

rear yard of the Italian consulate at 717 Spruce Street. Another is the broader garden of The Catholic Historical Society, in which I noticed with amusement Nicholas Biddle's big stone bathtub sunning itself. Then there is the garden of the adorable little house at 725 Spruce Street, which is particularly interesting because, when seen from the street, it appears to have no front door. The attic window of that house is just our idea of what an attic window ought to be.

A kind of philosophy distills itself in the mind of the saunterer. Painfully tedious as people often are, they have the sublime quality of interesting one. Not merely by what they say, but often by what they don't say. Their eyes—how amazing is the thought of all those millions of betraying windows! How bravely they struggle to express what is in them. A modern essayist has spoken of "the haggard necessities of parlor conversation." But the life of the streets has no such conventions. It is real: it comes hot from the pan. It is as informal, as direct and as unpretentious as the greetings of dogs. It is a never-failing remedy for the blues.

We save the world by being alive ourselves.

JOSEPH CAMPBELL



CHRISTOPHER MORLEY
(1890-1957)
American writer: journalist, novelist, essayist and poet. His writing study was a small cabin which he built at the back of his property and called the 'knothole'. This is his final message: "Read, every day, something no one else is reading. Think, every day, something no one else is thinking. Do, every day, something no one else would be silly enough to do."

THE WANDER SOCIETY
POCKET LIBRARY

SAUNTERING
Christopher Morley

tion zouave erected about 1873 to remind one of the horrors of commemorative statuary. Children scuffle to and fro; dusty men with spiculous chins lol on the seas; the uncouth and pathetic vibrations of humankind are on every side.

It is entrancing to walk in such places and catalogue all that may be seen. I jot down on scraps of paper a list of all the shops on a side street; the names of tradesmen that amuse me; the absurd repartees of gutter children. Why? It amuses me and that is sufficient excuse. From now until the end of time no one else will ever see life with my eyes, and I mean to make the most of my chance. Just as

Thoreau compiled a *Domesday Book* and kind of classified directory of the sights, sounds and scenes of Walden (carefully recording the manners of a sandbank and the prejudices of a woodlouse or an apple tree) so I love to annotate the phenomena of the city. I can be as solitary in a city street as ever Thoreau was in Walden.

And no Walden sky was ever more blue than the roof of Washington Square this morning. Sitting here reading Thoreau I am entranced by the mellow flavor of the young summer. The sun is just goodly enough to set the being in a gentle roasting muse. The trees conifer together in a sleepy whisper. I have had buckwheat cakes and syrup for breakfast, and eggs fried both recto and verso; good foundation for speculation. I puff cigarettes and am at peace with myself. Many a worthy wait comes to lounge beside me; he glances at my scuffed boots, my baggy trousers; he knows me for one of the fraternity. By their



S

was it—used to say of anyone she richly despised that he was "a saunterer." I suppose she meant he was a mere trifler, a loungeur, an idle stroller of the streets. It is an ignominious confession, but I am a confirmed saunterer. I love to be seen down haphazard among unknown byways; to saunter with open eyes, watching the moods and humors of men, the shapes of their dwellings, the criss-cross of their streets. It is an implanted passion that grows keener and keener. The everlasting lure of round-the-corner, how fascinating it is! I love city squares. The most interesting persons are saunterers, policemen, and actors at 11 o'clock in the morning. These are always to be found in the park; by which I mean not an enormous sector of denatured countryside with brittle paths, fashpods and sea lions, but some broad patch of turf in a shabby elbow of the city, scripped with pavements, with plenty of sun-warmed benches and a cast-

books ye shall know them. Many of those who have abandoned the race of this world's honors have a shrewdness all their own. What is it Thoreau says, with his penetrative truth?—"Sometimes we are inclined to class those who are once and a half witted with the half witted, because we appreciate only a third part of their wit." By the time a man is thirty he should be able to see what life has to offer, and take what dishes on the menu agree with him best. That is whole wit, indeed, or wit-and-a-half. And if he finds his pleasure on a park bench in ragged trousers let him lounge then, with good heart. I welcome him to the goodly fellowship of saunterers, an acolyte of the excellent church of the agorolaters!

These meditations are incurred in the ancient and noble city of Philadelphia, which is a surprisingly large town at the confluence of the Biddle and Drexel families. It is wholly surrounded by cricket teams, fox hunters, beagle packs, and the Pennsylvania Railroad. It has a very large zoological garden, containing carnivora, herbivora, scrap-plethora, and a man from New York who was interned here at the time of the Centennial Exposition in 1876. The principal manufactures are carpets, life insurance premiums, and souvenirs of Independence Hall. Philadelphia was the first city to foresee the advantages of a Federal constitution and oatmeal as a breakfast food. And as one walks and speculates among all this visible panorama, beating one's brains to catch some passing snapshot of it, watching, listening, imagining, the whole hullabaloo becomes extraordinarily precious. The great fault-

agreeable vias reward the eye of the resolute stroller. For instance, that delightful cluster of back gardens, old brick angles, dormer windows and tall chimneys in the block on Orange Street west of Seventh. Orange Street is the little alley just south of Washington Square. In the clean sunlight of a fresh May morning, with masses of green trees and creepers to set off the old ruddy brick, this quaint huddle of buildings composes into a delightful picture that has been perpetuated by the skillful pencil of Frank H. Taylor. A kindly observer in the Drexel seed warehouse, which backs upon Orange Street, noticed me prowling about and offered to take me up in his elevator. From one of the Drexel windows I had a fascinating glimpse down upon these roofs and gardens. One of them is the