Kenneth Rexroth, poet, playwright, translator, critic, and anarchist philosopher, is one of the major heroes of the counter-culture. His COLLECTED SHORTER POEMS, COLLECTED LONGER POEMS, and CLASSICS REVISITED are among his more recent books. His translation of Sheng Kung Fan's poem in this issue appears in his forthcoming book, CHINESE POEMS OF LOVE AND THE TURNING YEARS.

ON HIS THIRTY THIRD BIRTHDAY
by Sheng Kung Fan

More than thirty years have rushed
By me like a runaway
Chariot. I too have spent
My life rushing here and there
From one end of the country
To the other. I long for
The homestead where I was born
A thousand mountain ranges
away. Like yellow leaves in
The decline of summer a
Few white hairs have already
Appeared in my head. All my
Travels only made tracks
In drifting sand. I piled up
Learning like a snowball.
I crossed mountains and passed
Examinations and gave
Learned speeches. What did I gain?
Better I stayed home
And raised prize melons.