

I left the organization because, for every book, each new piece of legislation, every discussed theory, an *official* Y.C.L. viewpoint was advanced. We were to agree eye to eye with that attitude, or be doing the Y.C.L. an injustice by causing internal disruption. It was subtle training for subservient obedience: Nothing but the same "intellectual regimentation" often reviled in Communist speeches.

Disgusted, I quit attending the meetings, but from them I had taken some valuable gifts. First, I learned a new conception of liberty. Liberty to me now is more than just a word; it is a way of living at personal ease without straining those personalities around us. Secondly, I have gained a sharpened discrimination between theory and practicality, between truth and fiction, between right and wrong.

I haven't by any means decided that our present government is all it should be or could be, but I do believe provincial "horse sense," as you call it, with its tolerance and determination, comes closer to the true solution than does this noisy radicalism with its visionary, theoretical, fast moving plan.

In the future, when I give myself and my vote to any plan, I will remember that we have some democracy left, and I will make every effort to guard it and keep it. Only recently have I realized that it is much easier to lose democracy than to gain it.

And so, I have you to thank, you and all the other fathers who are wiser than young men, for giving me a way, a way towards truth.

I apologize, and remain,  
Your respectful son.

*R. N. M.*

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A Memory of the Pitara Tree

*Robert Browne Wallace*

Sci. Sr.

The olive brow and raven hair  
That I just saw fleetingly  
Has caused me to look backward

Over this sullied snow and ash-white sky  
To a yesterday in the Land of Tomorrow.

Just a glimpse.  
The fierce high cliffs, gray cragged,  
I stood on, watching the restless foam dash white  
Far below, and farther out  
The languorous blue swells.  
The sky burned passionate in the mauve gash of early twilight  
(One learns to see tropical skies merely as backdrops  
to matters of less abstract nature),  
And the muttering jungle, darkly green,  
Straggled down to me and the lonely Pitara tree  
That grew meditatively from a crevice  
On the brink of a tumble to the sea, far, far below.  
You do not know Pitara trees  
Else you would sigh now at the remembrance.  
A small tree standing as firm and sensitive  
As the lone Napoleon on the rocks of St. Helena,  
The resin-smooth orange-brown bark,  
The club-like twigs at least as large around  
As Guadalupe's candles at Easter Mass.  
I think a child must have designed the skeletal simplicity.  
In the gathering blood-beetled twilight  
The waxen-white blossoms blushed a little,  
Nestling in their radii of dark slipper-long leaves,  
Blossoms massive and tropic-scented.  
Impulsively my knife cut through a candle-twig,  
And I tendered the armful corsage to my companion  
Who sank in wordless trance to inhaling  
The sweet froggy odor—  
As we strolled back to the village—  
With milky juice dripping from the cut candle-twig.

One cannot regret memories of Pitara trees,  
But I do not like them to steal back on me  
To disturb my middle-western complacency.