

# LETTERS FROM THE EDITORS

"I Am - Yet What I Am None Cares Or Knows".

John Clare

## So What?

Beyond the necessities of food and shelter, everything that we possess has been granted us by fate for no apparent reason, save for the reason that we desired of it. And so what we have beyond our lives has been bestowed upon us as a gift. This gift, no reasonable man can believe, has been given for no purpose and therefore we rightly surmise that this excess has been given to enhance the capacity of our pursuit of happiness. We have however, wrongly assumed that the degree of this extension is also the measure of our happiness. We have foolishly come to use the distance of removal beyond the necessities as a unit of betterment, as if the further away from the necessary aspects of living meant the better the life. We have all along failed to see that it was always the manner of utilization of these benefits, and never their amount, which marked their improvement upon our lives. Better, regardless of the concept that it modifies, has always been an adjective of quality not quantity.

But possibly, now that the world is in its death throes, we have at last come to realize that we have been forever striving for the wrong things, seeking for the wrong sort of life, stretching to grab the wrong destiny. This generosity of fate which has made us more than animal and left us less than angel, we cannot for some reason be content with. Being masters of a world and possessors of a soul, we can still somehow presume to ungratefully resent the sweet agony of existence. Not only have we felt that materially the world owes us a certain standard, but we have come to feel that psychologically our happiness is a right to which we are due.

I cannot pity those, who being physically sound of mind and body, look at life and their position within it and see nothing but desperation and despair. A sculpture does not require of the clay that it produce its own artistic form and neither should we except from happiness that it mold itself into the design which we have patterned for it in our minds from pieces of our desires. Why do we see life as a bottomless pool that either must disgorge an infinite

stream of gratifications, or failing that, serve as a grave. Life is more plain than that. Happiness is more easy to achieve than sadness is to cope with.

Nietzsche once said-"who speaks of victories, survival is everything"-but I am sure he did not mean by that statement that one should be complacent and he did not mean that life is merciless and he did not mean that one should have a "caveman" mentality and live from day day. He only meant that each step beyond survival is just the same as every other step. There is no difference you see, between winning a race by one stride or by a thousand; the race is won by either margin and the reason for running is equally accomplished by one as by the other.

If the ultimate goal of all human struggle is to be at peace with one's self and the world around, no one should be stupid enough to allow himself to be the plaything of his emotions. This is not to say that one should not be sensitive or that one should not dream big, it only is to say that interior peace is solely in one's own hands for no one else is capable of, or responsible for, anyone else's peace of mind. John Clare realized his own melancholy and spoke of the reasons for it in the eloquence of what I consider to be the greatest poem in the English language, but even though his bitterness was the product of external forces completely outside any jurisdiction which he might personally control, Clare was still guilty of succumbing to the weakness of his own nature. The crude people of the world are too selfish to suffer because other people are suffering and they are too narrow-minded to need the compassion of others. It's only the sympathetic, empathetic people who feel for the problems of others and desire a reciprocal attitude from them, who cannot be at ease within their own personal circumference, but by making themselves, the good people, the agitated people as well, they are in a manner demonstrating against being concerned for others. If one were to seek happiness from life it would be silly for him to follow an example thusly portrayed. Again I am not saying do not have compassion for the millions of suffering, only realize that your internal suffering for their problems, or even for your own, will never begin to cure them. The only sensible recourse lies in logical, constructive action.

Expect what you will from life, for it is all there to be taken, but if your expectations are too grand, no fickle circumstance is not too kind, understand that disappointment does not exist one step beyond survival. And in the end or everything appears as nothing, as often I have imagined the end does make it seem, then only is the occasion for remorse. Time is the primary tragedy, but not knowing how to use the time given is the most blatant sign of weakness that exists.

Kevin Bruce

## CONCERT

The resident musicians of UNB are preparing a fine concert for Memorial Hall on Tuesday, February 16, at 8:30

All the resident musicians will be playing.

Turine is a contemporary Spanish Composer, and very appealing even on first hearing.

Dvorak is considered to be originator of soul music. This piece is one of the best examples of string music.

Some of these same pieces will be played at the regular Friday noon concert as a warm-up for the Tuesday concert.

## PROGRAM

Beethoven String Quartet - violin, viola, cello

Turina String Quartet - piano, violin, cello

## INTERMISSION

Dvorak Quintet - piano and string quartet

## Staff

Co-Editors

Liz Smith

Padi McDonough

Sheelagh Russell

Kevin Bruce

Pam Price

## Contents

Letters From The Editors 2

## Alden Nowlan Feature

Poems ----- 3

Background ----- 4, 5

Short Story ----- 6

Poetry ----- 7

Festival ----- 8