To You Who Walk and Talk

John Garberson*
To You Who Walk and Talk

By John Garberson, '37

I TURN my aching head and see, out there,
   How beautiful a day it is for them . . .
Those men and women, boys and girls who dare
Waste time as though it weren't a priceless gem.
Oh, what a sum I'd give to have the health,
The faculties for life that they confess.
I'd gladly part with any other wealth
That, lying here in bed, I might possess.
For two long years the Doc and nurse have claimed
That any day I might get out of bed.
(You see, I wasn't killed or cut or maimed . . .
Just "partly paralyzed," the Doctor said.)
But shucks, that's awfully dull to you who walk
And dance and swim and skate and play and talk.

I know that I can't move my legs and arms . . .
For many months I've been in bed this way,
And never stand much chance of roaming farms
Or picnicking, or walking home, someday.
I know that folks come in to visit me
And often have to leave because it's sad.
(I've seen them softly turn and say, you see,
"Too bad," or "... and he was such a strong young lad!")
But I don't know that it's so bad in here
Where one can lie and sleep or think at will.
Outside, there's strife and crime and war and fear;
In here there's pain, but not the kind to fill
The lives of men with things so hard to bear
That they must be exceptions to be square.