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The American Intellectual

By MORTON CRONIN

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One of Emerson's complaints when he wrote "The American Scholar" was that his country had not yet developed a sizeable body of intellectuals. That complaint is seldom heard any more. Nowadays the grievance which spokesmen for this group express most often is not that America lacks intellectuals, but that she does not love them, that in fact she rejects them and refuses to listen to their counsel on any important subject.

Whether America has actually jilted its intellectuals or not, it is undoubtedly true that many of them believe that she has. They often describe their characteristic symptom as a feeling of *alienation*. That word is so romantic, not to say exotic, and vibrates, cello-like, with such beautifully tragic overtones that it is almost enough in itself to win an argument. But when a feeling of repudiation flourishes in a nonintellectual, it generally receives a chillingly clinical designation: *persecution complex*. Which is the fairer term depends, of course, on the facts of the matter. Is it true that the American intellectual is rejected and considered of no account in his society? I am going to suggest that it is not true. Father Bruckberger told part of the story when he made the simple observation that it is the intellectuals who have rejected America (*Harper's*, February, 1956). But they have done more than that. They have grown dissatisfied with the role of the intellectual. It is they, not America, who have become anti-intellectual.

What is an Intellectual?

The object of our scrutiny pleads for definition. What is an intellectual? I shall define him as *properly* an individual who has elected as his primary duty and pleasure in life the activity of thinking in a Socratic way about moral problems, whether these be social or individual. He explores such problems consciously, articulately, and candidly, first by asking factual questions, then by asking moral questions, finally by suggesting action which seems appropriate in the light of the factual and moral information which he has elicited. His function is analogous to

that of a judge, who must first ascertain the facts, then the law, and in the end must accept the obligation of revealing in as obvious a manner as possible the course of reasoning which led him to his decision.

This definition excludes many individuals who are usually referred to as intellectuals—the average scientist, for one. I have excluded him because, while his accomplishments may contribute to the solution of moral problems, he has not been charged, either by society or by himself, with the task of accosting any but the factual aspects of those problems. Like other human beings, he encounters moral issues even in the everyday performance of his routine duties—he is not supposed to cook his experiments, manufacture evidence, or doctor his reports. But his primary task is not to think about the moral code which governs his activity, any more than a businessman is expected to dedicate his best energies to an exploration of business ethics. During most of his waking life he will take his code for granted, as the businessman takes his ethics.

The definition also excludes the majority of teachers, even on the college level, despite the fact that teaching has traditionally been the method whereby many intellectuals earn their living. The intellectual bent of most teachers is only slightly above the average for the population as a whole. They may teach very well, and more than earn their salaries, but most of them bring little or no independent reflection to bear on human problems which involve moral judgment. This description even fits the majority of eminent, and justly eminent, scholars. Being learned in some branch of human knowledge is one thing; living in “public and illustrious thoughts,” as Emerson would say, is something else.

The definition also excludes creative writers and artists, as such. They make an indispensable contribution to moral life, but it is not a Socratic contribution. They must dramatize and embellish their argument, and this necessity introduces many supra-realistic and extra-logical elements. In fact, an artist is well within his rights if he departs this world more or less completely—in music and modern painting this is the rule rather than the exception—and creates something in the realm of pure art which does not answer at all to the moral or sociological world in the ordinary sense.

The role of the intellectual must also be distinguished from that of the politician. The latter shares with the intellectual a preoccupation with moral problems, but he is not free to range where he wishes in his inspection of man's estate and to consider human problems on whatever level of abstractness or concreteness he desires. Furthermore, his duties prevent him from developing that candor which is indispensable in the intellectual. One of his principal obligations is to compose differences, and this obligation will often generate prudential reasons for not stating the whole truth as he sees it. He may think very well, and after the

Socratic manner, but if he consistently reveals the full nature of his thinking he will become a bad politician, and eventually no politician at all.

Finally, the definition separates the intellectual from the saint, the prophet, and the revolutionary. These last make the mightiest of all contributions to moral life. If any individual human beings can be said to create or discover moral values for an entire people, they are the ones who do it. But, once again, the character of their main activity cannot be called Socratic. Their typical utterances are short, sententious, and authoritative. What makes men saints, prophets, or revolutionaries is not so much their plans for mankind as it is their determination to inaugurate those plans. Convinced that they have found the truth, they concentrate—rightly, for them—on living it and making it prevail, in the course of which they do not seek the dialectical opposition which the Socratic thinker requires. Their characteristic tendency is to fight their battle with slogans and vivid affirmations which briskly summarize their thought and experience.

Precisely where, then, can one lay hold of intellectuals? Well, they can be detected in any occupation, although in some occupations you will have to conduct a long day's hunt in order to bag one. Some teachers are intellectuals. Also some journalists. Even some editors. Some clergymen. Most theologians, I suspect, although I never met one. Some lawyers, usually young ones with time on their hands or old ones on the federal bench. Very few doctors nowadays, for obvious reasons. Some college presidents, theoretically, but I cannot remember any in my time, except Hutchins and one other whose name would not mean anything to you. An occasional businessman, so help me. Some women, no doubt. Even longshoremen contribute their portion to this category, as Eric Hoffer proves.

But in no case will a man's trade or profession necessarily mark him as an intellectual. That status is only achieved by the cultivation of three characteristics, none of which has anything in particular to do with the classifications used in employment offices.

First of all, an intellectual is interested in moral problems as they concern the generality of people, not just as they concern himself, his relatives, and his close associates. The problems with which he himself is afflicted will influence the direction of his thinking, but his thinking does not stop with whatever *modus vivendi* he works out between the world and himself. Briefly, he considers general problems, seeks general solutions, and contributes to the public philosophy.

Secondly, his views are fully articulated. He is a conscious thinker. He collects evidence, weighs and sifts it, and exhibits a developed capacity for separating the true from the false. He does not mind dis-

closing his premises and explaining his terms. He does not disdain exceptions and qualifications, nor shrink from ironies and paradoxes. His mode of discourse, in short, is at the opposite extreme from the gnomic utterance of the intuitive thinker.

His third and most important characteristic is his willingness—indeed, his eagerness—to subject his views to critical discussion. If he is a good example of his type he will glow with health and good humor in an argument. He stalks truth in the dialectic maze the way some men maneuver for love in the labyrinth of romance. Yet his object is not to score debating points. For him the pursuit of truth must be cooperative, as well as dialectic, and all the pleasure vanishes when that pursuit turns into a mere contest of wills with his interlocutor. It is easy for him to say “I don’t know,” and he is impressed when his own questions evoke that reply.

From what I have said concerning the occupational habitat of intellectuals, it naturally follows that, despite their absorption in what is more or less public business, they do not always occupy a public stage. Indeed, as I conceive the species, most of them do not. When the circumstances of their lives invite publication, some portion of their reflections will usually appear in print. And a few, like Walter Lippmann, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Sidney Hook, will become really public figures. But the type is not determined by the size of its audience. An intellectual’s audience may consist of only a small circle of friends—no congregation, no band of students even—and he will still perform the intellectual’s function as truly and authentically as his famous brothers.

What Good is an Intellectual?

The term *intellectual* is one of those words which are both honorific and pejorative. Among those who deserve it, there are men who shrink from it, men who feel ennobled by it, and men in whom both of these reactions are in sweet conflict. This is about as it should be, for there will always be bad as well as good intellectuals. But that is not the worst of it. Even in the hands of the best of intellectuals, the Socratic method of arriving at moral judgments may, like any other method known on this planet, guide men to hell as well as to heaven. An intellectual may study the available facts with matchless care, press home the most intelligent questions, develop his argument from start to finish with irreproachable logic, square his recommendation of policy with the best moral values which either his culture or his inspiration can provide—and still, when all is said and done, he is only guessing. The ultimate result is determined by Mr. X. (I do not want to offend the American intellectual by using any three-letter word.) Some things are so well known

that they are hard to remember—the fact, for instance, that what justifies the intellectual process of reaching moral decisions is not that it is unerring but only that it presumably increases the percentage of lucky bets.

The uneasiness which afflicts the position which intellectuals occupy in society also results from the fact that no preparation of any formal character, no ritual of initiation, no conjunction of the planets at time of birth must necessarily precede the practice of their vocation. Like politics or teaching English, anyone can try his hand at it, and proof of his incapacity will never be as conclusive as if he tried to splash about in theoretical physics. He can always scream that having studied with Whitehead and knowing where to put the commas are not what make the philosopher. And he will be right. The occasional forays of irregulars into intellectual analysis will commonly strike more telling blows than campaigns prepared by gouty professionals.

But the status of the intellectual wavers for still another reason. The Socratic technique, even when judged by its own standards, cannot be brought to the purity and finish that, say, chiropractic technique can be brought to. There are no pure intellectuals, and there will always be some in whom their function has been so pitifully corrupted by immoderate zeal or unconscious commitments that the best they can offer is excellent logic marching superbly towards the wrong conclusion, with only one more day of history necessary for all the world to see its falseness. And there is no remedy for these aberrations. The sensitivity to moral and human values which keeps the intellectual process from being an empty exercise in formal logic is also the thing which makes the intellectual susceptible to those loyalties which compel him to suppress facts, ignore considerations, and substitute harrumphing indignation for thoughtful candor.

Finally, any assessment of the value of an intellectual must reckon with the circumstance that his apparatus for distilling moral truth and manufacturing social policy does not enjoy a monopoly. Other contrivances compete with his for this business, some of which are called intuition, spontaneous insight, susceptibility to revelation, and unconscious reasoning. These devices represent the free play of intelligence, and owe their share of success to the fact that human affairs will sometimes yield in a flash their true nature to the moral entrepreneur whose formal equipment does not rear up between him and reality. Another operation in this market consists in invoking precedent and tradition whenever possible, thus offering both the intuitive and the intellectual products which have been turned out in the past. This mode of supplying the demand for moral ideas pleases more customers than all the others combined. And then there is the artist's practice, which appeals to those who like precision work. It often unites in varying and unpre-

dictable proportions all the other processes, including the intellectual's, but receives its most distinctive character from its concern for esthetic or stylistic values. And this concern, rarely separable in representational art and literature from a concern for moral truth, is perhaps what gives the artist that right combination of engagement and perspective which the intellectual also needs but too often lacks.

Our protagonist, in short, is never infallible, he is never perfectly intellectual, and his system is only one of several for arriving at acceptable decisions. I have dwelt on the limitations of the intellectual mode because its typical American proponent careens towards the assumption that brains and good intentions can accomplish anything. With no embarrassment whatever, he will declare his *faith* in human reason. *Faith* is the right word, but it is odd that he should use it when we remember his deprecation of it in other contexts.

On the other hand, we cannot dispense with any method which experience has demonstrated will increase our chances of success in reaching for moral truth. The intellectual possesses such a method. Popes must have theologians, as well as models of piety and stout bishops. Kings need privy councilors, wise in policy and deft in expressing it, along with patriot-heroes and capable ministers. And a healthy society requires independent intellectuals, men who work for neither Pope nor King, as well as solid citizens and good providers.

Every organized segment of church, state, and private life stands to benefit whenever the nonintellectual's resort to custom, intuition, or esthetic inspiration is checked and supplemented by the Socratic explorations which are the intellectual's particular business. But the intellectual activity which concerns us most in this discussion is that which private individuals carry on for the benefit of the public philosophy. Other things being equal, they are the intellectuals *par excellence*, for they can achieve a maximum of independence and candor. The interests of the state, of the church, and of private groups of all sorts, as interpreted by their official servants, including the intellectuals among them, have an ineradicable tendency to separate from the interests of the generality. It is the free intellectuals who constitute *society's* Kitchen Cabinet or Brain Trust, and help these servants keep their attention focused on the big picture.

Finally, the value of an article is determined, as economists say, by its scarcity as well as its utility. A good intellectual is hard to find, and even a not-so-good one is, like a so-so husband, not always obtainable when you want one. We know how to contrive as many corporation lawyers and baby specialists as we need, but formulas for making intellectuals are only rumors.

How Should an Intellectual Behave in Society?

Now that we have said what an intellectual is and have suggested both the limitations and the usefulness of his *modus operandi*, we can consider the question of his proper relations with the rest of society. And in doing this we shall come more often to what is wrong with American intellectuals.

Like other individuals who perform special functions, the intellectual requires some special privileges. As everyone knows, the most important of these is the right, not only to subject established views to a more poignant examination than is customary among most of his fellow citizens, but to state the results of his examination in a public manner without provoking the social and economic pressures with which society usually protects its established code.

Contrary to what one often hears, freedom for intellectuals—among professors it is called academic freedom—is special. It is as special as the scientist's right to practice vivisection or the judge's right to render a binding judgment. Where it differs from these rights is in the fact that everyone shares in it to some extent, and no one's share, including the intellectual's, is easy to measure. *But the intellectual's share is always larger than that of the average citizen.*

Many American intellectuals delight in suggesting that *everyone* should be free to express whatever opinions he wishes without any contraction of his social or economic opportunities. When this suggestion is not the cool product of intellectual demagoguery, it is simply the result of a naive conception of how societies are necessarily organized.

It should not be necessary to repeat that no freedom, intellectual or otherwise, is ever absolute for anyone. Furthermore, the activity of most people inevitably commits them to programs of cooperative endeavor whose ideological basis can be *widely* reconsidered only at infrequent intervals. Societies are not founded on questions; they are founded on answers, however spurious, and can accommodate only a limited number of individuals whose regular business is to challenge those answers. There are people who concede that cohesion is an indispensable attribute of a viable society but would deny society the mechanisms by which it achieves cohesion—a fatuity akin to the one which dominates those men who urge their government to negotiate international agreements but to forego as an indelicacy any effective means of enforcement.

Now, it may be that a given population as a whole should be freer than it is to express opinions. But no matter how free it becomes in this respect, its intellectuals—if it has any—must be freer. This may be undemocratic, as the scientist's special right or the judge's may be,

but without these special rights we can have no scientists, judges, or intellectuals.

I must now recite the killjoy lesson that exceptional privileges usually entail exceptional obligations. The intellectual's most important obligation consists in maintaining a greater degree of independence, integrity, and candor in his relations with the world than can be reasonably expected of most men. His primary duty is to tell the whole truth as he sees it, in detail as well as in general. His primary duty is not to make that truth prevail. In fact, if he slips too deeply into the tactical maneuvers of social action, especially those which require close organizational ties, he will, like a judge who wades in politics, evoke the suspicion that he can no longer be trusted with his special prerogative. And this suspicion will be justified by the common experience of mankind. For when an individual becomes profoundly involved in a program of political action, he usually cannot be counted on to make a fair assessment of opposing programs. Such involvement on the part of an intellectual will be enough to establish the presumption that he has stopped being an intellectual and can now with propriety be treated as factionalists treat one another.

No one can say for certain just when the line is crossed which separates the domain of the intellectual from that of the party man. There can be no Hatch Act for intellectuals. Furthermore, the location of the line will vary with historical circumstances and with the temperament of the individual concerned. But it is important for practical as well as theoretical purposes to acknowledge that the line always exists and that reasonable men can at least identify those instances in which it has been grievously overstepped.

It has been a long time since an apartment in the ivory tower was a fashionable residence for an American intellectual. In so far as this desertion of the old neighborhood has reduced a preoccupation with trivialities, as exemplified in much of the study formerly lavished on classical languages, its results have been admirable. But to the extent that it has obliterated the necessary distinction between intellectuals and their fellow citizens, its results have not been admirable. This distinction cannot be erased, even in the name of democracy, without the emaciation of intellectuals, and eventually of democracy too. The unromantic fact is that an intellectual should, when he purports to function as an intellectual, occupy a position which is somewhat remote from the urgencies and envelopments of political life. On the other hand, his reflections will not be worth much if he has had no experience of such intimacies. And his aim in life is not to achieve the impartiality of the wife in Lincoln's story who exclaimed, "Go it husband, go it bear." But when an intellectual practices his vocation he must draw back from his

experience and maximize the tranquility with which he brings that experience to the study of human problems. He must even listen seriously to whatever the bear has to say for himself. It may be that this necessity is one of the sources of error in the Socratic method. When enough people in a society have acquired a fierce taste for hot loyalty and pungent discipline, the intellectual whose mouth does not water for these sensations may lose touch with social reality. If he does lose touch, events will sweep past him and he will be left spinning like a top. But so be it. It is his occupational hazard. Even under favorable conditions his method will not always work.

No one can define with exactness that blend of thought and feeling, of detachment and engagement, which yields the best intellectual results. But the presence of too much feeling is easy to detect, and it is characteristic of the person who passes for an intellectual in America. The test is a simple one: How does he respond to opposition? How eager is he to venture his opinions in free and dispassionate debate? More often than not, he is an individual who, like any orthodox citizen, confines his ideological activity to singing hymns of faith with like-minded individuals. He accuses America of being anti-intellectual, but his own consciously-held conception of his proper role has extinguished an essential difference between the intellectual and his countrymen—for he is proud of his emotion, cultivates it on principle, and protects it from any Socratic challenge. His image of the complete intellectual is a person who (1) sympathizes intensely on the right side of current social and political questions—the right side usually being the liberal or leftist side; (2) associates more or less exclusively, even in his professional life if he can manage it, with other correct-thinking persons; (3) supplements this activity with an interest in literature, art, and folk music.

This image obviously owes something to the Marxist revolutionary, whose example, however discredited, still influences the American intellectual, if only because, like a woman between marriages, he has not yet reorganized his imaginative life around a figure of superior power. But, disturbed rather than inspired by memories of his first love, he does not participate in any revolutionary activity, which would detonate his pent-up sympathies and sweeten his disposition. Nor, if he is typical, does he express his urgencies in conventional American politics, for, despite his characteristic concern for the masses, he is curiously snobbish. He does not like the masses, he just wants to be their champion. But how? He might write on social questions, of course, but the average American intellectual—I refer now to the one whose circumstances in life would make such activity natural—the one in the academic world, for instance—is singularly unproductive in this respect. The example of Thorstein Veblen does not stir him. He does not have the patience. It

is hard to write if emotion has crystallized your thoughts into a series of slogans. You discover that they can all be put in one paragraph. You discover something worse. That paragraph has already been written. The result is that the American intellectual from whom one would normally expect a public contribution characteristically stands between thought and action and howls like a donkey in tension between two bales of hay.

The second rule of behavior for the intellectual, comparable in importance to the one which limits his partisan involvement in affairs, is that he cannot demand that society love him without reservation. A certain hostility is part of the tribute paid to distinction. Intellectuals are not alone in provoking it. Businessmen, lawyers, doctors, public officials, army officers, clergymen, even people who are just good-looking or quick-witted—all who impinge with any force upon their fellow men receive a measure of resentment. The distrust which intellectuals generate is not only natural but, provided always that it does not turn morbid, it is also desirable. It is a necessary defense of the population against an elite group which, being human as well as elite, is subject to error, presumption, and impatience, and is no more to be followed blindly than are priests or politicians. The country protects itself against Wall Street bankers in the same way; so much so, in fact, that a public statement in actual praise of them is almost unheard of. This natural hostility towards the intellectual, together with his own need to maintain an intellectual's distance, means that he need never give up all claim to that lovely word *alienation*.

But the typical American intellectual asserts that the feeling which exists between him and his society is neither normal nor desirable. He claims that America is not both pro- and anti-intellectual, but that it is just anti-intellectual. It is hard to reply specifically to this charge, because it is usually stated as an axiom. What are the facts? If I may be a witness, I must testify that on those occasions when I have been taken for an intellectual, for no other reason than that I taught in a college, I have often received such touching deference and respect that I have had to go out of my way in order to put at ease those men in other walks of life. Whoever observes alumni attending their class reunions will notice a wistful hope in some of the meatiest faces that their old professors, baggy clothes and all, will pay some attention to them.

It is true that many intellectuals, especially in the teaching profession, do not make as much money as individuals of comparable ability in other occupations. But neither do army officers and clergymen, even when they become generals and bishops. Is America abnormally anti-military and anti-religious? Indeed, intellectuals often sigh that America is too fond of the military and too soft towards religion. The arguments

for putting more money in the pockets of intellectuals are just, but America's resistance to those arguments does not prove that she is peculiarly anti-intellectual. It has been a rare period in the history of any country when being an intellectual was a paying proposition. Wealth is accumulated by people who address themselves to that objective in life. When intellectuals do this—many who enter the communication industries, for instance—they stand a better chance of collecting a fortune than many a businessman. But traditionally most intellectuals, like scientists, professional soldiers, and ecclesiastics, array themselves for other battles. They give up money, but in return they receive an opportunity to modify in a conscious way, wearing the while no man's livery, the ideology of their society, in so far as it is given to human beings to achieve such free and conscious modifications. If they prize this opportunity, the rest of the world will admire, respect, and envy them, including their shiny pants and twisted neckties. The intellectual who feels too bitter about his difficulties in acquiring a house with three bedrooms, two baths, and a knotty-pine den has succumbed to the values of those segments of his society whose influence he most deplors. If the American intellectual, despite these considerations, persists in his feeling of persecution, we may eventually witness his miserable demise *à la Death of a Salesman*, for there is no essential difference between his insistence and Willy Loman's that he be well liked.

Rule number three: Without impairing his vocation of reporting the truth as he sees it, an intellectual does well to retain a decent measure of tolerance for the prejudices of his society, however dismal. He should strive, at least in the normal course of his activity, to offer his solutions without anguish or indignation, for he should realize even more than other men how the emergence of unappreciated or unforeseen facts may make him wish that he had stayed in bed. Certain moral truths may be eternal, but they only achieve this status enclosed in general terms, where they can hover serenely, like Buddha's smile, above the sweaty problems of human application, their radiance providing inspiration rather than specific guidance. He is a schoolboy intellectual who does not acknowledge that in the human world good and evil have such an affinity for one another that, after the manner of women in a polygamous society, the fair one will sometimes yield only to the man who also weds her ugly sisters. As other men, an intellectual is obliged to do the best he can, but a knowledge that that best is never certain to accomplish its aim is as desirable in an intellectual as it is in nonintellectuals. The mulishness of his countrymen may, for all he can definitely know, save him from having to witness one of his brilliant mistakes grinding into action.

Finally, the business of being an intellectual requires some sophisti-

cation about the nature of culture, in the anthropological sense of that word. Good or bad, the traditions men receive from their predecessors distinguish them from animals. It is literally true that nauseous traditions would be better than none, for traditions of any sort are proof that man's development is not confined to what he can learn in a single lifetime. But the extent to which he can change his customs in any one generation without inviting disaster has its limits, regardless of how desirable, abstractly considered, such changes might be. An intellectual must, like a good psychiatrist, resign himself to the fact that a solution which the patient cannot accept without undue resistance is no solution. His failure to do so gives him the character of an intellectual trifle and rightfully provokes contempt on the part of politicians and others who, in their own way, achieve maturity by respecting the limitations of their culture.

Placatory Remarks

Like other human beings, the American intellectual would rather be admired than analyzed. Instead of pressing him further, I shall just add some protestations in order to demonstrate that I am bent on a mere lover's quarrel and not a crime of passion.

I would not give the impression that the intellectual should possess no firm convictions. He may possess as many of them as his study of events has brought him to. What makes him an intellectual in this respect, and sets him apart from other intelligent people with firm convictions, is only his matador's readiness to confront the hour of truth and risk his convictions with grace, style, and regularity.

Nor does this conception of the intellectual dehumanize him. Lawyers subdue their righteous impulses in arguing a case, regardless of how convinced they are that the opposition exhibits the grossest effrontery in contesting the matter. Are lawyers inhuman? Medical students learn to cut on human bodies without grievous distress. This takes some learning, but it does not result in many students becoming ghouls. I doubt that we need worry about stunting the intellectual's emotional life. No one is suggesting that he make love, raise a family, tender mortgage payments, and receive traffic tickets without emotion. However professional his search for truth in his capacity as an intellectual, the rest of his life will give him many opportunities to scream his head off like a normal human being.

Finally, an intellectual has a right to stop being an intellectual at any time. His changing his role may result in glorious consequences, as when many gifted individuals abandoned the schoolroom and the study before and during the American Revolution. The point is simply that when an intellectual goes all-out for politics, he cannot retain that special

privilege which rightfully protects him as an independent thinker. When present-day activists who submit to party discipline are caught in the intellectual henhouse, their usual defense is to flap their arms indignantly, scratch up the dust, and cackle to the best of their ability that nobody's here but us chickens. But these activists are not intellectuals as I perceive the species. They may have been at one time, and they may become intellectuals again. But as long as they remain under orders, their freedom signed over to higher authority, they must expect to be treated as nonintellectuals treat one another in conflict, without extra consideration for their social and economic well-being. I doubt that Nathan Hale complimented the British on their dexterity with rope, but there is no record that he wailed bitterly that this was a fine way to treat a college man.

Professor by Merit

(For S. F. D., Emeritus, 1958)

- Dignity*: to balance verbals with the anxious care of college bulletins; to wear one's hair pale as a new note card, and hat and shoes sober as failing students' interviews?
- Pride*: to have had grace to survey nearly half a century's freshman themes, knowing when to laugh and sigh in ninety thousand paragraphs?
- Honor*: to nibble chicken roasted in one's praise and afterward digest a cooked-up phrase or colleagues' resolutions, or hear sent personal congratulations from the president?
- This*: your balanced verbal sketches demonstrate that Dignity is skeletal, the stay of structures planned and raised with purpose, tall, white, and grave; but cautious words are gray paint and plaster fit for hollow walls; that Pride is more than grace to contemplate amalgam forms: it gathers when a strait, pure discipline of self groups its estate; that Honor is no banquet praise to parts inert or final; it is what reveres the maker's life of ceaseless craft and art. Without a glance back at apprentice years,
Therefore, you bring us master-plans to fabricate.

Indiana University

Philip Appleman