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## Poe's Income\*

K o j i    O i

In the first half of the nineteenth century, American authors found it very hard to live by their creative work alone and were often compelled to make their living on a job of work quite apart from the job of their hearts' desire. In the forties, there were many American men of letters who, in Mott's words, "were represented from time to time in most of the important magazines and who made their living mainly from the magazines."<sup>1</sup>

Edgar Allan Poe was one of those notable examples and was the very type of the "magazinish" by his own definition.<sup>2</sup> He is said to have contributed to more than thirty different magazines and had editorial connections with five. And it was solely for his bread and butter that Poe dashed out one article after another in his literary career. It was for these magazines also that he developed, together with Hawthorne, "the peculiarly American form of that fiction characterized by its conciseness, plot and single action,"<sup>3</sup> known as the short story today. It is indeed an ironic twist of history. In this connection, it may be of great interest to raise the question: "How did Poe earn his living?"

Broadly speaking, there are only two ways of making a living for an author: outer investment, *i. e.*, self-investment and literary patronage, and inner investment, *i. e.*, returns from his books. In this light, Poe's main sources of income will be

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summarized in the following manner:

I. Outer investment

(A) Self-investment

( i ) Receipts from magazine contributions

( ii ) Salaries as magazine editor

(iii) Lecturing

(B) Literary patronage in the form of a literary prize

II. Inner investment: Returns from his books, both prose and poetry.

Naturally, the items (i) and (ii) are predominantly important in Poe's income program, while the other items are almost negligible so long as their pecuniary significance is concerned.

The first section of this paper will discuss the item (i) only, and the second section the other remaining items. In the third section, Poe's income will be considered in relation to the living costs of his time.

I

**Poe's receipts from magazines**

As magazinist, Poe had two major sources of income: his salaries as editor and his receipts from magazines. When he had no editorial connections at all, therefore, Poe found it necessary to live on the latter source alone. Moreover, each magazine had its own prices fixed for its contributors, which, in turn, were determined arbitrarily by its proprietor. Referring to the unreliableness of the magazine owners, Poe writes, "They graduate their pay by mere whim — apparent popularity — or *their own* opinion of merit. Real merit is rather *no* recommendation."<sup>1</sup> Poe's earnings from his articles were by no means constant, with a vast difference between his expectations and his actual payments.

*Graham's Magazine* was, in Poe's day, one of the most generous magazines in the United States, to which he contributed almost regularly, and very copiously when he was its editor. Graham seems to have paid from \$5 to \$50 a poem.

The *Graham* page, which became a kind of standard of measurement, was a very large one, containing about a thousand words. Then Graham's payment for a five-thousand word article was from twenty to sixty dollars, which, considered in proportion to the cost of living at the time, was liberal and almost a "living wage" indeed.<sup>2</sup>

Mott computes Poe's *Graham* rate at \$4 or \$5 a page, basing his calculation on the following information: (a) Poe's letter to George Roberts, written on June 4, 1842, in which, talking of one of his stories, Poe writes, "It will make 25 pages of *Graham's Magazine*; and, at the usual price, would be worth to me \$101"; (b) Poe's letter to "Annie" just before his death, where he says, "The *least* price I get is \$5 per 'Graham' page"; and (c) the "very definite statement," which shows that Poe first sold "The Gold Bug" for \$25, which, "since the story runs to thirteen thousand words, would have made about thirteen 'Graham' pages at four dollars a page."<sup>3</sup>

Of these three items, the (b) is not to be relied upon. For Poe's "*least* price" is, as Ostrom notes, easily "belied" by his letter to J. R. Thompson, where Poe offered his "Marginalia" manuscripts, requesting "\$2 per page" for them.<sup>4</sup> To the other evidences given by Mott may be added Poe's letter to J. E. Snodgrass, in which Poe writes of the same story mentioned in the item (a): "It would occupy twenty-five pages of *Graham's Magazine* and is worth to me a hundred dollars at the usual

Magazine price.”<sup>5</sup> And also useful is Poe’s letter to Robert Conrad, reporting that “The articles, at the old price (\$4 per page) will come to \$90.”<sup>6</sup> It would be fair to conclude from these data that Poe’s *Graham* price was, in spite of Mott’s authority, probably not more than \$4 per page. The price of “The Imp of the Perverse” (July 1845, pp. 1-3) is, for instance, estimated to have been at \$12.<sup>7</sup>

Compared with other contributors to *Graham’s*, Poe seems to have been paid a not very high pay. In 1842 Hawthorne was offered \$5 a page, while Cooper received \$1,800 for *The Islets of the Gulf* (later *Jack Tier*), which contains about 250 pages at the rate of about \$6 per page. N. P. Willis is said to have received as high a pay as \$11 a page at the peak of his career.<sup>8</sup> “The very liberality of Graham’s payment for popular authors,” comments Quinn, “must have been a bit galling to an editor who received eight hundred dollars a year for his services.”<sup>9</sup>

*Godey’s Lady’s Book* was another of the highly paying periodicals in Poe’s day. Though the general rate of Godey’s payment is not known, “that Godey was regarded with Graham as a generous employer is plain enough.”<sup>10</sup> Allen reports, “Since November, 1845, *Godey’s Lady’s Book* must have been the main source of his livelihood.”<sup>11</sup> Among the stories Poe contributed to this *Book* are “The Cask of Amontillado,” “The Oblong Box” and “Thou Art the Man.”

As to his pay from *Godey’s*, Poe writes in a letter to Philip Cooke that the magazine paid him \$5 a page.<sup>12</sup> But, as usual, we cannot accept Poe’s words without caution. First, Poe always posed, in his letters to Cooke, as “the artist and man of letters addressing himself to a highly idealized fellow poet.”<sup>13</sup> Secondly, Poe was paid only 50 cents per page from *The Opal*,<sup>14</sup> whose

editress, Miss Sarah Hale, also belonged to the editorial staff of *Godey's*. Taking these into consideration, we may as well compute Poe's *Godey* rate at about \$4 a page, the same price paid by *Graham's*, whose policy was strongly influential on many Philadelphia magazines.<sup>15</sup>

In 1835, "Berenice" and "Morella" were printed in *Southern Literary Messenger*, from which Poe's rate of payment was "probably not over two dollars a large page of small type."<sup>16</sup> In 1845, the editor of the *Messenger* tried to make arrangements with Poe for a critical article each month at \$3 a page.<sup>17</sup> Though the idea was not successful, Poe seems to have remained a contributor to the magazine.<sup>18</sup> Of a total of 15 "Marginalia papers," the last five were printed in the *Messenger* from April through September in 1849. Poe offered the manuscripts at \$2 per page and apparently had difficulties in collecting the money for them.<sup>19</sup>

With *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, Poe's price was \$3 per page in 1839--1840.<sup>20</sup> Near the end of his life, Poe seems to have "made a regular engagement for \$10 a week throughout the year."<sup>21</sup> *The Gift*, which Quinn reports was Poe's "principal outlet," paid an average of \$2 per page, but its page was very small. To this magazine Poe sold "Eleonora" for about \$18 or \$20 in 1842.<sup>22</sup> "Ligeia," one of Poe's best stories, was given away to *The American Museum* for only \$10, at about 80 cents a page.<sup>23</sup>

"A Chapter of Suggestions" was sold to *The Opal* (1845, pp. 164-170) at only 50 cents per page, probably netting Poe about \$3.<sup>24</sup> Poe seems to have received \$2 a page from *Broadway Journal* in 1845, if one judges by a receipt signed by Poe of \$18 for his criticism of Elizabeth Barrett's *Drama of Exile and Other Poems*.<sup>25</sup> To Lowell's *Pioneer*, Poe contributed "Tell-Tale Heart" and "Notes on English Verse," receiving \$10 for each of

the two. "Notes on English Verse" had been originally sold to *Graham's* for \$32 under the title of "Versification."<sup>26</sup> And Poe got only \$30 for "The Poetic Principle," posthumously published in the *Union Magazine*.<sup>27</sup>

Poe's attitude toward *Flag of Our Union* was very curious. He writes of it that, though "not a *very* respectable journal," it paid "as high prices as most of the magazines." The magazine offered, according to Poe, \$5 a *Graham* page for "Hop-Frog" and also \$5 for a sonnet.<sup>28</sup> But, in spite of the fact that the proprietor of *Our Union* was ready to give him \$15 for "Von Kempelen and His Discovery," Poe tried to sell the article to *Literary World*, showing his willingness to "take for it \$10—or, in fact, whatever you think you can afford."<sup>29</sup> Surely Poe was not bargaining away his story. For \$15 would be easily his own "on presentation" to the agent of *Our Union*. But if Poe was bargaining out of need for small money, then there is every reason to suspect that the offer of \$15 from *Our Union* was a fiction from the beginning. Even Poe's word about \$5 a *Graham* page from the magazine seems to sound very suspicious, especially when one remembers that it was quoted in one of his letters to "Annie," which are tinted, more often than not, with the color of exaggeration. "Von Kempelen" was finally printed in *Our Union*!<sup>30</sup>

How much did Poe receive for his poems? Mott makes the figure as high as \$50 a poem, basing his computation upon Poe's words, though, of course, Mott admits that Poe "received much less for some of his poems."<sup>31</sup> Poe was paid, for instance, \$45 for "Bells" (printed in the *Union Magazine* in 1849)<sup>32</sup> and "\$5 a sonnet,"<sup>33</sup> while Poe is said to have got only \$10 for "The Raven."<sup>34</sup> Generous as Graham was, his pay for a poem ranged

from \$5 to \$50, depending upon the popularity of the contributors. The most highly-paid poet was Longfellow, who received \$50 a poem, while Lowell was offered \$10 a poem and \$30 later on.<sup>35</sup> It will be safe, to estimate Poe's rate for a poem at about \$30, or \$40 at best. It may be the exaggeration, if not the distortion, of the truth when Quinn writes that in Poe's day, "Poetry, naturally, was not to be paid for at all."<sup>36</sup>

It is important, moreover, to remember that Poe's usual magazine price does not always mean the actual price he received. Poe was quite often in sheer need of money and had to bargain away his articles. "The Mystery of Marie Rogêt" is a good example. Before it was put to print in the *Ladies' Companion*, Poe wrote at least two different letters to *Saturday Visitor* and *Times and Nation*, offering it for \$40 and \$50 respectively, though Poe was sure that it was worth \$100 at the usual magazine price.<sup>37</sup> To make the matter worse, Poe often found difficulties in collecting his payments. He was forced to write a "dunning letter" to his editors or to totally give up the money due to him, though, at one time, Poe boasted of his "permanent engagements with every magazine in America (except *Peterson's National*)."<sup>38</sup> However, Poe's predicament was by no means exceptional, for, as Mott points out, adequate payment to contributions was not the rule in the mid-nineteenth century America.<sup>40</sup>

## II

### Poe's salaries as magazine editor

In his career as magazinist, Poe had editorial connections with five magazines: *Southern Literary Messenger* (July-August 1835-January 1837), *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine* (July 1839-



June 1840), *Graham's Magazine* (February 1841-May 1842), the *Evening Mirror* (September 1844-February 1845) and the *Broadway Journal* (June 1845-December 1845) .

With *Southern Literary Messenger*, Poe was first paid a salary of \$520 a year as assistant editor and found it quite "agreeable."<sup>1</sup> When he became editor-in-chief, his salary remained the same for a while, but Poe made about \$800, receiving "liberally for extra work."<sup>2</sup> By the middle of 1836, his pay was raised to \$15 a week, thus bringing him almost \$1,000 together with the payment for his extra activities.<sup>3</sup> After November 1836, Poe seemed to have received \$20 per week if one judges by his letter to John Kennedy. In all probability, Poe's salary is estimated to be well over \$1,000 near the end of his relation with *Southern Literary Messenger*.

According to Poe,<sup>4</sup> his monthly salary from *Burton's Magazine* was \$50. Mott reports that Poe received \$10 a week for the work which "would not occupy him more than two hours a day."<sup>5</sup> But he was not at all satisfied with this pay. Beside his editorial writings, he had to do proof-reading, general superintendence at the printing office, preparation of various articles, etc. After only one year with *Burton's*, Poe joined the editorial staff of *Graham's Magazine*.

Graham paid Poe an annual salary of \$800. The amount was, according to Mott, "not as parsimonious as some of his biographers would have us believe."<sup>6</sup> Moreover, Poe was not the editor-in-chief of the magazine, but the literary editor who was "expected to provide the book notices, and, for extra pay, a certain amount of the literary contents."<sup>7</sup> Ostrom also notes that, in addition to his usual salary, Poe probably received extra money for his contributions.<sup>8</sup> But how much Poe was paid for his additional work has not been settled yet.<sup>9</sup>

On February 21, 1845, Poe entered into a contract with John Bisco, who agreed to give him "one third of the profit" from the *Broadway Journal* and to settle with him "as often as every four weeks."<sup>10</sup> Poe's duties with the *Journal* included: (i) editing the magazine with Charles Briggs; (ii) contributing at least one page a week; and (iii) giving "his faithful superintendence to the general conduct" of the magazine. Though there is no knowing how much Poe earned from his joint work with Bisco, it is evident that his receipts from it were by no means large. For one thing, Bisco sold the *Journal* to Poe for only \$50 when he saw there was not enough profit to be gained from it. In his effort to keep the magazine running as its sole proprietor-editor, Poe seemed to have borrowed more money than he was ever able to pay, including the \$50 he had borrowed of Horace Greeley.<sup>11</sup>

It is of some interest to see how Poe stands as literary editor when his salaries are compared with those received by other noted editors of his day. When Griswold became editor of *Graham's* in 1842 as successor to Poe, he received a salary of \$1,000 a year, and Bayard Taylor was also offered \$1,000 by the same magazine in 1848. In the same year, the *Southern Quarterly* offered \$1,000 to W. G. Simms.<sup>12</sup> The annual salary of \$2,500 which J. R. Lowell received from the *Atlantic Monthly* was quite exceptional and proved more than the magazine could support, so that the publisher had to supplant him with J. T. Fields mainly to save the salary.<sup>13</sup> Generally speaking, however, many editors in Poe's day were underpaid or were not paid at all. Mott comments that "most reviews, both secular and religious, paid little or nothing to their editors."<sup>14</sup> Benjamin Silliman, the editor of the leading *Journal of Science*, once wrote that his magazine "has been far from paying

a reasonable compensation; often it has paid nothing, and at present it does little more than pay its bills.<sup>15</sup> Though, receiving from \$600 to around \$900, Poe was never the highest-paid editor, one may say that he was fortunate enough to get at least "reasonable compensation" from his magazines.

### **Poe's receipts from lecturing**

Near the end of his life (1848-1849), Poe sometimes went on a lecture tour to find a way out of his financial difficulties. His lectures were almost always favorably accepted and drew a large and enthusiastic audience. On December 20, 1848, for instance, Poe gave a lecture on "The Poetic Principle" in Providence before the audience of about 2,000 people.<sup>16</sup> On August 17, 1849, his audience was again a large one, but the tickets were sold at only 25 cents. Poe writes, "If I lecture again & put the tickets at 50 cts, I will clear \$100."<sup>17</sup> Judging by this statement, Poe's takings from the August lecture are estimated to have been at \$50, the audience being apparently 2,000 people. Quinn reports on this lecture, "Poe could hardly have profited greatly."<sup>18</sup> From his lecture at Norfolk on September 14, 1849, Poe "cleared enough to settle my bill at the Madison House with \$2 over."<sup>19</sup>

On the other hand, Poe had to borrow a great deal of money before his departure for a lecture trip. Even if he was able to "meet the current expenses of the tour by lecturing," Poe was too poor to get adequately prepared for the trip. Before going to Richmond in 1849, for example, Poe borrowed \$50 which was, as he said, "half the sum I need to begin with."<sup>20</sup> And his friends had to take care of him before he reached Richmond with only \$3 left in his pocket.<sup>21</sup>

In all likelihood, Poe's total receipts from his lectures barely covered his expenses and were far from adding to his income,

with every possibility of increasing his debts.<sup>22</sup>

### Poe and literary prizes

It is a matter of course that Poe had no literary patron in the usual sense of the word. But, though in a very indirect way, a literary prize may be taken as a modern and simple form of literary patronage in that it not only offers a certain amount of money but also helps to make the otherwise unknown writer familiar with the reading public.<sup>23</sup>

In October 1833, Poe won a prize of \$50 for "MS. Found in a Bottle" from Baltimore *Saturday Visitor*. According to Mott, the *Visitor* fixed its name in the history of American magazines by "awarding a hundred-dollar prize in a short story contest to an unknown by the name of Edgar A. Poe."<sup>24</sup> But this statement is a little misleading, as the magazine of October 12, 1833, carried the announcement that a prize of \$50 was offered to Poe, quoting high praises by the judges of the story.<sup>25</sup> Though the award was not much, the result of the contest was important. Poe came to know John P. Kennedy, one of the judges, through whose kind offices Poe was able to publish his early stories and get a job in the *Southern Literary Messenger*.<sup>26</sup>

In June 1843, Poe was again offered a prize of \$100 for "The Gold Bug" in the *Dollar Magazine* competition. The story, which had originally been sold to *Graham's* for \$52, was withdrawn by Poe to be entered in the contest.<sup>27</sup>

### Returns from Poe's books

Contrary to our modern idea of an author, the early nineteenth-century American writers could not base their living on the returns from their books.<sup>28</sup> The reasons are, as Quinn shows,

two-fold: a lack of international copyrights and the cold attitude of the publishers toward American authors.<sup>29</sup> Of this situation Poe was fully aware and wrote in one of his letters:

Literature is at a sad discount. There is really nothing to be done in this way. Without an international copyright law,<sup>30</sup> American authors may as well cut their throats.

Unable to find any willing publishers, an American writer was compelled to print his books on his own account, and even when he found any, he was helplessly placed at their disposal.

Poe received nothing for his *Tales of Grotesque and Arabesque* published by Lea and Blanchard, who "quickly regretted their momentary relapse into generosity"<sup>31</sup> in agreeing to publish the book in 1839. Before his *Raven and Other Poems* was printed by Wiley and Putnam in 1845, Poe was optimistic enough to expect "plenty of money -- \$500 at least."<sup>32</sup> Actually, however, Poe seems to have had only \$75 due to him several months after its publication. Whether or not he succeeded in recovering that amount is also quite doubtful.<sup>33</sup>

As to his *Tales* of 1845, Poe was to receive 8 cents per copy, which rate of return had been promised by the publishers. Poe expected to earn at least \$120 for the book, basing his estimation upon his guesswork that "1500 of the *Tales* have been sold." But there is every reason to believe that the *Tales* did not sell so well.<sup>34</sup>

*Eureka*, delivered as a public lecture in February 1848, was published by Putnam in June. In the month of its publication, Poe complains, "He could make me no advance, beyond \$14—some weeks ago."<sup>35</sup> Poe's receipt for this \$14 shows that the amount is "to be paid out of the proceeds of the copyright of my work entitled 'Eureka, a Prose Poem,' " and also indicates the shameful contract into which Poe had entered:

I hereby engage, in case the sales of said work do not cover the expenses, according to the account rendered by said Putnam in January 1849, to repay the said amount of Fourteen Dollars; and I also engage not to ask or apply for any other loans or advances from said Putnam in any case, and to wait until January 1849 for the statement of account above, before making any demand whatever. Edgar A. Poe. New York, May 23, 1848.<sup>36</sup> Witness, Maria Clemm, Marie Louise Shew.

Of 750 copies printed, about 500 of *Eureka* were sold out within one year of its publication.<sup>37</sup> If Poe was to receive 8 cents a copy as with the case of the *Tales* of 1845 (also published by Putnam), his receipts are estimated to have been at about \$40, including the advance payment of \$14. But it is quite dubious whether the poor sales of the book could cover the publishing expenses sufficiently.

### **Poe's possible source of income<sup>38</sup>**

While working for *Graham's*, Poe felt "more and more disgusted with my situation" and hoped to get a job in the Custom House, thinking that it would "relieve me of all care as regards a mere subsistence, and thus allow me time for thought, which, in fact, is action."<sup>39</sup> In spite of his maneuvers, his hope was completely dashed by the end of 1842. Commenting upon his "ill fortune in political preferment," Quinn considers it to be a "distinct gain to us" from the literary point of view and cites as an example Hawthorne's uncreative years in the Custom House and at Liverpool.<sup>40</sup>

Suppose, however, that Poe had succeeded in obtaining a job in the U. S. Government. In 1839, Hawthorne's salary at the Boston Custom House is estimated to have been at \$1,200 to

\$1,500 a year.<sup>41</sup> As Inspector of Customs in New York in 1866, Melville received a salary of \$4 a day, that is, about \$1,250 annually.<sup>42</sup> It is not impossible to guess that Poe's salary would have been at least \$1,200 a year, which is obviously much better than his \$800 from *Graham's*. So long as economical significance is concerned, the job in the Custom House would have been of great help to Poe, who writes, "If the salary will barely enable me to live I shall be content."<sup>43</sup>

### III

For the proper understanding of Poe's income, we must regard it in the light of living costs of his period. Though no definite data about them are now obtainable, the following information will be of some value: (i) in 1828, Longfellow's salary at Bowdoin College was \$800. The salary of a professor at the same institution was \$1,000, and that of an instructor \$700; (ii) in 1838, a salary of \$13 a month and board was the highest pay to a female teacher in Connecticut. And \$8 was the common salary for males and half of that for females; (iii) in 1839, a man could live on \$300 a year; (iv) in 1839, Longfellow's salary as the Smith Professor at Harvard was \$2,000 a year; (v) in 1840, the normal salary of a full professor at the University of Pennsylvania was \$2,300 a year; (vi) in 1842, the Governor of Connecticut got a salary of \$1,100 annually; (vii) in 1843, the salary of a college professor was about \$600 a year; and (viii) in 1843, the annual expenses of a Yale undergraduate was estimated at \$140 to \$210.<sup>2</sup>

It would be right to conclude from these data that a minimum salary of \$300 to \$400 a year was prerequisite for one male adult to make a moderate living in the 30's and 40's. With an

income of \$600 to \$1,000, a family man would lead a comfortable, if not luxurious life. At the least, an annual income of \$800 seems to have been a sufficient one for an average family.

Theoretically speaking, Poe must have been able to live comfortably on his salaries from the magazines, receiving \$600 to \$800 plus a certain sum of magazine receipts for his contributions. But he had a family to support, and especially after 1842, his wife Virginia suffered from a lingering illness, which eventually led to complications and to her death in 1847. Even when he was at the summit of his literary career as the editor of *Graham's*, his poverty was "at times excessive, extending to the want of the mere necessities of life."<sup>3</sup> It is almost beyond our conjecture, therefore, how miserable Poe's daily life was when he was out of editorship, which was quite often, living solely on the payments for his magazine contributions. Quinn says, "If the quantity of Poe's creative writing during 1837 and 1838 was small, the quality was high."<sup>4</sup> But, from our point of view, the smaller the quantity, the smaller his income, and the harder Poe must have been oppressed in his living.

Before Poe married Virginia and lived with her mother, he seemed to have been able to live fairly comfortably on his \$10 a week, paying the weekly charge of \$4 for board.<sup>5</sup> In 1836, when his salary was about \$800, Poe was charged \$9 for their board,<sup>6</sup> thus paying more than half of his annual income for it alone. No wonder that his life became a tight one, forcing Maria Clemm to try a boarding-house business. According to Allen, Poe seems to have "involved himself in debt. Mrs. Clemm's boarding-house venture was evidently not a paying one."<sup>7</sup>

1843 is the year when Poe had no editorial connections at all. According to Mott's calculation, Poe received the payment of



about \$300 for his magazine contributions of the year.<sup>8</sup> The amount is half the salary of a college professor and barely provides the annual expenses of a college student in 1843. To make the matters worse, Virginia broke the blood vessel in the preceding year, suffering from a series of attacks from then on. Though the Poes lived in a comfortable-looking house in Philadelphia, "there was evidently the spectre of care ever present."<sup>9</sup> At the bottom of Fortune's wheel, Poe seems to have been badly pressed for living and wanted a paltry sum of \$5 or \$10.<sup>10</sup> When Poe and his wife moved to live in New York in the next year, they settled themselves in a boarding-house where \$7 charged is "the cheapest board I ever knew."<sup>11</sup> Poe was still as poor as ever: "We have now got 4\$ and a half left. Tomorrow I am going to try and borrow \$3 — so that I may have a fortnight to go on."

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We have a long way to go before we can fully answer the question: How did Poe earn his living? So far, we have only confirmed the current view that, in spite of his literary importance, Poe was one of the poorest writers in America. Though it is commonly accepted that literature is no paying job, Poe's case was doubly aggravated by the literary situation with which Poe had to struggle all his life. Yet his ill fortune is, quite ironically, a vast gain to us today when we remember that with Poe began the history of the short story in America. The more we study Poe as magazinist, the more certain shall we be of literature, the outline of which has been indicated by Robert Escarpit's *Sociologie de la litterature*,<sup>12</sup> or Lea Lowenthal's *Literature, Popular Culture, and Society*.

## NOTES

### Introduction

1 Frank L. Mott, *A History of American Magazines, 1741-1850* (Cambridge, Mass., 1938) , p.498.

2 The term was originally applied by Poe to N.P. Willis. See J.P. Wood, *Magazines in the United States* (New York, 1949) , p.64.

3 Ibid., p.64. See also F.L. Pattee, "Short Story," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

4 This information is not original with the present writer, but is derived from Robert Escarpit, *Sociologie de la littérature* (Paris,1958) .

### Section I

1 Poe's letter to Philip Cooke, dated April 16,1846. For all references to Poe's letters, see J.W. Ostrom, *The Letters of Edgar Allan Poe* (Cambridge, Mass., 1948) , Vols .I&II.

2 Frank L. Mott, *A History of American Magazines, 1741-1850*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1938) ,p.506.

3 *Ibid.* , pp. 507-8 and notes.

4 Poe's Letter, dated January 13, 1849. See Ostrom, Vol. II, p.416 note.

5 Poe's letter, dated June 4,1842.

6 Poe's letter, dated August 10, 1847.

7 Similarly, the prices of such other stories as "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," "The Descent into the Maerstrom," "The Masque of Red Death" are to be known if the number of their pages or words is counted.

8 Mott, pp. 506-8. In this connection, it is interesting to see a modern example. *The New Yorker* pays regular contributors between 11 to 30 cents a word, half as much for articles of less than 2,000 words. This means, *The New Yorker* pays \$150 to \$300 per *Graham* page. See J. P. Wood, *Magazines in the United States* (New York, 1949), p. 265.

9 A. H. Quinn, *Edgar Allan Poe* (New York, 1941), p. 341.

10 Mott. p. 509.

11 Harvey Allen, *Israfel: The Life and Times of Edgar Allan Poe* (New York, 1934) ,p.547,

12 Poe's letter, dated April 16, 1846.

13 J. S. Wilson, introduction to Ostrom's *The Letters of Edgar Allan Poe*, p. xix. See also Ostrom, Vol. II, p. 315 note: "his figures here seem

rather exaggerated."

14 Poe's letter to Sarah Hale, dated May 31, 1844.

15 Mott, p. 509. If \$4 a *Godey* page is acceptable, Poe received, at least theoretically, about \$20 for "The Oblong Box" (September 1844, pp. 132-136), \$24 for "Thou Art the Man" (November 1844, pp. 219-224), and about \$172 for "The New York Litteratti" (43 pages in six installments from May to October 1846), at an average of about \$28 a month.

16 Mott, pp. 633-634. Mott gives the reason as follows: White was paying a dollar and a half and two dollars with difficulty five years later." These figures are exactly the prices Griswold was paid by *Southern Literary Messenger* in 1840. See Mott, pp. 504-505.

17 Mott, p. 646.

18 See Poe's receipt quoted in Ostrom, Vol. II, p. 520 note 238. Poe got the total of \$18 in three installments in April 1845. The payments are, according to Allen, for "monthly installments of a *critique raisonnee* on forthcoming foreign and American books." Allen, p. 521.

19 Poe's letters to Thompson, dated January 13, and June 9, 1849.

20 Mott, p. 508. See also Poe's letter to Burton, dated June 1, 1840.

21 Poe's letter to "Annie" around April 28 (?) May 23 (?), 1849. See Ostrom, p. 439.

22 Quinn, p. 285. Other articles are "The Pit and the Pendulum" (1843) and "The Purloined Letter" (1845).

23 Quinn, p. 285. See *American Museum* (September 1838), pp. 25-37.

24 Poe's letters to Sarah Hale, dated May 29 and May 31, 1844. See *The Opal*, 1845, pp. 164-170.

25 Ostrom, Vol. II. p. 520 note 238.

26 Poe's letter to Lowell, dated February 4, 1843. See also Lowell's letter to Poe on November 19, 1842.

27 Mott, p. 771.

28 Poe's letter to "Annie" dated February 8, 1849.

29 Poe's letter to E. A. Duyckinck, dated March 8, 1849.

30 Mott seems to accept Poe's words at face value. See Mott, p. 508 note. See also the discussion above on Poe's price with *Graham's*.

31 Mott, p. 508.

32 Mott, p. 771.

33 Poe may be referring to "To My Mother," published in *The Flag of Our Union* (July 7, 1849).

34 M. E. Phillips, *Edgar Allan Poe, the Man* (Philadelphia, 1926), Vol. I, p. 771, quoted in Mott, p. 508.

35 Mott, p. 511.

36 Quinn, P. 305.

37 Poe's letters to Snodgrass and to the editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*. See *PMLA* (March 1941), 233 note, mentioned in Ostrom, Vol. I, p. 200.

38 Ostrom's note to Poe's letter to Thompson, dated June 9, 1849. Also Poe's letters to R. Carter on March 7, 1843, to Graham early 1845, and others.

39 Poe's letter to "Annie" around April 28 (?)–May 23 (?), 1849. Also Poe's letter to "Annie," dated January 21(?), 1849.

40 Mott, p. 511. Before 1842, when Graham and Godey made their appearance, "fair payment was rare." Mott, p. 504.

## Section II

1 Poe's letter to John P. Kennedy, dated September 11, 1835.

2 Poe's letters to John Kennedy, dated January 22, 1863, and to George Poe, dated January 12, 1836.

3 Poe's letters to John Kennedy, dated January 22, and June 7, 1836.

4 Poe's letter to W. E. Burton, dated June 1, 1840.

5 Frank L. Mott, *A History of American Magazines, 1741–1850* (Cambridge, Mass., 1838), p. 512.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 549 note.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 549. See A. H. Quinn, *Edgar Allan Poe* (New York, 1941), p. 342, in which Quinn writes: "Poe's duties on *Graham's* apparently consisted of writing the reviews, reading the last proof and contributing one tale a month."

8 J. W. Ostrom, *The Letters of Edgar Allan Poe* (Cambridge, Mass., 1948), Vol. I, p. 198 note.

9 Quinn, p. 342.

- 10 Quinn, p. 751. See also Mott, pp. 758-762.
- 11 Mott, pp. 761-762.
- 12 Mott, p. 512.
- 13 J. P. Wood, *Magazines in the United States* (New York, 1949), p. 265.
- 14 Mott, p. 512.
- 15 Quoted in Mott, p. 512.
- 16 Quinn, p. 583.
- 17 Poe's letter to Maria Clemm, dated August 17, 1849.
- 18 Quinn, p. 624.
- 19 Poe's letter to Maria Clemm, dated September 18, 1849.
- 20 Poe's letters to Edward Petterson, dated May 23 and July 19, 1849.
- 21 Poe received \$5 from Godey and Patterson each. Burr bought him a ticket from Philadelphia to Richmond. The \$3 was a left-over from the initial \$10 after Poe had paid for the boat passage and other necessary expenses on the way to Richmond. See Poe's letters to Maria Clemm, dated July 14 and 19, 1849.
- 22 Compare Melville's takings from lecturing from 1857 to 1860. He got \$1,273. 50, an average of \$423 a year. William Charvat, "Melville's Income," *PMLA*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (November 1943), 255.
- 23 For further information on this head, see Robert Escarpit, *Sociologie de la littérature* (Paris, 1958), Chapter IV.
- 24 Mott, pp. 380-81.
- 25 Ostrom, Vol. I, p. 66. See also Quinn, p. 201.
- 26 This is an example of a helpful aspect of the literary prize. Notice also that Poe's letters to John P. Kennedy give the impression as if they were written to a patron. See James Southall Wilson, introduction to J. W. Ostrom, *The Letters of Edgar Allan Poe*, p. xx.
- 27 Poe's letter to G. W. Eveleth, dated January 4, 1848, and also Graham's "The Late Edgar Allan Poe." Also see Poe's letter to Graham, written early in 1845.
- 28 Melville's case was quite remarkable. He made a total of \$8,069. 34, an average of over \$1,600 a year, from the English and American sale of his first five books and from the English sale of *Moby Dick*. See William Charvat, "Melville's Income," 254.

29 Quinn, p. 305.

30 Poe's letters to F. W. Thomas, dated August 27, 1872, and to Anna Blackwell, dated June 14, 1848.

31 Quinn, pp. 305-5.

32 Poe's letter to T. Chivers, dated August 29, 1845.

33 Poe's letter to E. Duyckinck, dated November 13, 1845.

34 See above.

35 Poe's letter to C. A. Bristed, dated June 7, 1848. Cf. Quinn, p. 538.

36 Ostrom, Vol. II, p. 369 note.

37 M. E. Phillips, *Edgar Allan Poe, the Man* (Philadelphia, 1926), Vol. II, p. 1260, quoted in Ostrom, Vol. II, p. 450 note.

38 Poe had other sources of income. For example, Poe was offered \$100 for the editing of Mrs. St. Leon Loud's poems. See Poe's letter to Maria Clemm, dated August 28-29 (?), 1849. And, as to another possible source, see Poe's letter to John P. Kennedy, written on March 15, 1835, in which Poe asked him to get a teaching job for him, but apparently with no fruitful result.

39 Poe's letters to F. W. Thomas, dated June 26, 1841 and May 25, 1842. See also Poe's references to the job in a number of letters written in 1842.

40 Quinn, p. 324.

41 The figure is yet to be ascertained. For the difference of the opinions on Hawthorne's salary, see R. Cantwell, *Nathaniel Hawthorne: The American Years* (New York, 1948), p. 245 note. Also notice that a salary for a clerkship at the Charleston Navy Yard in the late forties was \$900. *Ibid.*, p. 395.

42 William Charvat, "Melville's Income," 257.

43 Poe's letter to F. W. Thomas, dated May 25, 1842.

### Section III

1 Frank L. Mott, *A History of American Magazines, 1741-1850* (Cambridge, Mass., 1938), p. 513 and p. 513 note; A. H. Quinn, *Edgar Allan Poe* (New York, 1941), p. 344; R. Cantwell, *Nathaniel Hawthorne: The American Years* (New York, 1948), p. 245 note; and Lawrence Thompson, *Young Longfellow* (New York, 1938), p. 148.

2 The Bulletin of Yale University for the year 1960-1961 estimates the annual expenses at \$2,300, which includes tuition, room rent, board, etc.

3 G. R. Graham's description, which Quinn accepts as "of special significance." See Quinn, p. 682.

4 Quinn, p. 269.

5 Poe's letter to Maria Clemm, dated August 29, 1835.

6 Poe's letter to George Poe, dated January 12, 1836.

7 Hervey Allen, *Israfel: The Life and Times of Edgar Allan Poe* (New York, 1934), p.327.

8 The present writer cannot see how Mott has obtained this figure. Mott, p. 508. In 1843, Poe won a prize of \$100 for "The Cold Bug." Mott does not seem to include this sum in his calculation. If he does, \$200 a year is too small for Poe's receipts from the magazines. \$400 may be a right guess, but the amount of \$100 makes no difference in the present discussion.

9 Quinn, p. 386.

10 Poe's letters to Griswold, dated June 11, 1843 ("I am sick, and Virginia is almost gone") and to Lowell, dated September 13, 1843 ("You would send me, if possible, \$10").

11 Poe's letter to Maria Clemm, dated April 7, 1844.

12 Leo Lowenthal, *Literature, Popular Culture, and Society* (N.J. 1961), pp. 141-61.