The loud applause was absorbed into silence again as Yehudi parted the curtains at the back of the stage and came forward. The huge Stanford chapel was very still as the violinist began his last encore. An almost universal sigh stirred the audience as the music swelled. "Ave Maria—" Yehudi’s mother in the first row gazed downward at her hands tightly clasped in her lap, because she knew that her son was playing this song for her alone.

Two high school girls, meekery stilled for a moment, looked up from their giggling to sense dimly that which had already caused the disillusioned old man near by to brush the back of his hand furtively against his cheek. The placid old spinster who had been frowning at the world in general allowed her face to smooth into wistfulness. A little ignorant alien, who had been given a ticket, and who had been sitting in the back row clutching the chair in front of him, was rapt and attentive, completely lost in the music.

When the song was finished, there was no applause, just silence. Half-smiling, Yehudi made his last bow and was gone. The audience filed out, not talking.

Shirley Jackson, '38

The man was a triumph of anonymity. Certainly there was no single feature or characteristic which could be accounted distinguishing. A nondescript sort of man, you would call him, of average height and weight, age uncertain—anywhere between 40 and 55—, with thin, rather untidy graying brown hair, mild blue eyes, grizzled mustache hiding an indecisive mouth, which was redeemed by a square chin. His blue serge suit, while neat, was obviously not new, and his well-blackened shoes had been recently half-soled.

His voice and mannerisms completed the personification of an underpaid clerk or bookkeeper. He had a habit of passing his hand nervously over his hair before he spoke, to gain the confidence he never had. Evidently he was acutely conscious of the fact that his necktie refused to conceal his collar button, for every few minutes found his hand creeping cravat-wards. His voice, too, fitted his personality as a banana fits its skin; it was timidly ingratiating, neither tenor nor bass.

The man looked like an inmate of the city directory. Like thousands of others, he helped form the drab background upon which the richer, more glowing colors of life are woven.

Nancy Gay, '38.

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PREFACE

It seems desirable, even necessary, that this booklet, this offering to our public, this little literary effort going just now into a world already full of big, successful efforts, should have a preface. It needs one for several obvious reasons: in the first place, because all prefaces add a certain touch of teacupliness and whimsy which, by the grace of Christopher Morley, has worked its way deep into the hearts of American literati; secondly, because books of this sort look so very naked without one; but mostly, just because we are trying a plan that is blatantly, perhaps offensively new, and we want you, whoever you may be, to be prepared, so that we may receive your blessing or your confounding with strong hearts and the peaceful knowledge that you were at least forewarned.

The chance of finding at large in a college enough genuine, enduring prose and poetry to justify using such material as the only standard for the substance of this sort of magazine, seems to us a very long chance. It has been for some time an amusing fiction to pretend that there is unlimited mature creative ability running rampant over all undergraduate campuses, waiting to be uncovered to the eager world. If this unwarranted assumption were true, the situation would be most unfortunate. During one’s student days immaturity of thought and style is not only normal but unavoidable. Any attempt to make the would-be author self-conscious by attributing to him powers which he knows he has not, is a direct offence against all standards of fairness.

Therefore we have made our book a record of the best purposeful writing that has come to our hands. Many of our selections, as you will see, are rhetorical exercises, showing not only unusual facility of phrases, and some real ingenuity, but also persistent attention to accurate detail, and that rare quality, patience. Some of the verse we have here is obviously derivative. We have tried to pattern after worthy sources in this, and will not refuse credit for whatever success we may have attained. Here and there you will come upon verses which have come into being spontaneously, out of as deep feeling as is possible to people of college age. In every selection there is sincerity, born of devotion to higher ends than we have yet achieved. We have meant to represent the Women’s College here. If it shows itself through this book to be as earnest, as conscious of beauty, as full of undeviating, consistent purpose as it really is, we, the Scribblers, by whom the book has actually been assembled, are not without honor, even in our own country.

B. E. S., ’35