

LETTERS LETTERS

Dear Sir:

One afternoon as i was briefly going through an old collection of legends and short stories i came across this article which i found rather interesting. please allow me space in your newspaper to relate this legend to the rest of the students at u.p.e.i. and if possible publish in the same form as it appears here.

Thank YOU
Joan S.

A Path to Heaven

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

A philosopher, a poet and a farmer were all walking down the road one fine summer day, headed for town.

The philosopher had been offered a chair at a great university nearby, and the poet had just gained fame and honour in the town's latest poetry-reading contest.

And the farmer had a load of turnips bound for the market-place.

Chatting amiably among themselves on the state of logic and poetics and turnips, the travelers came to a sudden fork in the road, just at noon.

To their left lay a broad, glistening highway paved with gold and lined with apple trees.

To their right, a crooked little path wound its way up the mountainside, covered with dust and brambles.

The three travellers began arguing over a choice of paths, when the heavens opened with a clap of thunder and God, flanked by the Blessed Virgin and about twelve legions of angels, suddenly appeared over their heads.

All three men - and you can be sure there were no atheists in that group - fell to their knees, patiently waiting for God to say something.

The philosopher, who couldn't remember any prayers, piously meditated on the essence of essence (hoping it would do), while the

poet recited a few lines of holy scripture praising the beauty, the majesty - and above all, the mercy-- of God.

The farmer was worried his turnips might spoil in the hot sun, but was too polite to mention it to God.

"You are all good men," thundered the Lord, "and I have chosen you to serve me.

"To your left, paved with gold and lined with apple trees, stretches the highway to hell.

"And at the right that narrow path, covered with dust and brambles, leads to heaven, a short mile away."

"All men must travel this road eventually," said the Lord, "and every man will have to choose between the highway to hell and the path to heaven.

"You can see that the choice isn't easy, but I've built you three tents here, so that you can work to guide men onto the narrow path."

"Teach men well, that they may know the path to heaven."

"And your work will be accountable to me, the Lord."

And the heavenly host disappeared in another clap of thunder.

The three men were astounded, and discussed the situation among themselves at great length, dwelling on the importance of being singled out by God for a special purpose, and the honour and fame that would follow their accomplishing God's bidding, and the need for getting the turnips to market as soon as possible. Although this last was quickly passed over, as a topic unworthy of the philosopher's and poet's new calling. But the farmer just thought he might mention it in passing.

Finally they made up their mind to do the Lord's bidding, and save men from the path to hell.

So all three retired to their separate tents-the philosopher, the poet and the farmer and his turnips - and meditated on the saving of mankind.

For forty years the philosopher fasted and prayed and argued with himself, and produced twenty volumes of heavenly philosophy whose brilliant dialectic would inevitably lead men to the straight and narrow path.

And the poet similarly wept and prayed, and had a vision that very night. For forty years he too laboured to express his vision in an eighteen volume epic poem whose verse might make the very angels weep for joy. And the poet showed how the path to heaven was all dust and brambles, and not at all paved with gold.

And the farmer in turn thought how he might fulfill God's command. But he still had to sell his turnips before they spoiled.

And so, as you near that little fork in the road, three things catch your attention, to this very day.

There are two large bookcases in the middle of the road, one containing twenty black-and-red volumes of philosophy, and the other containing eighteen blue-and-gold volumes of poetry. And both sets of books are called "The Path to Heaven".

And just at the fork itself, a little neatly-lettered sign reads:

Heaven, next right. One mile.

The sign is the work of a farmer who had to get his turnips to market.

Dear Sir:

We are living in an age that is trying to do something about the tremendous problems we have inherited and created. This is as it should be.

What is wrong, however, is the scope of our efforts towards improving the situation.

Pollution, race relations, war and the emancipation of oppressed minorities are very important problems indeed, but I feel that a little more attention should be paid to the terrible injustices, abuses, and cruelties that are being inflicted upon oppressed minorities that do not and cannot offer spokesmen.

The current trend toward owning distinctive pets is one that is as thoroughly damaging to our civilization as any pollution.

The hunting and capture of wooly monkeys, for instance, is very standardizing.

A fire is set around a stretch of forest likely to shelter these valuable commodities. This drives all the monkeys into the innermost trees. The hunters then shoot the mothers holding onto their young and retrieve them (those that are not too badly crushed), prying them from the still warm bodies of their mothers.

The young are then shipped to dealers, in crates of four or five. These standard crates measure two feet on a side.

Shippers also harbour a misconception about the diet of monkeys. They do not realize that all primates live mainly on protein.

During the period they are in transit and storage, often up to a year, the monkeys are fed bananas, a fruit high in sugar and in carbohydrates - but totally lacking in the protein that that young monkeys need for proper muscle and bone growth and development.

As a result, the monkeys arrive at the pet store emaciated and crippled by malnutrition, rickets and in extreme cases, arthritis.

When and if the monkeys grow past the cute stage they are shipped most often to a zoo where, deprived of a normal attitude toward other monkeys, they almost always display social and sexual aberrations to such a degree that they are disturbing to the public and destroyed.

Continue protesting conditions that must be changed, but please do not forget your obligation to the fellow passengers of spaceship Earth, that of common, human decency.

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MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM THE CADRE STAFF TO YOU THE STUDENTS OF UPEI AND GOOD LUCK WITH THOSE EXAMS.....