



Nuntius

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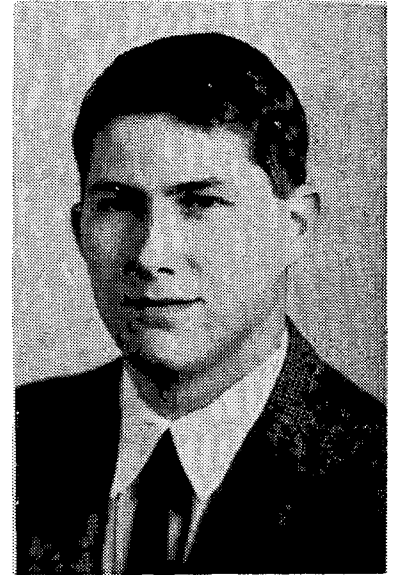
Number 2

1962 Prize Winning Essay

Prometheus, The Symbol of Our Age

By JACK RHODES

The essay which follows was the 1962 winner of the annual Eta Sigma Phi Essay Contest. It was written by Mr. Jack Rhodes of the State University of South Dakota.



"... but the task requires a giant who may afterwards distribute the light among inferior men. It is not everyone that can steal the fire from heaven like Prometheus; but, when once he had done the deed, a thousand hearths were kindled by it." (Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Earth's Holocaust," **Selected Tales and Sketches**, Rinehart, New York, 1959. p. 365.)

The statement quoted above is a very penetrating comment by Nathaniel Hawthorne on the relationship of Prometheus, was indeed a giant among people of less stature. It is to be carefully noted, however, that Hawthorne does not degrade the average man by his compliment to the superhuman; merely because he considers Prometheus of titantic stature does not imply any disrespect for the proprietors of the "thousand hearths." It is important to bear this relationship — that of giant to average rather than giant to totally inept — in mind when considering Prometheus as a symbol of our age.

By what stretch of the imagination can a student suggest that a character from Greek mythology of several hundred years ago might be construed as an appropriate symbol for the age of nuclear weapons, polio vaccine, and orbits of the earth? Is there, indeed, any remote or direct connection between the feats of Prometheus and the accomplishments to the "atomic age"?

The answer to the former question is relatively simple: the fact that Prometheus and the progress of the modern world are not contemporaneous does not exclude the possibility of existing similarities. But it is the second question toward this that the efforts of this paper must be directed. What is the relationship, then, between Prometheus and our age?

It is in answer to this question that the quotation from Hawthorne assumes meaning: even as Prometheus, giant among mortals, reached toward the skies and secured the blessings of fire, alphabet, and numbers for mankind, in like manner is the present age striving to reach the skies, striving to give to future races and ages the blessings of superhuman technological, cultural, and scientific advances.

With this general thesis proposed, this paper can now turn to a closer study of the manners in which our age resembles the character and ability Prometheus. Even before this can be done, however, it must be again noted that even in the transition from Prometheus to our age must be included no disrespect for predecessors. Although the present day is the culmination of all former areas of the earth and despite the fact that **this** age rather than

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Prometheus, The Symbol of Our Age

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the seventeenth or twelfth century is the Prometheus of all, it must be remembered that the progress possible in this age could not exist without the knowledge of the decades which have preceded it. Thus the relationship of giant to inept is no more applicable when comparing the present day to past eras than when comparing Prometheus to lesser individuals.

The resemblance between Prometheus and our age does not, in this thesis, exist so much in the time-honored portrait of the suffering benefactor lashed to the unyielding rock. Rather the resemblance exists in the more seldomly envisioned prospect of the giant's enormous efforts to bestow upon man the treasures of the gods. Our age is by no means lashed to the rock; this is not an era which hurls alternating laments and curses at a higher power. This is an age of effort and a time of strain, an era of Herculean toil and all-persuasive hope. This is not the passive and helpless age typified by the hapless hero on the rock but the active, bright-eyed, vigorous age symbolized by the enormity of Prometheus's feats and his willingness to suffer consequences in order to wrest the fetters from the marching feet of progress.

Prometheus is a symbol of our age because he represents the spirit of continuing progress in many areas. Too often we are forgetful of his contributions to culture through the introduction of numbers and the alphabet because we are more intrigued and engrossed with the power of his gift of fire. But it is important to remember all of his offerings to man. He gave us fire so that food might be cooked; warmth might be provided, animals might be deterred from molesting us, so that sterilization of medical equipment might become possible, and so that hundreds upon thousands of advantages might be visited upon mankind. And he gave us the tools of culture and international understanding (such as dress and knowledge and customs).

Our age provides a parallel to Prometheus in its efforts to further the progress of man. Although advancements are being made steadily in the fields of culture and international understanding (such as the important election of Mr. U Thant as Secretary General of the United Nations), the major portion of progress in recent years has been highlighted by the rapid strides in scientific knowledge; and it is in

symbol, Prometheus.

On February 20, 1962, the United States of this area, scientific advance, that the most significant comparisons may be drawn between our age and its America exhibited its likeness to Prometheus by striving to gather further information about the void of the universe. John Glenn was hurtled around the world, a living counterpart of Prometheus because he had been selected as a super specimen of mankind. His flight will stand as an example of man's striving in this age to duplicate the feats of Prometheus by reaching for the sky in the name of progress. The giant Prometheus, many years ago, exerted a superhuman effort to reach the sky and return with its riches; the human race, 1962, is exerting a like effort.

Thus Prometheus is the symbol of progress and the dominant character of our age. One final example will suffice to indicate our resemblance to his effort. This example is the "mushroom cloud" of the atomic bomb, an object long considered a symbol of our age. Look at a picture of the cloud. It is a composite of atomic power and all the dust of the earth, dust of which man is made. It surges, contorts, insists on reaching the Ultima Thule of Heaven; it gropes, strives, begs, and aches in its desire to gain ultimate knowledge from the stars. The cloud of the culmination of man's thirst for knowledge, this cloud, is an outstretched hand of our age. Its fibers and muscles scratch at the doors of Truth. It is **our** symbol; it is the mighty hand of Prometheus!

Mr. Rhodes was born June 5, 1942, in Seattle, Washington; and although he now claims residence in Lawton, Oklahoma, he has travelled, as the son of an army officer, throughout most of the United States and much of Europe. He was graduated from Senior High School in Lawton, Oklahoma, in 1959, and he has attended the State University of South Dakota since that time. At South Dakota he has declared a major in both English and Classics and minors in History and Speech in addition to frequent participation in dramatics, debate, and student government. He is now serving his second conservative term as prytanis of the University chapter of Eta Sigma Phi and plans to attend the national convention in the spring. Mr. Rhodes desires to become a college instructor and plans to continue his education toward the Master of Arts degree in English after receiving his Bachelor of Arts degree this June.

Latin And Classical Studies Boom

By **ROBERT N. KELSO**

This may come as a surprise—but the shock registered in the the U. S. when Russia orbited Sputnik I has led to a boom in Latin and classical studies in American schools.

That's what a group of classicists in New Orleans for a three-day professional meeting contend. They say the re-evaluation of U. S. education brought on by Sputnik places emphasis on "more rigorous forms of education."

The rigorous and basic studies, along with science and mathematics, include Latin, Greek and the scrutiny of ancient Western culture—the stock in trade of the college and high school teachers here for a Southern section meeting of the Classics Association of the Middle West and South.

About 100 of these specialists have been meeting for three days at the Sheraton-Charles hotel, listening to each other talk on classical languages, literary masterpieces, archaeology, history, religion and mythology.

ONE CAUSE

One of the causes of an upsurge of campus interest in classical studies has been an expansion of programs long-established but until recently granted only a restricted place in the curriculum, a section officer said.

Section secretary-treasurer Francis L. Newton of Vanderbilt University said it is not unusual now to find both colleges and high schools offering three or four years of Latin, where they formerly offered two at the most. Newton said other classical studies have gotten a comparable shot in the arm.

"Sputnik," said Newton, "led to a major realization across the country that there was a weakness in our technical training, but it also led to a reconsideration of basic academic programs including the classics."

ANOTHER FACTOR

Another factor leading to increased emphasis on classical studies, he said, is the growing maturity of American civilization.

"As our American culture matures, some of us realize increasingly the need for recapturing the lines that lead us back into the past so we can understand something of the background of Western culture," he said.

"That leads us inevitably back to the Greeks and the Romans as founders of what is best in our civilization."

The major value of the study of classical languages, Newton said, is to put the student in direct touch with the great minds of classical antiquity.

"This," he said, "is necessary if we are to have the depth of understanding we need if we are to emulate the greatness of the past and avoid its mistakes."

STRESSES IMPORTANCE

Section president Arthur F. Stocker of the University of Virginia stressed in an address to delegates the importance of returning to classical studies as a means of restoring the true aim of education.

Stocker said Greek and Roman educators equipped youth with a wide and thorough knowledge of literary, philosophical and historical fields, as opposed to creative work at an earlier age.

The ancients, he said, stressed the development of memory, and considered the building of character as going hand-in-hand with a well-stocked mind.

PART OF ENDOWMENT

They considered creativity and originality as a part of the student's native endowment, believing that these qualities were to be given full play only after completion of a basic education, he said.

Among rugged discourses including "Military Defenses in the Corinthian Isthmus," and "Derkylos of Hagnous and the Date of IG II2 1187," delegates last night pulled out a plum with a discussion of digging to find St. Peter's tomb.

An account of the location of the tomb, three altars straight down from the Bernini altar at St. Peter's in Rome, and evidence that the Father of the Church was buried in the spot was given by Brother Edmund Hunt, C.S.C., of St. Edward's University.

Brother Edmund told a reporter that archaeologists who conducted the painstaking excavations under St. Peter's church are positive they located the right tomb from thousands of scribblings on a plaster wall thrown up about 190 A.D.

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ANNUAL REPORT ETA SIGMA PHI MEDAL FUND

Cash on hand, August 31, 1961	- \$ 315.22
RECEIPTS:	
Sale of large silver medals (64 @ \$3.75) ...	\$240.00
Sale of small silver medals (313 @ \$1.25) ...	391.25
Sale of bronze medals (276 @ \$1.25)	345.00
Accounts outstanding paid	8.75
Overpayments	4.30
Total receipts	\$989.30
Total cash and receipts	\$1,304.52
Accounts outstanding	30.00
Net cash and receipts	\$1,274.52
DISBURSEMENTS:	
Payments to Medallic Art Co. for medals ..	\$940.90
Refunds of overpayments	3.75
Bank charges24
Total disbursements	\$944.89
Cash on hand, August 31, 1962	\$ 329.63
Medals in custody of Medallic Art Co. and paid for:	
51 large silver medals	\$172.64
35 small silver medals	39.62
43 bronze medals	34.40
Inventories	\$246.66

NUNTIUS

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Letter To The Chapters

With this issue of the NUNTIUS I will hand back the leadership of the fraternity to Dr. Butts who will return in a few days for his position at Birmingham-Southern. It has been a pleasure for me to serve you as your Acting Executive Secretary for the past seven months and it is my hope that you feel the work of the fraternity has gone along well in his absence. I must confess that I did not realize the amount of work that is involved in this responsibility and the time which Mr. Butts must put on it. These past seven months have certainly caused me to have a greater appreciation of him and the job which he does. I appreciate him even more when I think of the other duties of the fraternity with which I have not needed to concern myself with that he has year after year. I realize the tremendous responsibility that there is in being the Executive Secretary of Eta Sigma Phi. In many ways I think it would be wise if every chapter advisor could serve and fulfill these duties at least once. It would serve to make each of us

realize the problem that is involved.

If my work has been successful it has been largely due to several factors. I would like to express my thanks to the chapters, chapter advisors and the officers for the splendid co-operation which I received and also for the words of encouragement that have been offered. My thanks also to the Board of Directors and the co-operation which they have given me in moments of decision. I know there are many others whom I should thank but I would like to extend a special note of thanks to a young lady who soon will become a member of Eta Sigma Phi, but without whose help this work could not have been done, Miss Carole Hedgepeth. She has typed all of the correspondence and helped to take care of all the records during my tenure of office. Her help has been invaluable.

May I urge each of the chapters to let Mr. Butts know of the activities of the chapters that may be included in the NUNTIUS and also I would like to call your attention to the National Convention which will be held in Baltimore in the spring this year.—Thomas T. Boswell, Acting Executive Secretary, Eta Sigma Phi.

Latin Is Still Alive And Kicking

By DR. PENDLETON GAINES

One of the hoariest myths in current education is the notion that Latin is a dead language. Far from it! It is alive, kicking and far-reaching in its influence.

For example, a controversy rages in England today over whether Latin should be continued as a requirement for admission to Cambridge University. Regardless of the outcome of the argument, not many English educators minimize the importance of that classic language.

Why should any student take Latin? Nobody speaks it anymore. It's not much help in developing an atomic bomb or in building a hydro-electric plant or even winning the Sugar Bowl football game. I guess I've had a hundred people in my life time ask me if there was any value in Latin. Well, I think Latin has tremendous value, and for three reasons. First, a large percentage of the words in our own language are based on Latin. The understanding and meaning of our own tongue becomes easier when we know the Latin stems and roots of our words.

Education has no more important purpose than a clear grasp and use of the English language. The ability to comprehend and communicate effectively is the number one goal of true education. A thorough grounding in Latin cannot fail to help a person achieve this end more readily. Most eloquence and articulateness in our own language stems from a basic knowledge of Latin.

Second, an understanding of Latin leads to a readier grasp of many foreign tongues. In this era of a shrinking world the need for understanding other peoples and their cultures is paramount. The starting point for this should be a knowledge of these peoples' languages.

A friend of mine in the Foreign Service told me the other day that in the Russian Embassy in Cambodia there were 80 persons, all of which spoke the native language. We have some 20 persons in our Embassy there, none of whom speaks the local dialect! It is needless for me to speculate as to who is winning the cold war there.

All the Latin and Romantic modern languages, such as Italian, French, Spanish and the rest, are even more firmly rooted in Latin than in English. Anybody with a good grasp of Latin can learn these modern Romantic languages without too much effort. Thus Latin makes languages more readily understandable and becomes an important

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LATIN AND CLASSICAL STUDIES BOOM

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to protect an earlier shrine over the grave.

"PETER IS INSIDE"

"One of these scribblings actually says, in Greek, 'Peter is Inside,'" Brother Edmund said.

The remnants of literally hundreds of other simple tombs, none of them marked, which are jammed around the central tomb indicates that these Christians wanted to be buried as close as possible to Peter, he said.

Another bit of strong circumstantial evidence, he said, is the fact uncovered by diggers that the Emperor Constantine completely buried a rich pagan cemetery in order to level a site and locate the altar of the church he built directly over the tomb.

Father Edmund, who has explored and photographed the crypts under St. Peter's church on several visits to Rome, said the bones of the Saint were never identified.

SOME INDICATION

Some indication that students are not uniformly clamoring to study Latin was given in a talk yesterday by a teacher at New Orleans' Benjamin Franklin high school.

Franklin faculty member A. L. Romeo discoursed for 15 minutes on "Some Techniques of Motivation in the Teaching of Secondary Latin to Academically Segregated Students at Franklin."

Translated, this means how to persuade 'em to study the stuff.

Currently Active Chapters

- Beta:** Northwestern University
Evanston, Illinois
- Gamma:** Ohio University
Athens, Ohio
- Epsilon:** State University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa
- Zeta:** Denison University
Granville, Ohio
- Theta:** Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana
- Lambda:** University of Mississippi
University, Mississippi
- Pi:** Birmingham-Southern College
Birmingham, Alabama
- Tau:** University of Kentucky
Lexington, Kentucky
- Upsilon:** Mississippi State College
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- Beta Kappa:** College of Notre Dame
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- Alpha Omicron:** Lawrence College
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- Beta Theta:** Hampden-Sydney College
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- Gamma Beta:** Bowling Green State

- University
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- Gamma Delta:** Yeshiva University
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- Gamma Epsilon:** University of
Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin
- Gamma Zeta:** Albion College
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- Gamma Eta:** Louisiana College
Pineville, Louisiana
- Gamma Theta:** Georgetown College
Georgetown, Kentucky
- Gamma Iota:** Wabash College
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- Gamma Kappa:** Heidelberg College
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- Gamma Lambda:** St. Mary's College
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- Gamma Rho:** Hope College
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Woman's College
Lynchburg, Virginia
- Delta Beta:** Canisius College
Buffalo, New York
- Delta Gamma:** Marywood College
Scranton, Pennsylvania

LATIN IS STILL ALIVE—

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bridge to international goodwill.

Finally, I believe that the rigorous study of the Latin language is about the best intellectual exercise a young mind can have. It's almost like an intellectual crossword puzzle. Once the vocabulary, disciplined thought processes by which tenses are known, then the translation is understood automatically.

I confess to being old-fashioned in educational ideas, but I believe the same disciplined thought processes by which

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**LIST OF NEW MEMBERS
OF ETA SIGMA PHI**

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Mrs. Robert Rushing
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Michael J. Ryan
Honorary Members
Rev. Edward M. Maloney, S. J.
Rev. Edward B. Gillen, S. J.

LATIN IS STILL ALIVE—

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a youngster masters Latin can be transferred to virtually any field of study or endeavor, and will sustain that youth throughout life. The mastery of Latin is an intellectual thrill for any teen-ager who accomplishes it.

I'm not recommending Latin for everyone, but for those who have the ability to learn it, nothing is more important. I am proud that Spartansburg High School has such an excellent program in Latin and that Winthrop College sponsors such a popular Latin Festival for our state high school students.

And if you will forgive an indulgent parent, I'm prouder still of my own 14-year-old who is taking second-year Latin at Jenkins and making A's and B's in it.

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AMONG THE CHAPTERS

ALPHA CHI Tulare University

Alpha Chi Chapter has begun this academic year with a schedule including the best of past traditions and adding new programs calculated to develop interest in the classics among students who normally would not find a place for them in their regular work.

The traditional Saturnalia orgy was a remarkable success this year. Over forty performers from eleven different classes produced elaborately costumed and skillfully produced skits (in all cases written by students) before an audience estimated at over seventy-five people. Attention-catching posters placed about the campus had brought to the entertainment people with no previous connection with the classics, after which many stayed for refreshments and enjoyed meeting one another.

The first of our new series of faculty lectures for the university public was also a remarkable success. Professor Richard M. Frazer, Jr., of our department, gave an illustrated talk on Ovid's *Metamorphoses* before an excellent audience, a good number of which was comprised of visitors. In the spring, members of the departments of Philosophy and History have been invited to speak on classical topics under our auspices.

In February the Chapter will initiate a goodly company of promising candidates. The initiation banquet will be held again this year at a prominent Vieux Carre restaurant, marking the social highlight of the classical year.

No report of our activities would be complete, however, without mentioning the very high privilege that chapter members had over the Thanksgiving Holidays in attending the public sessions of the convention of the Classical Association of the Middle West and South, at the St. Charles Hotel in New Orleans.

Plans are also underway to send a delegation of chapter officers to the national convention of Eta Sigma Phi at Baltimore this year.

Cooperating with Alpha Chi Chapter in sponsoring Saturnalia were the Orades, classical association at Sophie Newcomb Woman's College, whose president is Miss Adrienne Lapeyre, also a member of Eta Sigma Phi; adviser is Professor Mary Sollmann.

At the annual election of officers of Alpha Chi Chapter Joseph L. Roberts III was named President. William M. Ross was selected Vice President; Miss Veleka Gray, Secretary; Miss Natalie Prise, Treasurer; Miss Ethelyn Breaux, Corresponding Secretary; and Miss Katherine Kamp, Sergeant-at-Arms.

—Submitted by Joseph L. Roberts, III
President.

BETA KAPPA College Of Notre Dame Of Maryland

Our busiest moments in the Chapter are, of course, devoted to preparations for the national meeting. We held a joint meeting for this purpose with our neighbor Beta Chi Chapter at Loyola on November . Both Chapters are enthusiastic, including our associate members, who are planning a small benefit party to aid our finances. After the business meeting, Betty Klein showed us very attractive slides of her summer's tour of Europe and served refreshments.

We also attended an archaeological lecture at the John Hopkins University on October 19, given by the Norton Lecturer for this year, Dr. Louisa Bellinger, of the Textile Museum in Washington on "The Bible as a Source Book for the Study of Textiles." It was a very delightful and instructive lecture.

BETA XI Rosary College

On May 16, 1962, the Beta Xi Chapter of Eta Sigma Phi at Rosary College enjoyed slides of the "World of Vergil," and also scenes of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Afterwards, the chapter held the election of officers for the year 1962-63. Newly elected officers are: Donna Curtin, Prytanis; Mary Lou Cox, Hyparchos; Audrey Malinowski, Grammateus-Chryso-phylax.

The Beta Xi Chapter wishes to extend its thanks and best wishes to you. We appreciate the cooperation that has been extended from the National Office both now and in the past.

LATIN IS STILL ALIVE—

(Continued from page 14)

He had to be literally forced into taking it in the first place, but now he loves it and thinks his teacher is without a flaw.

Yes, Latin is a long way from being dead, even though no one really speaks it anymore. If you've got a child who is debating whether or not to take Latin, I suggest you give him a strong nudge in the direction of this fine old language.

GAMMA TAU

Mississippi College

Gamma Tau Chapter has elected the following officers for the present year. Harold Parten, a junior Latin major, was elected as president. Reese Carleton was chosen vice-president. Jennifer Reynolds was elected as secretary-treasurer.

To help the chapter raise funds for their projects for the year, a rummage sale was held and brought in \$25.00 Other ideas are in a planning stage to raise additional funds. The chapter awarded its annual scholarship at the close of the year to one of its senior members, Miss Betty Lou Jones, who is this year teaching Latin in a high school in Jackson, Mississippi. This is the third year that this scholarship has been awarded by the group. The chapter held an initiation on October 2 at which time two new members were initiated. Another initiation is planned in February for approximately seventeen new members.

Under the lead this year of our vice-president, Reese Carleton, we have enjoyed outstanding programs including one recently given by a new member of our English Department who spoke on the "Role of the Humanities in our Present Civilization." Other worthwhile programs are scheduled for the coming meetings.

We hope to have a good representation at the Convention in Baltimore. At the present time we have enough for two carloads who have shown interest in the trip. The chapter appreciates the honor of having a National Officer in our fraternity as a member in our chapter. We are proud of the job that Sessions Polk is doing as National Treasurer. Respectfully submitted, Jennifer Reynolds, secretary.

CLASSICAL ENTERTAINMENT

AT SERVICE CLUBS

THE DAILY REVIEW ATLAS, a newspaper of Monmouth, Illinois, recently carried an interesting article about Professor Garrett Thiessen, Head of the Department of Chemistry at Monmouth College and an honorary member of Gamma Omicron Chapter of Eta Sigma Phi. The article states in part:

Monmouth Exchange Club members heard an unusual program Tuesday when Dr. Garrett Thiessen . . . recited poetry for 20 minutes, sans script. Thiessen, dramatizing excerpts from Thomas Babington Macaulay's LAYS OF ANCIENT

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