

# Rue the Scholar

Clinton F. Larson

Essence winnows through his existential bones  
And separates the unknowns from the knowns  
As he reads. It is delicate mind recusing  
That he affects, not holy passion infusing  
Thought, nor even logic not of his choosing.  
For he has it comatose, carefully glossed  
And fixed in abstract history, or embossed  
In his mindlight's regimen and encyclical.  
He iterates from a podium the shadowy call  
Of scholarship, to get it said and written,  
Strenuously falling from fact hard-bitten  
To find its brittle strength. O antiquity,  
If you could have lived as he, in propinquity,  
As he delivers you! Any mastodon writhing  
In a field of ice might envy such striving  
For preeminence! Later, in temperate clime,  
Students also might, writhing as his rime  
Encrusts awareness. How can they attain it  
And, if attained and cozened, maintain it?  
Never will supplicant, knitting with his mind,  
Learn a language quite so facilely or find  
Surcease by working like an abject Turk  
To save his soul. Mohammed himself would shirk  
Such shrift and then, weakly louring, deplore  
Tares browning three feet high at his door  
And languid termites grazing through his wood,  
While he tosses ashes to exacerbate his mood.  
And surely Rue can talk at will, and will,  
To genera of enlightenment. The old mill  
One subtly runs must have its gears, and gears  
Must turn, and grist, at turning, cheers  
The hoi polloi, even grist of rye.