

NONSENSE VERSES
By HENRY TAYLOR

**FROM WARSAW
TO STALINGRAD**
or the fable of
**THE EAGLE, THE
BEAR AND THE LION**

Dedicated to the Heroes of Stalingrad

From Warsaw to Stalingrad.

(Dedicated to the heroes who fell there.)

I tell a tale of strong and weak,
of arrogance unlettered,
a tale of slaughter—so to speak—
of mighty wings and piercing beak
and savagery unfettered.

Crude hatred clouds the eagle's brain
and limits his perspective,
the bear and lion both refrain
from carping gibes; see, in the main,
no reason for invective.

The king of birds, the eagle strong,
had long prepared for action;
he thought the lion weak though thrawn,
which he had swindled for so long,
was rotten with reaction.

He sent his eaglets far afield
to every land on earth,
their industry he knew would yield
much knowledge of a kind concealed,
yet of substantial worth.

When every land and continent
had eaglets not a few,
the eagle further eaglets sent,
and eagles more and eaglets went
to join the patient crew;
who planned to liquidate the hosts
who kindly took them in;
they had meantime secured the posts
most coveted by sundry ghosts
of former kith and kin.

To gather strength quite close at hand
at no cost so to say—
he fitted out a robber band
and captured each adjacent land
and kept them under sway.

While to the south there lived a bird
unlike the eagle strong—
he was so fat, his shape absurd,
he could not fly nor speak a word
but one and that was wrong.

The Nazi eagle is a fowl
of quite exclusive breed,
all lower birds such as the owl,
the ptarmigan and guinea-fowl,
are only good as feed.

The one exception is the goose
whose step he imitates,
the eagle's morals are so loose,
his manners bad, his krieg profuse
for victory he waits.

When time is ripe he spreads his wings
far into Bruin's land,
he pushes out, his radio sings
of victories great, and other things
told by the high command.

He hopes to reap a harvest feast
from land he never ploughed,
he plans by theft and wish possessed
by rapine, murder and the rest,
to feed his brutal crowd.

The lion lived in scanty space,
so cubs of his had gone
to find o'erseas some larger place
where they could breed and spread their race
and yet offend no one.

The other beasts in course of time
and birds to tell the truth
had noticed that the lion fine
spread feasts that were replete with wine,
which flattered tongue and tooth.

The lion's whelps now gather round
their parent in his den,
some at a leap some at a bound,
all with affection most profound,
they rally round again.

The lion stretches out his claws
nor stretches them in vain;
the cubs applaud, they know their cause
identical with his, because
he pulls them in again.

The king of beasts has no desire
for something not his own,
he only wants in town and shire
to labour on with son and sire
to make and hold his own.

Meantime the lion licks his cuts
and manicures his claws,
he knows that courage, faith and such,
combined with patience, brains and guts,
can stabilise world laws.

The eagle with his southern friend
had conquered those who near
them dwelt, but failed to comprehend
the barnyard fowl was on the mend,
the valiant chanticleer.

A week of screaming flights soon made
the chicks and pullets dumb;
no age or sex or breed delayed
no urge of pity easy made
the vengeance of the Hun.

Poor chanticleer gave up at once,
he could not climb the fence;
the eagle took the best of France,
the aged cock, who sold the stance
still lives among the hens.

Not all the cocks, nor all the hens,
though broken by their fall,
had wilted when the eagle came
and caused them bitter-bitter shame,
but trusted to de Gaulle.

He had a courage mighty great
like knights of old romance,
he was so tall and eke so straight,
the cockrels and the chickens wait
to welcome him to France.

The crafty eagle fears the east,
where lives the Russian Bear;
he hates his cubs, pretends at least
to help the clumsy shaggy beast
before he raids his lair.

When Bruin found he could not stand
against so fast a foe,
he used his head and saved his hand,
destroyed his crops, forsook his land,
as fast as he could go.

To lands so far and so remote
o'er Don and Volga bends,
where other bears who had a vote
had richer crops and would promote
the welfare of their friends.

The hardy bears of OLEKMINK
of OMSK and ASTRAKHAN
joined with their pals of MINUSINK
to purge their land of carrion stink
and beat them with a plan.

Another eagle joins the fray,
he comes from western skies
where every beast and bird of prey
or timid creature, green or grey,
may live and fraternise.

He welcomes one—he welcomes all—
who's brown or black or yellow;
from early spring to fading fall
he welcomes them, both short and tall,
and is a decent fellow.

The eagle, with his wishful brain
and feeble intuition,
had scorned his leaders who in vain
suggested caution to restrain
his insensate ambition.

To found a reich of endless life,
or for a thousand years;
to build a state on endless strife
where brutal venal crimes are rife
and based on countless tears;
such was the childish foolish strain
the yes-men helped to fix
securely in the pampered brain
of raging zealot, now insane—
the latent lunatic refrain
that two and two make six!

Three hundred thousand eagles fly;
in Stalingrad they land;
their beaks are blunt, their tongues are dry,
their hearts grow weak, and bye and bye
with frozen wings and weary cry,
they die a broken band.

NONSENSE VERSES
By **HENRY TAYLOR**

VANCE
MUSICIAN SPROT
THING-O-MY-JIG

Vance.

There was a lad whose name was Vance;
a most peculiar circumstance
constrained his father—an A.B.—
to leave his home and go to sea.

His mother left at home with Tim
did all that she could do for him;
she worked her fingers to the bone
and toiled and moiled for him alone.

Young Tim at five to school was sent;
he was so full of merriment
his teacher could not fail to see
his thoughts were far from A.B.C.

Reluctantly she asked his "mar"
to move him to some school so far
away, that his lugubrious tricks
would be innocuous—he was six.

They pulled their stumps did Ma and Tim
another pitch they found; to him
it little mattered if he could
do what he liked—and that he would.

At seven his education o'er—
from five he'd voted it a bore—
his inclination was to see
if he could find his Pa A.B.

The senior Vance had been away
six years, one month and but a day;
he'd been to foreign parts galore,
now hoped for easier times ashore.

No sooner had he left the quay,
kit-bag on shoulder—that A.B.
made straight for Ma and little Tim,
but found them gone—some blow for him.

He searched the town from end to end
and could not find them; but a friend
reported they had gone away,
had not been seen for many a day.

Poor Vance was in a dreadful fix
his plans were shattered—seven and six
was all he'd left of his poor pay—
the sum's quite common. So next day

straight to the shipping office hied
and joined a crew; the evening tide
now bore the good ship s.s. "Zee"
with forty sailors out to sea.

Meantime his wife and little Tim
pursued with zest the latter's whim
to find his father's whereabouts
by secret methods of the scouts.

The town he portioned into blocks,
marked A to Z in little lots;
enquired at all the sailors' pubs—
no one had heard of Vance—and snubs
soon chilled his ardour as you see
and his affection for B.P.
evaporated; then to Ma
reported he'd not found his Pa.

The fourteenth verse has now been passed;
it should have been my very last—
I've only two lines now to write,
we'll let the last one say goodnight.

Musician Sprot.

A Music-maker, name of Sprot,
composed of music quite a lot;
it rambled up from fe to le
and down again to lower G.

Some dozen instruments he played,
the soft go-soon and loud lass-weighed
and other verberators thin,
that blended with the violin.

When he performed a fugue irate,
it sounded inarticulate:
the music made in minor key
resembled rumblings of the sea.

At length his wife grew petulant—
she did not bar experiment
but she objected to a spouse
who was a nuisance in the house.

So Sprot, by now quite insensate,
determined he'd evacuate
himself and his euphonious drone,
to some fair dwelling quite alone.

He knew no other one but "she"
would "do" for him and "mask" his tea,
so he decided—short of wife—
to live alone the simple life.

He chose a drear, deserted spot,
far, far removed from others; thought
his harmonies might not compete
with other sounds, much more discreet.

With satisfaction soon he found
a solemn silence spread around,
awaiting his three hundredth Op.,
when, just beside him, with a hop
arrived a lark from out the blue
with countless other thousands too;
it sang to him a threnody,
"We do not like your melody."

Sprot knew his dream was at an end;
he left his instruments to wend
his weary way to Mistress Sprot,
who always liked him quite a lot.

No moral seems to be required:
some dreams are vicious, if inspired
by eating what you should have not,
so take a warning from poor Sprot!

P.T.O.

Thing-o-my-jig.

A pirate named Thing-o-my-jig
proceeded to sea in a gig,
when he reached the white foam,
he turned to go home
and suddenly encountered a pig.

Said the pig to the pirate, "Oh, me!
I've now been a long time at sea,
but I've never before
seen a sail or an oar
which could be so useful to me."

So with one wild leap did the pig
upset both the pirate and gig;
he deep down below
continued to blow,
did that pirate named Thing-o-my-jig.

The pig in the gig quietly sat—
he was inexpressibly fat—
and to run up the sail
by a shake of his tail
was beyond him—he knew at least that.

But Thing-o-my-jig on a wave
muttered words such as shave, save and grave,
and the pig with relief
expressed now his grief
and admitted the narrowest shave.

He invited the pirate on board
and promised a handsome reward,
if he'd put up the sail
he'd bequeath him his tail;
but the pirate immediately roared,
"get out of my gig P.I.G.;
you're a swine quite without pedigree!
had you been in Debrett,
you'd still be in debt
to this rollicking man of the sea."

So he gripped the gig well by the snout,
he stopped the pig's talk with a trout
which he found in the sea
so near yet so free;
then he suddenly threw the trout out.

So Thing-o-my-jig all alone
decided that he would postpone
any further intentions
or secret inventions,
and settle down all on his own.

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By **HENRY TAYLOR**

UTOPIA

S.S. "COUNTERPANE"

POLITICIAN GROAT

Utopia.

There is a country far away
where no work's done except by day,
where none gets up before the dawn
and morn is greeted with a yawn.

There are no rich, there are no poor,
there are no suppliants at one's door;
there is no money, none's required,
for no one's idle, no one's tired.

You pay no fares on tram or 'bus,
conductors are so generous,
like ladies and like gentlemen
the 'bus they stop if you say—When.

If in the kitchen drips the tap,
you 'phone the plumber; he's the chap
who in an instant's on the spot—
he likes to do the job—a lot.

When into shops you percolate,
assistants ask, "Will you please state
what are the things you most desire?"
to perfect service they aspire.

If you desire some buns for tea
the baker hands you two or three,
but if you tell him you want four
he presses on you many more.

When to a chemist's shop you go
and ask for soap, he'll say, "Just so,"
and give you all the kinds he's got
and order others—on the spot.

Does Spring suggest your gardening needs?
the seedsman shows you all his seeds
bright coloured in a mighty tome,
and sows them for you—at your home.

If you go out to buy a mower,
when you get back you may be sure
the shopman's there—the grass has gone;
you have a green and perfect lawn.

But now you find your house too small
for wife and growing children all,
your dwelling grows, as you will see—
no rent there is to pay—it's free.

If you should be of tender years,
from three to sixteen, without tears
you'll get an education sound,
the very best that can be found.

Home lessons will not be allowed,
you will not feel one of a crowd;
at school you'll leave your "3 times three"
and scamper home in time for tea.

Your parents also will be glad
to know their little maid or lad
will not find out that methods they
were taught at school have had their day.

That country as I've pointed out
seems far away, beyond a doubt;
and yet it's very plain to see
that we could enter it, if we
the kind of love and humour had
to choose the good, reject the bad,
to scorn the lure of petty pelf,
and love our neighbour as ourself.

S.S. "Counterpane."

There was a ship what's in a name—
she was the s.s. "Counterpane";
her captain was Josiah Brad,
he was a most intriguing lad.

He was not brought up to the sea,
no master's ticket, eke, had he;
he'd spent his whole life on the shore
but could not thole it any more.

So when from business he retired—
oh, no! you're wrong—he was not fired;
he'd made a fortune and a name,
the former bought the "Counterpane."

She was a ship of medium size;
her former owners said a prize
like her could hardly now be bought;
he thanked them warmly quite a lot.

Brad bought a naval suit of blue;
he got it to impress his crew,
who recognised the taste displayed
in bars and stripes of golden braid.

His crew were an incongruous lot,
for some were tall—the rest were not;
he did not choose them for their skill,
they had to come—it was Brad's will.

For Brad had during twenty years
allowed them credit—their arrears
could be wiped out if they would deign
to serve on s.s. "Counterpane."

They left the port one Friday night;
Brad could not face the morning light,
and in the gig four tars profane
dragged out to sea the "Counterpane."

The fireman and the engineer
were both a very oily pair;
they hailed from Greenock, you must know,
for Jacobs always makes them so.

So when the water was a-boil,
the steam expanding, and the oil
a-slipping on the pistons free,
the "Counterpane" was out at sea.

The doughty Brad now in command
had mustered aft his naval band
to play that piece with choice refrain—
"the 'Counterpane's' at sea again."

He shouted orders to his crew
regretting that so very few
could fit the actual circumstance;
the crew received them in a trance.

The thirteenth verse has now been reached,
the "Counterpane" I could have beached,
but Brad had made a fatal slip,
no Friday's lucky for a ship.

Politician Groat.

A Politician—name of Groat—
now asks you for your valued vote,
and volunteers with violent voice
to air the grouses of your choice.

He has no inkling what these are:
he's not at all particular,
but concentrates his whole intent
on getting into Parliament.

To guide the fortunes of the State
and make remarks intemperate
appeals to him as easier than
the weary darg of moiling man.

What qualities you well may ask
commend him for his sacred task
of representing you and me
within the chamber of the free.

Is there an aim which animates
all Parliamentary candidates?
Do they delay and then display
their ranting rancour on their prey?

Groat now finds life safe in the House;
subdued like any other mouse
by other beasts that ramp and roar,
he waits his turn upon the floor.

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For weeks and months o'er many years
he takes his chance: it now appears
as Independent he may slip
the notice of the Party Whip.

Somnolent members there deplore
the mouthings of the genus "bore,"
while others vigilant yet shy
attempt to catch the Speaker's eye.

Groat's chance has come at last, aghast,
he's up to speak, and speaks so fast,
three hundred members start to trot
while three remain—including Groat.

The Maiden speech, so coy and shy,
instead of tripping trippingly,
raced like a motor on high gear
and terminated his career.

NONSENSE VERSES
By **HENRY TAYLOR**
FOR CHRISTMAS 1943

**BALLAD OF
COMMON WEALTH
BEVERIDGE PLAN**

Ballad of Common Wealth.

The prehistoric common man
combined with others of his clan
to bring to earth the sprinting food
they caught by artifices crude.

He as a slave in Pharaoh's day
had seen his freedom fade away,
and morn to night remorseless whip
cut curling lip and straining hip.

Though still a slave in Grecian times
when lettered penman was, sometimes
indulgent master used his skill
to calligraph a codicil.

In Roman days his lot grew worse,
his hourly portion was a curse,
pronounced by Caesar So and So
(there were a number as you know).

When Julius Caesar on the tide
had entered Albion in his pride,
I cannot think the common man
would welcome such a gentleman.

The British Common man abhorred
the coming of the Pagan lord;
from western shire and weedy fen
he pushed him out to sea again.

Columba, Patrick, and such men
encouraged him to hope again,
to heaven above his thoughts incline,
his aspirations were divine.

But greed for gold and lust for power
now long delay the promised hour,
while Kings and Bishops, Barons and Lords
purloin the common man's rewards.

Progeniture decides that one
may work for all, while others shun
the apt and bare suggestion rude
that work for all is really good.

Through feudal and through Tudor days
the populace in divers ways
contrived to live without a plan
upon the work of common man.

In all the wars that Britons fought
to keep intact the sacred spot
we call our home, our sires have died
and we've retained their ancient pride.

But now the conscience of our race
has sprung alive in every place
where privilege is seen to be
inconsequent upon the free.

No fault attaches if great wealth
descends upon you or if health
should pass you by, with justice won
both wealth and common should be one.

When Britain owns her common wealth—
it cannot be achieved by stealth—
her lands, her mines, her factories free
will all belong to you and me.

We own our Navy, Army, Post,
our Air Force too, a doughty host
of brave defenders who deserve
the gratitude of those they serve.

If we can find the means to pay
the war expenses of each day,
we can and will devise a plan
of work and wages for each man.

There's work enough for man and maid,
and wives as well in every trade,
where spindles spin and shuttle's speed
produce the fabrics that we need.

In shipyards, docks and mines as well,
of countless thousands who can tell
the confidence that they would feel
if working for the common weal.

The man or woman who to-day
plays all the night, sleeps half the day;
I find no place in all this plan
for idle miss or spendthrift man.

Our work and wages now depend
on vested interests we defend,
but common interests should denote
the common purpose of our vote.

Each manager and foreman true,
directors, clerks and typists too,
shall share among them from the trade
the profits they've together made.

The smaller man with helpers few
will not rejoin the many who
find work and wages happier got
along with others, quite a lot.

Our M.P.'s sitting in the House
will then as always lay our grouse
before the men who toil and sweat—
the members of the Cabinet.

But if self-interest takes the place
of service for the populace,
we want to know what has been done
for us, our children and the town.

We do not fear the bureaucrat,
though often wonder what he's at;
he cannot do his deeds by stealth—
he ought to join the Common Wealth.

A man there is much known to fame,
Sir Richard Acland is his name;
his title comes from ancient lore,
its date is sixteen-forty-four.

The first Sir Acland did present
his liberal views to Parliament,
from then till now descendants, too,
presented them till 'forty-two.

Sir Richard then decides that he
as Independant must be free
to advocate his simple plan—
“The Country's Wealth for Everyman.”

It can be had by major votes
from Land's End up to John o' Groats,
each voter then must count his loss
by not recording Acland's cross.

If parties could agree and would
but join together, then we could
convert the country through a mike
by Acland's “What it will be like.”

Beveridge Plan.

A man there is who loves his kind
so ardently, that his whole mind
has used his talents skilfully,
and has emerged triumphantly.

Before you draw your earliest breath,
all through your life, from birth to death,
he plans to make existence free
and save you from anxiety.

But all must work, though none need slave,
no one may squander, all must save;
by weekly contributions we
secure secured security.

The people joyful hail his plan,
that makes equality for man
dependent on your four and three
plus your employer's moiety.

But if your boss should so decree
to close his works immediately
because his profits are too low,
you and some other thousands go.

Your weekly contributions paid
now hasten promptly to your aid,
no means test now the sum degrades;
the ghost of unemployment fades.

But if your master should go "bust"
or if he's such you cannot trust,
you then can learn another job;
believe me it won't cost a bob.

If life should hand you sundry knocks,
'gainst teeth, or eyes, or arms, the shocks
will softened be by nursing care,
attentive, kindly, everywhere.

If you should be a maiden sweet,
your chosen partner parked so neat,
the plan will help you to defray
the bare expenses of "the day."

And if at later stage you meet
the children clustering round your feet,
the plan again provides the means
of boots and clothing for the weans.

At last the end appears in sight
and toil is o'er—the darkening night
few terrors holds to wife and man
through blessings of the "Beveridge Plan."