The Oxen
By Gary Wondergem

Yesterday, the planes had come. Bombing the village, dropping their fiery glue on the small thatched huts, burning the fearful inhabitants crouching inside. Le Duoc Tho had escaped. Twenty years of war had made a man wise. He had seen the French come and go. He knew the new strangers would come and go. He did not worry. He had found a safe hiding place for his oxen. Yes, for his oxen.

He remembered when the man from the government had come and had told the villagers they were to receive a tractor. A machine stronger than all the oxen in the village. A machine that could plow all the rice paddies in the village in a week. The machine, the tractor, never came. Now, there was no village, and no villagers. Only his oxen. Yes, his oxen.

He was a rich man, an important man, because of his oxen. He was able to produce more rice than others because his oxen were the best, the strongest in the village. He used to help the other villagers with their fields, but now there were no other villagers. A week ago, people from the north had come, saying they were brothers, and they would free them from their oppressors. Their actions spoke otherwise. They took their rice, and when they resisted them, they took their elders hostage and then killed them. The brothers from the north had left. Before they left, one dark night, the northerners had attacked the government camp and had killed several soldiers. The next morning their village had been levelled by the silver birds that had died, the rest had fled. Only Le Duoc Tho had had the courage to stay, near his rice paddy, near his oxen.

This morning the planes would not come. The village was burned, the villagers gone or dead. Twenty years of war made a man wise thought Le Duoc Tho. The planes would not come today. He would harness his oxen, which he had safely in the cave near the river. He would plow his rice paddy.

Le Duoc Tho walked slowly to the river. He would have to walk many more steps before the day ended. There was no sense in hurrying.

Twenty years of war made a man wise and cautious. Le Duoc Tho harnessed his oxen, and started his long journey to his field. It lay quite far from the village. He had chosen it years ago when the French were landlords of his village. It had escaped the ravages of war before. He knew it would not be damaged by the bombs that had fallen yesterday.

The morning was quiet. The children that used to run to him were gone. His friends were gone. Even the birds were gone. On the horizon he could see the smoke of another burning village. High in the sky he could see the smoke trails of the silver birds, streaking away with their fiery cargo. The war had moved to another village. It would be safe to plow his village today.

Le Duoc Tho worked until the sun was high, then rested, letting his oxen roam into his field. He found some shade to rest in until the sun lost its heat. It was at that moment when a piercing scream hit his eardrums. The earth suddenly quaked beneath his feet, the air was filled with dust. Le Duoc cursed in anger mingled with terror, but it was too late. His field was destroyed. When the air cleared Le Duoc Tho saw that his oxen were dead. Le Duoc Tho would not plow his field today. Twenty years of war made a man wise.
invites you to come in and see how quickly and easily you can improve your writing efficiency with a new Smith-Corona Powerline portable!

We will trade. Bring in your typewriter for an offer.

Schalekamp's Drug Store

What do you mean, "the g" is stuck, how about another word?"
Young
Young walks through
Chirp-pleated
Dawn skirt swish
As
Gray night memories
Fold quiet under
Gold-rayed morning frock.
Solar ecstasy denies
All but peace-glow
Warmth triumphant
On
Shadow-yield streets
Telling dark, cat-kept
Secrets now but gone.
Strength-striving steeple
Pointedly confess
First blue pure
As
Young walks through
Chirp-pleated
Dawn skirt swish.
—Tina LaBrenz

Retreat
to a windmill
powerfully strong tall
sifting its fingers
in a breezy blue
or moved
by something stronger
My white vapor clouds
arrive
so vague
laughing in slow motion
at the corn
—Becky Maatman

Avenue
A child’s imagination
like the sea
on the verge of overflowing
at times exploding,
eager—
to penetrate worlds unknown.
Opening as a spring flower
a child’s mind
reveals — ideals and longings
long forgotten by those said mature.
Yet, their youthful fancies
embrace
glimpses of the truth.
That most have put away
as immature dreams
or irresponsibilities.
Would we listen to their craving
we would find
a simplest
of hope — of love — of faith
that most have lost
in fear of themselves
but most ....
in fear of him.
—Wally van de Kleut

Winter
No one came by me today.
Kids must lead exciting lives.
Could’a run up; it’s tiresome though
Hearing me sigh of so much pain.
Ja, well, almost dark out now.
Pa’d be coming in, shaking snow
Off his green coat and battered boots.
Ach, Pa, look to that dirty barn,
Field of rotting corn. Can Neal
Think of Pa, instead of his dev’lish League?
God, don’t let it snow. It’s cold,
I can’t move to the fire, so much pain.
—Sue Meyer

Lamentation
(by and for the living-dead)
I
My veins distend
with Acheron’s tepid waters
crawling amongst an assemblage
of gleaned, salt-coroded, bleached bones;
a keeling framework;
Keeling
under the steal weight
of waste winds
stuffed with heat
and death seeds
from red land.

II
Wet weeds’
and brown kelps’
stink
cuts the fusty air
while waiting for Charon.

While waiting,
black moths flutter
a round
and death seeds slowly
open-
abarren valley.

III
Dust-choked, yellowed crackles
echo
in the hollow
gorge,
off walls of bone-water.
Cold stones
crumble.

IV
How long must I wait
on these festering shores!?
Where is my ferryman!?
Where is my hope!?

V
Your hope is drowned.
...not to be found.
And you are ground
on these festering shores.
—Mark Okkema

To A Friend
You have come an
gone.
Elusive,
shy as a fawn
later opening to playfulness
and then sincerity.
—jeanie zinkand

I could not focus my eyes on the
printed black letters

to read their meaning would be
recognizing my
failure

Instead
I write on blue lined cards
meant for sugar, flour and
two teaspoons allspice
pouring out my rising sad recipe
—jeanie zinkand
Sonnet on Sight (Gen. 2: 19-20a)
My Eden eyes focus on East;
eyes seared by hot, blood-tears;
always yearning and craving and crying to feast
upon that Son-Rise so eternally dear
and necessary. Eden eyes -
stubborn; torn by sunken glass slivers;
eyes losing sight of the earth and sky,
and man-creating Word of the loving Giver
of the Body-and Blood-Word who gives. Taking
his Bread and Wine, the fragments slowly return
and rejine to mirror an all-encompassing, making,
preseving Power. How I forever yearn
to have Perfect, Adam-Sight to see
the Word ruling with Over-All Majesty.
—Mark Okkema

Untiled by Julius de Jager
Dumb-founded is the Blood, Peigan, Sarceee. . .
in this world of reds and whites
all let one forget.
"I am a gentleman—"
a gentleman
with that red man's nose
and white man's rags
and white man's red wine.
"an', an' I love my kids, yeah."
a sugar-beet house, not fit for an immigrant
a rusty car surrounded by children,
wild, long-haired, filthy children
that run through weeds and wait in dark alleys.
"I got a boy as old like you"
dark figures in the night
young daughters looking for comfort
with white men and red wine
and sons lie in gutters; scared by living.
"Yup, an' now I go to the rodeo."
with swaying feet curved by horses
that plod over the dry dirt in endless beet-fields
worn, torn cowboy boots shuffling over the sizzling pavement.
We see you
standing on the highway in the open spaces
being cheated by bars and bartenders.
What will become of the children that still
run through the weeds and crouch in corners?

S. U. B.
Sitting on the brown chair
I finger a cigarette hole
on the seat
gently depressing the bumpy leather surface.
Flattened dead damp grass
lies on the small incline
beyond the plated glass wall
Grey sky
like wet sea sand
the pounding rise and fall
summer surf of
bowling balls
below
repeat the sounding dullness
of restless
captured life.
—jeanie zinkand

Missing the Point
Stellar stabbings
Seek forever
Faunted flickers
In the void:
Spinning spitiors
Span the spaces
By no basic
Boundary bouyed.
Cataclysmic chaos
Courses craveingly
Through
Carbon Cold;
Mighty motion
Many maravelled
As they crossed
A palm with gold.
—Tina LaBrenz

EDITORIAL
Poetry is as old as man's tongue. It is perhaps
the best conveyor of attitudes at a given period of
time. It is also one of the best ways that man can
praise his Maker.
In an age which easily discards traditional ways
of communicating, today people write more poe-
try than ever. Modern thinkers feel emptiness in
their lives, but they can't keep quiet in their search
for some kind of meaning. The more futile the
poem or the lyrics, the more popular it becomes.
I like poetry because it is heart stuff. The poet
pours his heart out to the reader's heart in con-
densed language. He speaks his way of life and his
way of death. A poet hits the soft or painful spot
in the reader. Therefore a poem is often more emo-
tionally worded than an essay. It is also shorter
than an essay, but it cannot be read rapidly. Poe-
try should be read aloud and at least twice to get
the full meaning. It is hard to judge the quality of
poetry, especially since rhymes, meters, and punc-
tuation are no longer observed. Instead we look at
the content and decide if what the author says
is true about the world, who made it and why he
is here on earth.

Reflection
Last night
sky wept for earth.
He drenched the trees,
green grass and
me
with sorrow.
I cried.
The hollow pearl
sank
last night
with ice-cold bareness
inside.
I cried.
A grain of sand,
(the melted pearl),
drowned
in unfathomed
loneliness
last night.
Last night,
I cried.
—Mark Okkema
You may have read in our previous issue that we hoped to publish music and you may have wondered what kind of music would be produced on a Christian campus. Now that we have published a song celebrating sleep you may be wondering even more. Haven’t we Christians been asleep too long as it is? Shouldn’t we use our music to win “souls” for Christ.

I don’t think so. I believe the arts were created to be much more than a tool for evangelists. Through the arts one expresses his religious commitment, his vision. A few centuries back Frau Bach complained to her husband Johann Sebastian, “Do you have to sit here and compose all day just to prove you’re a Christian believer?” (Saturday Review of the Arts, November 1972). We can sense in his music the joy of his Christian confession, though it may have brought his wife grief, poverty and 22 children.

In the same way we can celebrate sleep. Sleep is a beautiful part of our creation without which we would all probably go insane. Though it may be a terribly simple song, it is perhaps through the little things that we can recover the sense of joy Bach displayed. This is our creation given to us by God – let’s celebrate all of it.

“Arh,” said Bach. His wife had interrupted him just as the great chords and grand sonorities of the opening of the B-Minor Mass had thundered through his head.

Princess Sioux says....

“We take care of Thanksgiving feasts, pale face.”

HEAP BIG SAVINGS!

PASTRIES

4 LOAVES OF BREAD – 99¢

–PASTRIES

–DOUGHNUTS

–BARS
(Continued from page one)

Lord's and the fullness thereof." Opposition calls forth renewed dedication.

But where does antidisestablishmentarianism fit in? To begin, it rejects a violent overthrow of Establishment Institutions. It calls for intelligent, capable citizens, followers of Christ, to begin to work with the tools given, and to return government to the obedience demanded by its Creator.

Second, antidisestablishmentarianism operates by entering the territory of the (political) enemy, and calling to the attention of the nation its mistakes, shabbiness, and futility, while boldly suggesting an alternative. Christians, through their efforts allow the Establishment to work against itself, and publicize its failures.

Third, antidisestablishmentarianism rejects individualism, especially in its application to the activity of Christians. Rather, it pleads for the support of the Christian community in prayer, academic research and compiling of records, and communication of ideas.

The seed of Christian political awareness has germinated. The next four years will be decisive as to the growth of the young plant. Yet, rooted in God's Word, fed by the light of His blessing, and watered by the prayers and sacrifices of God's people, it must grow, leaving the greenhouse of uncertainty and spreading its branches in witness to the will of its God.

Karl Neerhof

Fools Remain Necessary

Even fools play a vital role in our lives. Without them, how could the rest of us succeed?

CANNON POLL

In an effort to make the Cannon fit your needs, we would like you to answer these questions. Please fill it in and drop it in the box near the bulletin board in the classroom building.

Which articles do you like to read in the Cannon?

Do you think the Cannon is aimed toward you and your friends?

Put these in order of preference:

- Short Stories
- Poems
- Essays
- Cartoons
- Reviews
- Music
- Art
- Photos

What other types of creative literature should be included in the Cannon?

What should be excluded?

How could the Cannon best be improved?

If you're interested in ideas, you'll be interested in reading VANGUARD, the magazine voice of an international body of Christians calling for an alternative lifestyle, and an alternative Christian culture witness in every country, according to its particular needs and history. VANGUARD is a magazine of vision advocating and leading the way to thorough, integral Christian reformation of every sector of public and private life. VANGUARD seeks to proclaim Christ as the Redeemer and Renower of creature and creation, through whom man may dedicate the fulness of life to God in loving and obedient service.

Past issues have included:

"Christian Faith For Today" – Calvin Seerveld
"Do Christians Have a Political Future?" – Bernard Zylstra
"Christ In The Classroom" – Arnold De Graaf
"The Effect of Rudy Wiebe" – Adrian Peetoom

If you send in $12.00 for a two year subscription, you will receive FREE a copy of The New American Standard Bible. One year is $6.50. Send check or money order to VANGUARD, 229 College St., Toronto 2 B, Ontario, or stop in at the Reformational Dugout in downtown Sioux Center, Iowa.

Free Copies of VANGUARD are available at the REFORMATIONAL DUGOUT. Stop in and see the new selection of books by Francis Shaefer, Joel Nederhood, and Rudy Wiebe.