse, far worse, for civilization
Cannot last if some other nation
Marches in war and threatens again,
That which we fought for, and fought in vain.

—T. A. S.

« • »

How to Get Up in the World

Boy
Nitric Acid
Glycerin
Heaven!

The Subway

Far down the track a sullen roar is heard
Faint lights appear,
Grow brighter;
The sound growls louder
Louder,
Until the very universe seems filled with deafening
clatter,
With the noise of this abysmal monster,
A shriek of brakes, a pause—
A gong sounds its strident warning
"Next stop—Times Square."

« • »

Photographs

A group of faded snapshots
Of me at a tender age,
Having all the usual elements:
Showing me crying in mother's arms,
Expressing fear, or rage, or foiled egotism,
All hopeless,
But yet I'll keep them!

—A. F.

« • »

Anaesthetic

"The new interne is very handsome;
More ether."—Always more ether.
"Dr. Grey said—"
Whirling and floating.
Soft feathers blown
Spirally upward and outward
By a gentle breeze.
"Dr. —!"
Fluffy, cotton-like clouds
Drifting lazily skyward.
More feathers; always snow-like
Downy feathers.
More clouds; always pure white
Soft clouds.
Now fog; lots of fog.
Then—thick, inky-black,
Almost liquid fog!
Clear-sky emptiness—
Then, deep-earthed darkness.

—E. J. T.

« • »

The Quick and the Dead

Here we lie in a deep shell hole,
Dirty of body, and damned of soul,
Torn to pieces;
We've played our role,
And here we die in this filthy hole.