

WELTONSCHAUUNG

By BEVERLY BATCHELOR

Bill gazed at the slovenly yard ahead of him with the bitterness of cynical old age.

"Two years of this," he muttered. "Dr. Bill Roberts! Ha!"

He closed his eyes quickly, forcing back tears of indignation.

"Where does it get you—eating day after day at a place like this, living like a peasant. What's an M.D. anyway? I make big money working in the tobacco business, banking, anything — I — oh, what's the use?"

He climbed slowly up the steps and across the porch. Fingerprints edged against the dingy white of the poor paneling told their tale, and the limp curtains pulled across the windows were the weakest kind of camouflage. Inside Bill hesitated. The tart odor of vinegar twitched his nose.

"What's the trouble, Bill? Getting too good for us?"

"Huh? Oh, of course not, Ma. I was just — thinking."

As he scratched his name in the credit book for meals, Ma Ramsey watched him sharply, pushing the tarnished silver rim of her glasses back to the hump on her precipice-like nose.

"Humph! Look like you think you smell something," she wheezed. "You high-falutin' med students! Last ones to pay up."

Ma Ramsey, twenty-year mistress of a boarding house for Winston students and others who are apt to be financially lacking, moved heavily in the chair where she was guarding the meal-entry book. Her greasy apron and torn, flowered dress spoke a common language with the fingerprints, but the story they told was no longer important to Ma Ramsey.

Bill closed the book and looked up.

"Who's this Glen Williams? Don't know him."

"Another would-be doctor," the old lady snorted. "Don't know why I take 'em in. This one looks like he han't got a dime on him."

"Stupid Kid," Bill thought, "I'll set him straight right away. Nothing's worth this kind of life."

He shoved the book into place and strode through the hall to the dining room.

The long, narrow table was crowded as usual with boys and men — coarse, muscular day laborers; slender, youthful students; thoughtful, intelligent men. Bill searched the faces till he found one — young and scared and sick.

Glen Williams, he thought ruefully. It must be.

He wandered casually over to an empty place beside the boy, brushed a space clear of crumbs for the plate and silver that he had picked up from the cupboard, and sat down. Except for a "Hi, Bill" and a "Well, if it ain't the Doc," the dinner-time conversation excluded him, and he ate. Steadily, at first not

speaking to the boy. Then "New med student?" he asked.

Glen looked up from the food that he had only pushed about the broken crockery.

"Uh-huh."
"No money?"

A blush crept up the lad's cheeks. "Well — I —"

Bill laughed. "Don't be embarrassed. We're all in the same boat."

They were silent for a few minutes till Bill remarked, "Atmosphere of this place is kind of sickening, isn't it?"

"Oh, it's O. K."

"Then why don't you eat?"

"I've just got to get used to it, I guess."

Bill turned to him sharply. "Don't kid yourself. You won't get used to this or the penny pinching or the worn out shirts or any of it."

"What?" The boy was puzzled.

"You heard me. You'll begin to crack up. Your grades'll take a slide, and you won't be able to do a thing about it. Take the advice of an old med student. I know, see, I know. You think you'll get used to it, but you won't. You can't." Bill's voice grew tense. "I saw your name on Ma's book — Glen Williams. She said you were a med student, and I thought I had to tell you. Then I saw you and I was sure. You've got to get out of this before it's too late. Sure, I know, you've got dreams of Dr. Williams. Well, I had dreams, too. 'Dr Roberts,' people will say, I told myself. Now where are those dreams? Lost in a haze of fatigue and dirt and hunger. Take my advice and leave this M.D. business to somebody with money and backing and time."

"Just a minute," Glen interrupted. "Just one minute." He was forceful in his indignation.

"Don't you think I know what I'm up against. Don't you think I understand about the fatigue and the dirt and the hunger? Do you think I care? No! Listen, fellow, whoever you are, you've got a nearsightedness that glasses won't cure. Go ahead, live your life by the minute. That's O. K. but you've got to remember the whole, too, and this is where I can serve. I'm sure of that. My pop was a doctor. I saw him pull little kids through pneumonia, save old ladies from dying of heart attacks. I heard him get up in the middle of the night when he hadn't slept for days. I watched him work for weeks in a small-pox epidemic and saw him die from that service. He knew fatigue and dirt and hunger, but he saw all that in the light of something else — in the light of an overall purpose for everybody. That's the way I look at these four years and the years to come. That's the only way to look at it. And you talk about quitting! I guess I'd better get out of here before I make a dope of myself." He shoved back his

PHIS, ASTROS,

(Continued from page one)

Girl. Betty Moore is in charge of staging, Virginia Jones and Janet Roberts, lighting, Frankie Ward, programs, Addie Elliott, properties, and Marianna Morris, make-up.

The Astro play is "The Bridegroom Waits" by Marjorie and Joseph Hayes. In the cast are Chris Williamson as Aunt Agnes; Micky Bowen as Kay Watkins; Betty Jean Hedgepeth as Grace Winston; Gazelle Moore as Aunt Henry; Shirley Powell as Helen Addams; Betty Hefner as Ruth Addams; Mary Humphrey as Mrs. Addams; and Marjorie Joyner as Lorraine Goodrich. The production chairmen are Flo Moore, programs; Mary Bland Josey, publicity; Mary Humphrey, make-up; Virginia Bowman, staging; Peggy Patrick, lighting; and Pauline Cone, properties.

Two judges, sponsored by the participants, will be invited to the performance. Judge for the Astros will be Bill Long, technical director of the Raleigh Little Theatre, and for the Phis, Mrs. A. C. Hall.

COLLEGE TO

(Continued from page one)

the visitors' pleasure. Peaview Royal recently won honors at the horse shown in Oxford, N. C., with Meredith College students up.

The climax of May Day will be the crowning of the May Queen and the plays that follow.

chair and stumbled hurriedly out of the room.

Bill sat immobile for a few moments struggling with the ideas that had been flung at him so violently.

"Maybe he's got something there," he muttered "I just don't know."

"Hey, Bill," someone yelled from the extremity of the table.

"What was the matter with him, jumping up and running out like that? Was he sick or something?"

"Maybe so," Bill mused. "Yes, I guess that's it." Then he grinned. "But I'll tell you something, boy. I sure hope it's contagious."

"Huh!"

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"That's right, and do any of you fellows know where that young man lives? He's got some doctoring to do!"

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