

Merton, the student. Nothing very new. Nothing for a dissertation, I think. But, then I'm not working on one. That was long ago for me. It was Mark Van Doren then — and now. Merton, then, and now. And the coincidence — if that's the word I want here — is stunning. Van Doren and Merton.

And as the rain falls and I turn the pages of my scrapbook, the sights and sounds return full-blown and rich and full and very real. Did I find Merton? Well, I found people. Good people, full of love and care and piety and humanness and doubts and fears and dreams, breathing the air we all breathe and watching, over last coffee or tea, the same sun sink into evening shadows. And through it all the echoes of bells from some abbey tower calling us to prayer. That's Merton enough.

A WORLD AWAY

(for the Monks at Gethsemani Abbey)

by **Jack T. Ledbetter**

the road winds among the autumn trees
 and carries a world away
 yet we do not watch the cars
 nor see the desires feverish among the people
 nor can we stop watching and seeing
 for we are witnesses in these holy woods
 of all that lives
 and breathes among us
 around us
 in cities dark in tangle
 and beneath the seas alive in silence
 and deep in seasons
 where angels find us
 our hands folded
 our hearts open to a waiting world
 borne forever away
 on roads winding among the autumn trees