

P. H. CROSBY

FRENCH'S FIELD II

September 11th, 2001

The catbird doesn't like me here. It startles.
Ignoring it, I brush by arcs of timothy,
each head a dancing golden caterpillar,
my steps a moist slide in earth's dermis.

I turn in a spot where the rod casts down
its storied draperies, and smartweed pinks
against the rigid dock. I am tattered,
like the jewelweed at my side. Clutching at
the names of things, pied beauty, metaphor,
anything to keep from thinking, feeling what
I know I need to know, I need to integrate

Now. Looking back behind me,
a tractor tread of clouds, pincushion trees,
billowed in fog the smokiness of which--
only because of this day--looks ominous,
ending abruptly in a sun-bleached meadow.

Two hundred miles away a city staggers.
A narrow, nagging line between

here and now's delight;
there, that's terror.

P. H. CROSBY has an M.A.T in English from Brown and has been published in *Changing Men and The Other Side*. Crosby lives on a small farm in Massachusetts and is working on a dramatization of a 19th century George Gissing novel.