

Student throws new light...

The Gateway policy of encouraging students to submit articles for these pages (thereby giving them a chance to see their work in print) resulted in this strange manuscript finding its way into our mailbox. The industrious first-year English undergrad who penned these

words, tells us he was sitting at his mid-term exam last November and suddenly decided he would "tell it to the prof the way it really is." The result, as you will see, seems an unambiguous, simple and direct answer to the question he was faced with, which was ...

Assignment: Explicate the following.

**When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide.
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he returning chide;
"Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?"
I fondly ask; but Patience to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts; who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and wait."**

Explication:

I think that if a person or individual really and truly has something to say, and if its worth their reader's attention — and especially if they have some idea of just what exactly their arguing about. Personally, I can't see why they can't just come right out and say what he has to say? Without beating around the bush and wasting everyone's time, because time is money. This is only my opinion; and other people might think different (their entitled to they're opinion too, everybodys' opinion is equal because we live in a democracy) but I really prefer someone or somebody who comes out with it and I mean straight from the cuff. With no fancy stuff and no mincing metaphors. And I hate it when people throw you a curve right off the bat and don't tell me what his *point* is.

The above is a good example, I think it was in yesterday's paper. I've seen better letters to the editor of the *Edmonton Journal* but they I've seen lots worse ones to. Terrible ones. Like that guy from Manyberries which nobody could figure out. It's not clear what this guy's complaining about either. The purpose of writing is communication, and the purpose of communication is to communicate! In fact, he has lost sight of this fact due to the fact that he is so upset and conceited. A close, however, analysis of his prose will clearly shows what his problem is. The many references to God indicates that he is a religious person and that's good but nobody's business

but his own and totally besides the point.

Right in the first line of the letter we get a very unique clue: "When I consider how my light is spent." The salient verbal aspects with respect to this line are "light" and "spent." The "light" part is easy enough it just means electricity, however, the "spent" is unprecise. Its not light that get spent but money. The guy is complaining about his hydro bill.

Read one of these letters you've read 'em all, the guy talks about "half my days," probably meaning look, here I am, middle aged, and look at all the money I've coughed up for electricity. This is probably unaccurate. Olderly people often refer to themselves as "middle aged" even when their 60 or sixty-five. Your only as old as you feel, as they say, but do they really think they'll make it to 130? You can't teach an old dog new tricks. Or even how to spell. He spells "ear," "e'er," and "oar," "o'er"! So anyway he's probably coming up on retirement and a fixed income and a real worry is how am I going to pay those bills?

Can you blame him? Not me. Personally, I feel sorry for him. But having read his letter through several times, his conceitedness really got to me due to the fact that the tone of his letter is very conceited and he's really boastful. I.e., he talks about his "talent," probably meaning that his letter is rhymed and he talks as though it would kill him if he didn't write the thing just so. Senile neurosis, obviously, delusions of

Continued to page 11



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