It is said that there is a "Harvard stamp" that marks the man who has absorbed the pride and prejudice of Cambridge; a "Yale stamp" that characterizes the man from New Haven.

One would not say of a southwesterner that he had a "southwestern stamp." The word "stamp" connotes imitation, a trade mark. But one could say with truth there is a "southwestern feeling" that permeates the being of one who has experienced the thrill of life in the mid-continent. What traditions there are have been grafted on to local custom by the "climbers" who suffer from "inferiority complex." The true southwesterner is not bothered by such a complex but is delighted to experience the true thrill of do and dare, action and originality.

Earl Sparling is a true southwesterner. He has the "southwestern feeling." He has carried it with him to New York. In Cosmopolis he still remains southwestern to the core. That is perhaps the reason, coupled with innate genius, why Earl Sparling is one of the most remarkable literary men the southwest has produced.

His field of action has been mainly in the east, shared with Louisiana. He began his career in Oklahoma and it is to Oklahoma he delights in returning. Oklahomans know him but in the main, Oklahoma has not remarked him as a Sooner abroad.

Yet Mr. Sparling is probably the only Sooner who has entered the class of writers whose first editions are collector's items. He is one of the few Sooners to reach the "best seller" lists.

The Sparlings have lived in the southwest for years. Members of the family lived in Arkansas and Texas before 1800. Earl himself was born in Little Rock, spent his boyhood in Texas, and lived his youth in Louisiana and Oklahoma.

The university and Tulane share him. Earl Sparling feels himself a Sooner without any sense of disloyalty to Tulane, for he is also a true son of Tulane. The Harvard man is a Brahmin, but not the southwesterner who drinks with equal relish from the cup of experience, whether it be passed in Louisiana or in Oklahoma.

After a year at Tulane, Earl worked a summer on the Oklahoma News, of which George B. "Deak" Parker, '07 arts-sc., was then the editor. When the war came, Earl enlisted, became a second lieutenant in the heavy artillery (and still holds a commission in the reserves). After leaving the army, he began work on the News, since he had not been discharged early enough to enter school again. After a year of reporting, he enrolled in the law school of the university, in 1919 and would have finished at Norman but for the sudden offer of the editorship of the Tulane Hullabaloo (which at that time was known as the Tulane Weekly). Sparling changed the name after assuming the editorship). His brother Hugh and sister Orlean both continued at the university however, and Earl claims Beta Eta chapter of Kappa Alpha as his fraternity chapter.

Tulane years were busy ones for Earl, and he left his imprint on student affairs. A pledge of Kappa Alpha at Norman, he was initiated by the Psi chapter at Tulane, becoming chapter president in his senior year. During his freshman year he achieved the unique distinction for a freshman of winning the Glendy Burke literary prize, the oldest literary prize in the south, with a monograph on free verse. After three years of trial, he won the Carnot debate, founded by Baron de Courtbertin of France, and held every year at Tulane, Princeton and Leland Stanford.

Those were days when Earl was ex-
permenting with literary forms, verse being one of them. A poem smacking of Kipling christened anew the Tulane football team, the Green Wave. Alabama liked the name so well that it changed the name of its football team from the "Thin Red Line" to the Crimson Wave.

"The Great Green Wave" by Earl Sparling is still sung at Tulane. A verse and chorus of it:

Tech's got a Gold Tornado,
Alabama a Thin Red Line,
But he hasn't got a Great Green Breaker
That will break them every time.

Chorus
Break 'em, break 'em, break 'em,
At 'em Rolling Wave,
Give 'em what they came for,
Give 'em a deep Green grave,
Fight 'em, fight 'em, fight 'em,
At 'em Old T. U.
If they won't go where you're master,
Just fight 'em till they do.

Although that was Earl's lone adventure into song writing, he did write some poetry, his translation of The Dinns of Dumas appearing in the collection Modern French Verse, unsigned.

Mr. Sparling's first great venture in the world of literature was Under the Levee. Much of it was written in Oklahoma City, although the locale is New Orleans. Charles Scribner's published it in 1925, remarking of it, "Both book publishers and booksellers deplore short stories—the tradition is that they never sell. Once in a while a born tale-teller encounters the tradition and shatters it—a Davis, a Kipling, an O. Henry, a Ring Lardner . . . Under the Levee suggests that Sparling is such a born tale-teller." The publisher's faith was repaid, for the book is now in many first edition collections.

But, as Earl remarked this summer on a visit to Oklahoma City, "I'm not lit'ry, thank God!" He makes no pretense towards the esthetic goal; he is more a newspaperman who has been slightly tainted with the "writing" virus. He never "went in" for magazines, for he has little faith in the average magazine.

"It is better to write for a newspaper than for the average American magazine," he told friends this summer, while on his visit to Oklahoma. "A newspaper man may slowly grow in reputation and attention that a national magazine of its kind west of the Mississippi river, declared "At the moment it seems that I should call Mystery Men of Wall Street the greatest book of the age. As a revelation of modern history it will startle everyone who is interested in the financial structure." And the New York Times appraised Mr. Sparling as follows:

"He tells their stories in a tense staccato style that concentrates their drama and turns vivid lightning on every spectacular event. His facts seem to be authoritative and his books informing and illuminating as the personages now improbable in the country's financial affairs and as to the genesis of the panic of last year." Mystery Men of Wall Street is now in its third edition.

In the meantime, Mr. Sparling has been writing for Scribner's Magazine and for the Nation. An article on "Jazz" is to appear shortly in Scribner's. Two publishers are negotiating with him for approaching publication of books he plans to write.

Earl Sparling is a master of style. Perhaps it is the merciless discipline of the newsmen that gives it. More likely it is the innate ability, the scientist's love of accuracy, that accounts for the peculiar mastery of words and understanding of word values that distinguishes Mr. Sparling's writing, and makes him one of the most vital of the younger moderns.

His outlook is wholesomely American. He has no pique at the world, nor is he smug and satisfied with it. His rational outlook may be inherited. His family, the Sparlings, fought their way out of the German Palatinate in the Huguenot rebellion in the sixteenth century and settled in Ireland. There is also the contradictory elements of American life in his makeup, for he is a direct descendant of Daniel Boone, and though an ardent southerner, of General McClellan. His own parents were settled in Oklahoma before statehood.

The southwest, though, is Earl Sparling's intellectual homeland. As he said in a recent biographical note that accompanied an article for Scribner's, "I have paddled progres down the bayous of Louisiana, ridden horses over the flats of Texas, driven automobiles by the light of derrick lamps and gas flambeaux through the oil fields of Oklahoma. Why should I be fighting subways and gypsy taxi-drivers in New York? I don't know."