

Trade Winds

Cleveland Amory

Advertisement of the Week—as found by Mrs. Faye Leventhal of Chicago in the Lincoln (Nebraska) *Sun*:

WANTED: Good used baritone.

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Food for Thought—as discovered by James McCauley of Corvallis, Oregon, from Sylvia Porter's column in the *Oregon Statesman*:

NEW YORK—What could possibly be the advantage of chewing on desiccated lover when you can buy and probably eat with pleasure regular fresh liver at far lower cost?

We give up. You tell us.

Advice of the Week—via Elizabeth Long of Washington, D.C., who came upon it in Ann Landers's column in *The Washington Post*:

Dear Raven: It will end where it began—in the home. It will happen when the so-called liberated woman discovers that the price was too high, and her most important job, the one with the greatest rewards, was right under her nose—and she blew it.

Bless you.

Story of the Week—from Marge Cook of Tenants Harbor, Maine, who spotted it in the *Portland Press Herald*:

PHOENIX, Ariz. (AP)—Svetlana Peters, daughter of the late Soviet dictator Josef Stalin, said Wednesday she had left her architect husband—only his communal way of living.

But her husband, who said Tuesday that divorce appeared inevitable, asserted Wednesday that his position was unchanged no matter what his wife said.

"I tttietaon shrdlu cmfwyp t," said William Wesley Peters, "but I believe I've made my position perfectly clear."

Etaoin.

Russell Kirk, the thinking man's conservative or the conservatives' thinking man—depending on which way you want to look at him—is a bright, bespectacled, round-faced fellow who thinks so fast his words have trouble keeping up. In his book *Eliot and His Age* (Random House), he makes the statement that "ours has been the Age of T. S. Eliot, as once there was an Age of Dryden and an Age of Johnson."

What, we asked Mr. Kirk, did Eliot actually stand for? "First of all," Mr. Kirk said, "he stood for the belief that we are part of a transcendental order, a divine heritage, that we live only as part of a realm of spirits—spirits in person, as it were, in the limitation of the flesh—and that this accounts for both the greatness and the tragedy of the human condition. Second, Eliot believed in tradition. He repeatedly emphasized, both in his poems and in his critical essays, the principles enunci-

ated by the medieval schoolmen—Fulbert of Chartres, for example—who said that we are dwarves standing on the shoulders of the giants who went before."

But, we wanted to know, were these ideas either original enough or different enough to make Eliot an Age? Mr. Kirk nodded. "I think so. Eliot himself said you cannot make yourself an original—you can only be part of a tradition. Vergil and Dante are examples of this, Vergil expressing the religious tradition and Dante the medieval synthesis."

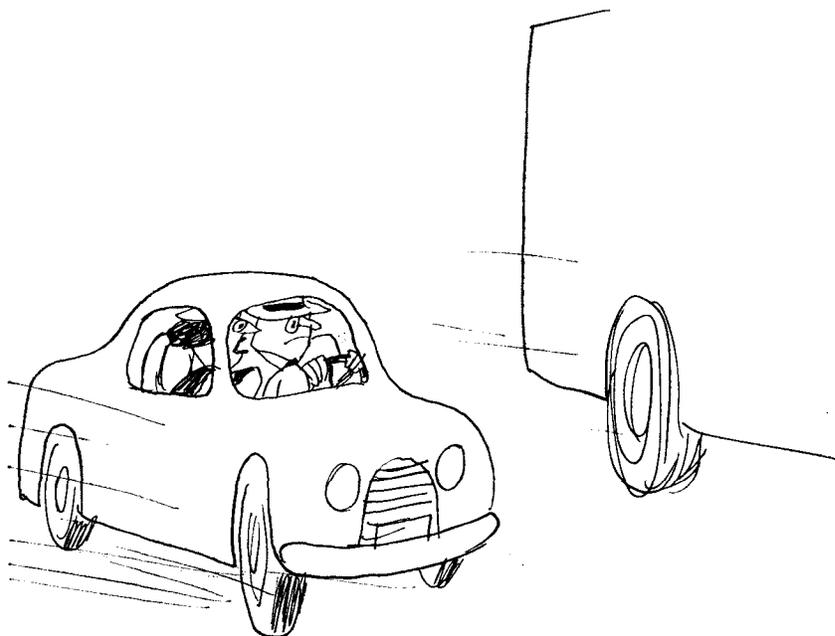
But weren't they giants in comparison to Eliot? we persisted. "Yes," Mr. Kirk said. "But really primarily because of Eliot's own modesty and self-mockery. Also, he seemed to be incapable of a really long work. I had always assumed, until Mrs. Eliot brought out her annotated edition of *The Wasteland* a few months ago, that Eliot's long version was better. Pound had edited it, you know. But I was wrong. Pound's taste was better than Eliot's—the fact is there was waste in *The Wasteland*."

"Pound thought his age," Mr. Kirk continued, "a dead age, and he deliberately set about to reinvigorate it by discovering new writers of power and getting them published and giving them money to support themselves. The fact is, until Pound came along, there wasn't anybody who would publish Eliot at all, in either England or America. Harriet Monroe, editor of *Poetry*, the dominant force in American poetry at the time, didn't like *The Wasteland*. She preferred Vachel Lindsay's *The Fireman's Ball*."

How, we asked, was Eliot as a publisher? "Well, his friend Frank Morley probably put it best. He said that Eliot wasn't apt to fight for anybody that any other publisher would publish, but he would fight for people that no other publisher would look at. On the other hand, he turned down his friend Orwell's *Animal Farm*. He didn't think it would enjoy popular success. Actually, as a publisher, he was very receptive, but he was very careful—the way he was in everything."

Did not Mr. Kirk think that this too might have detracted from his being the man of his age? Mr. Kirk shook his head vigorously. "No," he said, "I think it is more the fact that he seems so far from an age so materialized and secularized. In his own life he suffered very much. He was ruled by duty. Only the last eight years of his life, when he married Valerie—he married her when he was sixty-eight—was he really happy."

We asked him what he thought of the way Eliot is taught today. "I'm afraid it's too pedantic," Kirk said. "Eliot himself called it 'the lemon-



"Do you realize that all the money that we're saving on gas we're spending on chiropractors?"

squeezer school of criticism'—the kind where you distill everything but you don't get the poem. He also deplored what he called the 'school of sources.' Actually, people think the kids today would be put off by the tradition and the religion in Eliot. And they may have been—until recently. But the fact is Eliot was primarily concerned with human feeling and emotion, and I think that the questing spirit of youth today is coming back to Eliot's own questing spirit."

Mr. Kirk first met Eliot in 1953. Born in Plymouth, Michigan, the son of a locomotive engineer, Mr. Kirk now describes himself as "about the only one left who works full time as a writer of serious books and critical essays. Did he support himself at it? we asked.

"Yes," he replied, "but just. Of course, I have a lot to support. I didn't marry until I was forty-five, but I have three girl babies, and I also support my father, stepmother, and aunt."

Was he a believer in Eliot's dictum that if you were an American and wanted to be an intellectual, you had to be an expatriate? "It would be easier," Mr. Kirk conceded. "But I find it possible," he paused again, "if you live away from New York." Mr. Kirk lives where his family has lived for five generations, in Mecosta, Michigan, in an ancient house called Piety Hill, complete, he told us, with ghosts and haunted room. "Two months ago," he said, "we had a young lady houseguest from England. She was in our second-most haunted room, and in our most haunted bed. When she woke up one night, the door flew open and there was a man standing there. She cried out. By the time we got there, of course, he had ephemeralized. But she distinctly remembered he had a high collar, a check coat, and an expressionless face. We checked the family album, and sure enough we found my great-uncle Raymond. He always wore a high collar and a check coat, and in the last year of his life, because of a brain tumor received when a lunatic in the insane asylum where he worked had hit him on the head, he had an expressionless face." □

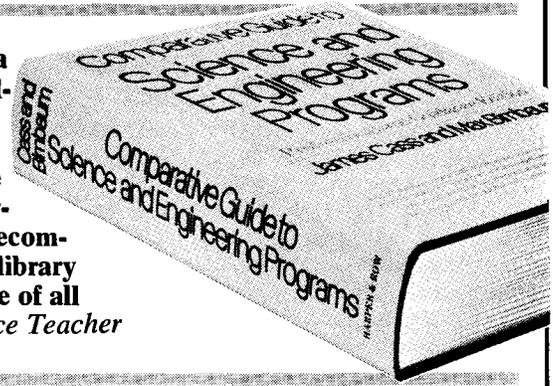
SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S
KINGSLEY DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 1981)

(RICHARD M.) HUBER:
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SUCCESS

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Dorian: A New Picture

Joe Layton has been big in show biz ever since 1959, when Jerome Robbins gave him a go-ahead to choreograph an Off-Broadway revival of the musical *On the Town*, Robbins's first great hit outside the world of ballet. In the dozen years since Layton made a big success of the modest revival, he has choreographed, staged musical numbers, and even directed a raft of shows. He has become a major figure in the musical theater. Now he has turned his energies toward ballet itself. For Britain's Royal Ballet, he created *The Grand Tour*, which, unfortunately, will not be in the troupe's repertory for its April 24-June 3 season at the Metropolitan Opera House. For our own City Center Joffrey Ballet, now in the final days of its regular spring season at the City Center 55th Street Theater, Layton provided the new *Double Exposure*.

Double Exposure is an updating of Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, the Faustian novel that tells of a man who retains his youth and physical beauty while, over the years, his painted portrait reflects his aging, his corruption of others, his sins. Layton has replaced the painting with a huge photograph of a nearly nude man, a photo that succumbs to the ravages of a man's life. The youth himself,

while innocent, is made aware of his bodily allure by a photographer who gets him to take off his clothes and who photographs him from every angle. Today's Dorian becomes involved not only with vanity but with dope and sadism, and, sexually, with the male as well as the female.

Since Wilde's theme has a pictorial center, one would think that it was ideal for ballet adaptation and that a modernization process would be not only possible but pertinent. *Double Exposure* could have been a powerful, absorbing ballet. It is not. It is not, because Layton's choreography fails to provide solid portraits of Dorian, the Photographer, the Leader of the sinners, or the lesser characters. In a ballet such as this we do indeed need to see revealed the inner man, motivations as well as overt actions. Choreographically, it is a fragmented piece, not an episodic ballet, which would be valid, but one of tantalizing bits.

If I seem to dwell upon an unsuccessful ballet, it is because Layton has long since proved his abilities as a showman and because the genre of his ballet—that is, the use of theater images, rather than dance action, for stage effect—is becoming increasingly important. The trend itself is strong, but Layton, in this ballet, failed to reach his goal.

The Joffrey company had two casts. In one, Dennis Wayne was Dorian; in the other, Dermot Burke. Of these two splendid young dancers, Wayne was the superior, for he injected into his portrayal a sense of urgent exposure about his constantly shifting exposures to sensual experiment. Burke, dark and handsome, was more withdrawn from the violent proceedings and, as a picture, came out more negative than positive. But neither had much to work with in a highly publicized ballet that is part of a trend but by no means in the vanguard of ballet-as-theater.

The Joffrey season, as I indicated in an earlier report, has been the most rewarding in the company's history as resident dancers at the City Center. Established productions looked and were danced better than ever before, and of the new additions, if *Double Exposure* tantalized and failed, two other stagings were both successful and sunny. These were Eliot Feld's *Meadowlark*, made for the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and later danced by Feld's now-disbanded company, and *Chabriesque*, a brand-new work by the Joffrey's principal choreographer, Gerald Arpino.

Meadowlark has sometimes been criticized for changing moods in mid-stream—from elegant gaiety to horse-play—but, after all, it is based on courtly fun and, historically, the somber *pavane* was customarily followed by the dashing *galliard*. It is, then, an enchanting piece. Enchanting, too, is *Chabriesque*, which may not be much more than fluff in body and breezy exits and entrances in form but which is spirited and has an absolutely captivating relating of the male and female forms (innocent, of course!) in swirling lifts, swift embraces, dartings, and dashings. As one might guess, the score for *Chabriesque* is derived from Chabrier (unfortunately, it is held to two pianos). *Meadowlark* basks in Haydn. And *Double Exposure* is cursed, as was Dorian, by a double exposure involving music of Scriabin and electronic music by Henri Pousseur.

And now for some capsule comments. Since Martha Graham's withdrawal from the stage after more than fifty years as a professional dancer, the entire world of dance wondered about the future of her repertory of masterpieces. The Martha Graham Center of Contemporary Dance recently embarked on a project designed not only to preserve but to renew Graham creations for young dancers. Programs of Graham dances and of new choreographies have been and will be given through May 28 at Miss Graham's headquarters, 316 East. Mary Hinkson and Bertram Ross, both Graham stars, are directing the project, and the preview program that I saw promises well for the future of an enterprise dedicated not only to the genius of Miss Graham but to the continuation of her worldwide influence in the field of modern dance.

In the ethnic dance area, let me note that the Ballet Folklorico de Mexico, founded and directed by Amalia Hernandez, had one of its most delightful seasons at the City Center—Indian reconstructions, Hispano-Indian celebrations both religious and secular, contemporary folk dances. It was so successful that S. Hurok insists that the groups return next year despite a tightly booked worldwide tour.

In out-and-out Spanish dance, Luis Rivera gave Manhattan a taste of his own Tabasco-flavored performing, but his program bogged down, because he had so few dancers that the musicians had to take over a big portion of the program. They were good, but when one goes to see dancing, listening is merely supportive. With José Molina, it was different at Carnegie Hall. The music was great, but dancing predominated, and Molina himself was fiery, and his ensemble, beautifully trained and magnificently costumed, had the "Olés!" bouncing from wall to wall. □

WIT TWISTER NO. 264

Edited by ARTHUR SWAN

The object of the game is to complete the poem by thinking of one word whose letters, when rearranged, will yield the appropriate word for each series of blanks. Each dash within a blank corresponds to a letter of the word.

The bite of — — — — is like a
poisoned knife;

More cruel still, this pain that
— — — — her life.

The clinics and the — — — —
have had their day,

And none could make her illness
— — — — away.

A.S.

(Answer on page 70)