

July third

M. Teru--

This is indeed an auspicious time at which to write—even now these words are being punctuated with the "sissy" explosions of firecrackers celebrating Independence Day, which has already dawned upon Chicago and its wicked glories and is gradually winging westward. There's something incongruous about it all, but then, that's typical of humans and this world. And perhaps Emerson was quite right in rationalizing that consistency is the hobgoblin of small minds.

As for being burned up by anything which another person a good thousand miles away writes—that is absurd, for either of two reasons; viz., that who are you to judge me or perhaps that you're quite correct. Chameleonic in nature as I am at times, occasionally I fail to read just what was written, and in the process of fashioning my idiosyncratic implications I may irk the poor writer. But I adjure you—please take all that I write with a grain of salt, a whole sackful, if you will.

May I quote:

"I seldom mean a single thing
I say, or (as the phrase goes) sing;
But if it sounds both bright and true,
I like to think I think I do."

I agree with you that there are unmistakable traces of fossilizations in my ego. The wonder is, however, that it is yet in its early stages. I'm just beginning to recover from the last two years of overactivity and overthinking. Rather foolishly I too often sought to unravel the unresolvable paradoxes of this world—the stone walls just hardened my ego. Not to say that I shall be satisfied with a vicarious life, but howsomever the realization is

awakening that it is wise to be reasonable, although one must be unreasonable at times in order to remain reasonable. But it is not exactly my sole ambition to be always wise.

Love and wisdom—it is a combination, isn't it? Love to Mr. Schopenhauer was generally an illusion with animal bases and animal origins. However true that may be, still it cannot be denied that it gives zest to life—the spark and thrill that everyone seeks, whether openly or not. One girl told me that she could fall in love with almost any fellow with a little charm if she thought enough about him night and day. I would add that she would fall out if she continued that for any length of time. In love as in life, flux—change is the supreme law. Two persons can remain in love only insofar as they are able to find something new in each other, only so long as they can create new experiences. Love is all right, but what of marriage? It's rather overwhelming to most people to think of living the rest of his or her life with another particular person. G.B. Shaw (may I use him again?) says that the middle-class women in England have gotten to the stage where they must convince themselves that the men they hate the least are the ones they love the most and so marry them. Of course, some people love themselves so much that they can't really love anyone else. Maybe after all, Bertrand Russell has the right idea, the Puritans to the contrary. Another thought—very often possession means satiation. In the words of a good American friend of mine, happiness is the constant adjusting of one's self to an ever expanding horizon of values. One can't ever stop.

In the course of the last four months, a half dozen good friends of mine have left for New York for work with Okura Shoji, S.M.R.R., and Tokyo Asahi. One fellow is working with the Civil Service Commission in Washington. My room mate for two years writes back—

New York, what a dump! But I don't think he longs too much for the foggy clime of the city of Seven Hills times Seven. New York reeks with sophistication and I suppose it gets into your blood. Hear Mary Date or some Seattle-lite is thereabouts.

By the way, Ron Shiozaki is down here working for the "K" Line. Haven't had a chance to see him even as yet because I'm still rushing hither and yon, but knew him fairly well from our trip up north when we stayed at the clubhouse. Can't think of anyone with more gentlemanly and smooth manners.

The war hangs heavily and preys mightily on everybody's mind. Just one "bad" move by Japan can wreck all our lives into the proverbial smithereens. Well, the individual in this world is a pretty helpless iota in the face of unknown forces that we can't gauge or fathom. Strange, when you think of it. We may hate like hell to go out and butcher strangers living in another land; yet our everyday actions are inevitably furthering that grim prospect. Still, it may be that nothing we do can save us or hurt us any less or more. Things happen too often without design or plan--the quirks of Fate are notorious by now. All this patriotic ultra-nationalistic talk is sickening to me. It smacks of narrow-mindedness and chauvinism--no better than Father Divine's or Aimee Semple McPherson's "religion." But you can see what tremendously moving forces they are. Reason is a phantom who beckons but never rules--perhaps sometimes like Jiminy Cricket.

My brother-in-law is one of the few nisei who saw real action in the last war. He came back with a renewed faith in God and has since led as sincerely a "good" life as anyone that I know. He runs a large laundry but has never made it into a really money-making proposition as he can if he wanted to, simply because he'll hire people that others wouldn't use,

because he'd never use underhanded tactics to win away customers from competitors, because he gives many of his poorer customers very low prices, etc. He spends little money on himself but when it comes to social service he's never stingy. He can get along doing all this, too, because he's such a strong personality, forceful and commanding—people like to come to him. I don't suppose I've ever desired to be in his shoes, but I've learned quite a bit from his surprising understanding of human nature and psychology. It's an art, isn't it, to handle people. Savoir faire alone can't do it, except superficially.

I'm glad to hear that I have something brilliant, even if it is only a chasm. I think I would call it George's gorgeous gorge. . . where intellectual freedom forever rings! Of course, there's a niche reserved for that Shangri-La sarong. Perhaps I shall eventually find true peace; then at last I'll know how long I can stand that. I doubt very much whether your restless (vibrant is a better adjective) spirit would find anything appealing in a dead calm. Still you've an awfully good imagination. I think that memories for you are something to be made and not to be drooled over.

These summer days, cloudy and dreary, I help out at the laundry, doing everything from bossing to running errands, keeping books to pressing shirts, delivering to studying French and Japanese in the few slack hours. Not a very romantic life, is it, when Fisherman's Wharf is just around the corner, Coit Tower austere looking down at me, the Seal Rocks overflowing with flapping tails, the Bohemian dens filled with gay laughter, smoke, and much stories, and Treasure Island just a Washington's stone throw away? How nice are those Oregon hills and the magical blue of Crater Lake against the snowy peaks—that's what I'm thinking. Give me something natural, undefiled by man—in rugged settings, beautiful by

chance, possessing depths, abounding in freedom and exuberance.

You ask why I was in Oregon. It was for a student co-operative conference, which was attended by delegates from many universities of the Far West which possess student co-operative boarding houses. There were 70 of us and we went through the gamut of discussion of administration, government, finances, education, social, etc., with the interchange of many fruitful ideas. I might add that I was the lone nisei present. Being the headman in the house next semester, I thought it would do me good to attend--it was, at least, a good excuse to travel.

There really is nothing quite so broadening as traveling. It's surprising how provincial we are and never realize it until we get around a bit. Usually we grow so well accustomed to our little grooves--ruts--that we begin to think our ways of thinking and doing are the chosen ways. It's rather surprising to find people elsewhere living just as well as ourselves often more sanely, wisely and more "abundantly." A jolt--but then we all need it. The only trouble is that of thinking the grass is greener in the next pasture always. (Thereby is illustrated the polarity theory of the world--the Scylla-Charybdis and the golden mean doctrine.)

Well, words are long and I am loquacious, but time is indeed short so I'll close. I almost envy you for the pleasant rounds you make at nights and weekends, but I'm still young enough to wait for them. That glitter is sometimes almost irresistible. . . . like the lovely flame of a candle burning at both ends.

City by the Golden Gate
The Golden State

Adrian

