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THE LITTLE REVIEW

THE MAGAZINE THAT IS READ BY THOSE
WHO WRITE THE OTHERS

DECEMBER, 1917

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The Reader Critic

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THE LITTLE REVIEW

VOL. IV.

DECEMBER, 1917

No. 8

A LETTER FROM REMY DE GOURMONT

Ezra Pound

AT A TIME when most of our now vocal and prominent American bellfists were still determined that the United States should take no part in saving civilization, I desired to found a magazine which should establish some sort of communication between New York, London and Paris. To that end I asked the assistance of Mr. Yeats, who is without question the greatest living poet of these islands; of Ford Madox Hueffer, founder of *The English Review* (and in no way connected with the present management of that periodical); and of Remy de Gourmont. None of these men refused. Other complications delayed the project. The present arrangement with *The Little Review* is the ultimate result of the scheme. If DeGourmont had lived he would now be among our contributors. His last letter concerning the project is therefore of personal interest to our well-wishers. It is of far wider interest, in so much as there are few amiable and dispassionate critics of America, and that DeGourmont's few words on the subject are not without some enlightenment.

Cher Monsieur:

J'ai lu avec plaisir votre longue lettre, qui m'expose si clairement la nécessité d'une revue unissant les efforts des Américains, des Anglais, et des Français. Pour cela, je vous servirai autant qu'il sera en mon pouvoir. Je ne crois pas que je puisse beaucoup. J'ai une mauvaise santé et je suis extrêmement fatigué; je ne pourrai vous donner que des choses très courtes, des indications d'idées plutôt que des pages accomplies, mais je ferai de mon mieux. J'espère que vous réussirez à mettre debout cette petite affaire littéraire et que vous trouverez parmi nous des concours utiles. Evidemment si nous pourrions amener les Américains à mieux sentir la vraie littérature française et surtout à ne pas la confondre avec tant d'œuvres courantes si médiocres, cela serait un résultat très heureux. Sont-ils capables d'assez de liberté d'esprit pour lire, sans être choqués, mes livres par exemple, elle est bien, douteux et il faudrait pour cela un long travail de préparation. Mais pour-

quoi ne pas l'entreprendre? En tous les pays, il y a un noyau de bons esprits, d'esprits libres, il faut leur donner quelque chose qui les change de la fadeur des magazines, quelque chose qui leur donne confiance en eux-mêmes et leur soit un point d'appui. Comme vous le dites, il faudra pour commencer les amener à respecter l'individualisme française, le sens de la liberté que quelques uns d'entre nous possèdent à un si haut point. Ils comprennent cela en théologie. Pourquoi ne le comprendraient-ils pas en art, en poésie, en littérature, en philosophie. Il faut leur faire voir—s'ils ne le voient pas déjà—que l'individualisme français peut, quand il le faut, se plier aux plus dures disciplines.

Conquérir l'Américain n'est pas sans doute votre seul but. Le but du *Mercury* a été de permettre à ceux qui en valent la peine d'écrire franchement ce qu'il pense,—seul plaisir d'un écrivain. Cela doit aussi être le vôtre.

Votre bien dévoué

Remy de Gourmont.

"The aim of the *Mercury* has been to permit any man, who is worth it, to write down his thought frankly,—this is a writer's sole pleasure. And this aim should be yours."

"Are they capable of enough mental liberty to read my books, for example, without being horrified. I think this very doubtful, and it will need long preparation. But why not try it. There are in all countries knots of intelligent people, open-minded; one must give something to relieve them from the staleness of magazines, something which will give them confidence in themselves and serve as a rallying point. As you say, one must begin by getting them to respect French individualism; the sense of liberty which some of us have in so great degree. They understand this in theology, why should they not understand it in art, poetry, literature."

If only my great correspondent could have seen letters I received about this time from English alleged intellectuals !!!!!!! The incredible stupidity, the ingrained refusal of thought !!!!! Of which more anon, if I can bring myself to it. Or let it pass? Let us say simply that DeGourmont's words form an interesting contrast with the methods employed by the British literary episcopacy to keep one from writing what one thinks, or to punish one (financially) for having done so.

Perhaps as a warning to young writers who can not afford the loss, one would be justified in printing the following:

50a. Albermarle Street, London W.

22 October, '14

Dear Mr. Pound:

Many thanks for your letter of the other day. I am afraid I must say frankly that I do not think I can open the columns of the *Q. R.* — at any rate at present—to anyone associated publicly with such a publication as *Blast*. It stamps a man too disadvantageously.

Yours truly,

G. W. Prothero.

Of course, having accepted your paper on the *Noh*, I could not refrain from publishing it. But other things would be in a different category.

I need scarcely say that *The Quarterly Review* is one of the most profitable periodicals in England, and one of one's best "connections", or sources of income. It has, of course, a tradition.

"It is not that Mr. Keats (if that be his real name, for we almost doubt that any man in his senses would put his real name to such a rhapsody)"—

wrote their Gifford of Keats' *Endymion*. My only comment is that the *Quarterly* has done it again. Their Mr. A. Waugh is a lineal descendent of Gifford, by way of mentality. A century has not taught them manners. In the eighteen forties they were still defending the review of Keats. And more recently Waugh has lifted up his senile slobber against Mr. Eliot. It is indeed time that the functions of both English and American literature were taken over by younger and better men.

As for their laying the birch on my pocket. I compute that my support of Lewis and Brzeska has cost me at the lowest estimate about £20 per year, from one source alone since that regrettable occurrence, since I dared to discern a great sculptor and a great painter in the midst of England's artistic desolation. ("European and Asiatic papers please copy".)

Young men, desirous of finding before all things smooth berths and elderly consolations, are cautioned to behave more circumspectly.

It is a far cry from these schoolmaster tactics to Remy de Gourmont, and of course no Englishman or American would write as DeGourmont has written. Nor does the generation that preceded us care much whether we understand French individualism, or the difference between the good and bad in French literature. Nor is it conceivable that any of them would write to a foreigner: "indications of ideas, rather than work accomplished, but I will send you my best."

To the phrase "Ils comprennent cela en théologie" I may take, later, exception. My present comment was intended solely to show De Gourmont's attitude toward our endeavour to publish an enlightened periodical in English. Concerning "concours utiles" from Paris, I hope to make definite and interesting announcements before much more time has elapsed.

"PRUFROCK: AND OTHER OBSERVATIONS" A CRITICISM

May Sinclair

SO FAR I have seen two and only two reviews of Mr. Eliot's poems: one by Ezra Pound in *The Egoist*, one by an anonymous writer in *The New Statesman*. I learn from Mr. Pound's review that there is a third, by Mr. Arthur Waugh, in the *Quarterly*.

To Mr. Ezra Pound Mr. Eliot is a poet with genius as incontestable as the genius of Browning. To the anonymous one he is an insignificant phenomenon that may be appropriately disposed of among the "Shorter Notices." To Mr. Waugh, quoted by Mr. Pound, he is a "drunken Helot." I do not know what Mr. Pound would say to the anonymous one, but I can imagine. Anyhow, to him the *Quarterly* reviewer is "the silly old Waugh." And that is enough for Mr. Pound.

It ought to be enough for me. Of course I know that genius does inevitably provoke these outbursts of silliness. I know that Mr. Waugh is simply keeping up the good old manly traditions of the *Quarterly*, "so savage and tartarly," with its war-cry: "' Ere's a stranger, let's 'eave 'arf a brick at 'im!'" And though the behaviour of *The New Statesman* puzzles me, since it has an editor who sometimes knows better, and really ought to have known bet-

ter this time, still *The New Statesman* also can plead precedent. But when Mr. Waugh calls Mr. Eliot "a drunken Helot," it is clear that he thinks he is on the track of a tendency and is making a public example of Mr. Eliot. And when the anonymous one with every appearance of deliberation picks out his "*Boston Evening Transcript*," the one insignificant, the one negligible and trivial thing in a very serious volume, and assures us that it represents Mr. Eliot at his finest and his best, it is equally clear that we have to do with something more than mere journalistic misadventure. And I think it is something more than Mr. Eliot's genius that has terrified *The Quarterly* into exposing him in the full glare of publicity and *The New Statesman* into shoving him and his masterpieces away out of the public sight.

For "The Love-Song of J. Alfred Prufrock", and the "Portrait of a Lady" are masterpieces in the same sense and in the same degree as Browning's "Romances" and "Men and Women"; the "Preludes" and "Rhapsody on a Windy Morning" are masterpieces in a profounder sense and a greater degree than Henley's "London Voluntaries"; "La Figlia Che Piange" is a masterpiece in its own sense and in its own degree. It is a unique masterpiece.

But Mr. Eliot is dangerous. Mr. Eliot is associated with an unpopular movement and with unpopular people. His "Preludes" and his "Rhapsody" appeared in *Blast*. They stood out from the experimental violences of *Blast* with an air of tranquil and triumphant achievement; but, no matter; it was in *Blast* that they appeared. That circumstance alone was disturbing to the comfortable respectability of Mr. Waugh and *The New Statesman*.

And apart from this purely extraneous happening, Mr. Eliot's genius is in itself disturbing. It is elusive; it is difficult; it demands a distinct effort of attention. Comfortable and respectable people could see, in the first moment after dinner, what Mr. Henley and Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson and Mr. Rudyard Kipling would be at; for the genius of these three travelled, comfortably and fairly respectably, along the great high roads. They could even, with a little boosting, follow Francis Thompson's flight in mid-air, partly because it was signalled to them by the sound and shining of his wings, partly because Thompson had hitched himself securely to some well-known starry team. He was in the poetic tradition all right. People knew where they were with him, just as they know now where they are with Mr. Davies and his fields and flowers and birds.

But Mr. Eliot is not in any tradition at all; not even in Browning's and Henley's tradition. His resemblances to Browning and Henley are superficial. His difference is twofold; a difference of method and technique; a difference of sight and aim. He does not see anything between him and reality, and he makes straight for the reality he sees; he cuts all his corners and his curves; and this directness of method is startling and upsetting to comfortable, respectable people accustomed to going superfluously in and out of corners and carefully round curves. Unless you are prepared to follow with the same nimbleness and straightness you will never arrive with Mr. Eliot at his meaning. Therefore the only comfortable thing is to sit down and pretend, either that Mr. Eliot is a "Helot" too drunk to have any meaning, or that his "Boston Evening Transcript" which you do understand is greater than his "Love Song of Prufrock" which you do not understand. In both instances you have successfully obscured the issue.

Again, the comfortable and respectable mind loves conventional beauty, and some of the realities that Mr. Eliot sees are not beautiful. He insists on your seeing very vividly, as he sees them, the streets of his "Preludes" and "Rhapsody." He insists on your smelling them.

"Regard that woman

Who hesitates towards you in the light of the door
Which opens on her like a grin.
You see the border of her dress
Is torn and stained with sand,
And you see the corner of her eye
Twists like a crooked pin.

Remark the cat which flattens itself in the gutter,
Slips out its tongue
And devours a morsel of rancid butter."

He is

"aware of the damp souls of housemaids
Sprouting despondently at area gates."

And these things are ugly. The comfortable mind turns away from them in disgust. It identifies Mr. Eliot with a modern tendency; it labels him securely "Stark Realist", so that lovers of "true poetry" may beware.

It is nothing to the comfortable mind that Mr. Eliot is

"... moved by fancies that are curled
Around these images, and cling:
The notion of some infinitely gentle
Infinitely suffering thing."

It is nothing to it that the emotion he disengages from his ugliest image is unbearably poignant. His poignancy is as unpleasant as his ugliness, disturbing to comfort.

We are to observe that Mr. Eliot's "Observations" are ugly and unpleasant and obscure.

Now there is no earthly reason why Mr. Eliot should not be ugly and unpleasant if he pleases, no reason why he should not do in words what Hogarth did in painting, provided he does it well enough. Only, the comfortable mind that prefers So and So and So and So to Mr. Eliot ought to prefer Hogarth's "Paul Before Felix" to his "Harlot's Progress". Obscurity, if he were really obscure, would be another matter. But there was a time when the transparent Tennyson was judged obscure; when people wondered what under heaven the young man was after; they couldn't tell for the life of them whether it was his "dreary gleams" or his "curls" that were flying over Locksley Hall. Obscurity may come from defective syntax, from a bad style, from confusion of ideas, from involved thinking, from irrelevant association, from sheer piling on of ornament. Mr. Eliot is not obscure in any of these senses.

There is also an obscurity of remote or unusual objects, or of familiar objects moving very rapidly. And Mr. Eliot's trick of cutting his corners and his curves makes him seem obscure where he is clear as daylight. His thoughts move very rapidly and by astounding cuts. They move not by logical stages and majestic roundings of the full literary curve, but as live thoughts move in live brains. Thus "La Figlia Che Piange:"

"Stand on the highest pavement of the stair —
Lean on a garden urn —
Weave, weave the sunlight in your hair —
Clasp your flowers to you with a pained surprise,
Fling them to the ground and turn
With a fugitive resentment in your eyes:
But weave, weave the sunlight in your hair."

So I would have had him leave,
So would have had her stand and grieve,
So he would have left
As the soul leaves the body torn and bruised,
As the mind deserts the body it has used.
I should find
Some way incomparably light and deft.
Some way we both should understand,
Simple and faithless as a smile or a shake of the hand.

She turned away, but with the autumn weather
Compelled my imagination many days,
Many days and many hours,
Her hair over her arms and her arms full of flowers.
And I wonder how they should have been together!
I should have lost a gesture and a pose.
Sometimes these cogitations still amaze
The troubled midnight and the moon's repose."

I suppose there are minds so comfortable that they would rather not be disturbed by new beauty and by new magic like this. I do not know how much Mr. Eliot's beauty and magic is due to sheer imagination, how much to dexterity of technique, how much to stern and sacred attention to reality; but I do know that without such technique and such attention the finest imagination is futile, and that if Mr. Eliot had written nothing but that one poem he would rank as a poet by right of its perfection.

But Mr. Eliot is not a poet of one poem; and if there is anything more astounding and more assured than his performance it is his promise. He knows what he is after. Reality, stripped naked of all rhetoric, of all ornament, of all confusing and obscuring association, is what he is after. His reality may be a modern street or a modern drawing-room; it may be an ordinary human mind suddenly and fatally aware of what is happening to it; Mr. Eliot is careful to present his street and his drawing-room as they are, and Prufrock's thoughts as they are: live thoughts, kicking, running about and jumping, nervily, in a live brain.

Prufrock, stung by a longing for reality, escapes from respectability into the street and the October fog.

"The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes,
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window panes,

Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening,
Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,
Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from chimneys,
Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,
And seeing that it was a soft October night,
Curled once about the house and fell asleep."

Profrack has conceived the desperate idea of disturbing the universe. He wonders

"Do I dare
Disturb the universe?
In a minute there is time
For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse.

For I have known them all already, known them all:
Have known the evenings, mornings, afternoons;
I have measured out my life with coffee spoons;
I know the voices dying with a dying fall
Beneath the music from a farther room.
So how should I presume?"

Prufrock realises that it is too late. He is middle-aged. The horrible drawing-room life he has entered has got him.

"And the afternoon, the evening, sleeps so peacefully!
Smoothed by long fingers,
Asleep . . . tired . . . or it malingers,
Stretched on the floor, here between you and me.
Should I, after tea and cakes and ices,
Have the strength to force the moment to its crisis?
But though I have wept and fasted, wept and prayed,
Though I have seen my head (grown slightly bald) brought
in upon a platter,
I am no prophet — and here's no great matter;
I have seen the moment of my greatness flicker,
And I have seen the eternal Footman hold my coat and
snicker,
And, in short, I was afraid."

His soul can only assert itself in protests and memories. He would have had more chance in the primeval slime.

"I should have been a pair of rugged claws
Scuttling across the floors of silent seas."

As he goes downstairs he is aware of his futility, aware that the noticeable thing about him is the "bald spot in the middle of my hair". He has an idea; an idea that he can put into action:—

"I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled."

He is incapable, he knows that he is incapable of any action more momentous, more disturbing.

And yet — and yet —

"I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.

I have seen them riding seaward on the waves
Combing the white hair of the waves blown back
When the wind blows the water white and black.
We have lingered in the chambers of the sea,
By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown
Till human voices wake us and we drown."

Observe the method. Instead of writing round and round about Prufrock, explaining that his tragedy is the tragedy of submerged passion, Mr. Eliot simply removes the covering from Prufrock's mind: Prufrock's mind, jumping quickly from actuality to memory and back again, like an animal, hunted, tormented, terribly and poignantly alive. The Love-Song of Prufrock is a song that Balzac might have sung if he had been as great a poet as he was a novelist.

It is nothing to the *Quarterly* and to the *New Statesman* that Mr. Eliot should have done this thing. But it is a great deal to the few people who care for poetry and insist that it should concern itself with reality. With ideas, if you like, but ideas that are realities and not abstractions.

NOTES ON BOOKS AND PLAYS

jh.

THE CRITICS here are like country doctors who carry on their entire business with proprietary or patent medicines.

They have no scent which will lead them to discover for themselves work of exception and creation, and, when bad stuff is put before them with the good, no principles from which they may strongly declare or damn.

They are merely practising reviewers who write carefully-gleaned comments upon two kinds of things: things that come from Europe heralded and stamped with the approval of some well-known critic over there, or things in this country recommended by Mrs. Atherton or Colonel Roosevelt.

When I am offended or amused by some exceeding stupidity or sentimentality I feel a momentary impulse to do something about it; but "I am a man who does not kill mosquitos".

I could never be a useful critic because I can never see myself taking any interest in anything beyond the work of art itself. It is of no interest to me whether the public comes to it early or late or never. If it were I should not try to lure or lead or goad or shame them to accept it. But to prevent my suffering I should entrench me in some creed of reincarnation and rest, knowing that they will have to come.

I have no militant opinions of the offensive kind. I have formed a few principles out of some intelligence that I contained at birth and I have kept them in spite of so-called education and training. I am quite conscious of their operating independently of my thoughts. I cannot understand Ezra Pound and Margaret Anderson when they become impatient with the American public because it won't take Art. I believe if you leave the right kind of food out the right kind of animals will get it—if they are hungry!

It is never a matter of impatience to me when people fail to use their brains; but I am sometimes puzzled when they give no sign of instincts or emotions. I should never be very angry or surprised at an automobile if it refused to go if the gasoline tank were found to be empty, but I would be slightly dashed if the gasoline,

properly ignited, gave no action. Water in the gasoline would be the obvious answer to that, I suppose, and Puritanism in the blood the obvious answer to the life in America. This last seems to me more of a question than an answer. It goes back to the kind of people who could adopt a religion so opposed to life, no matter against what they were revolting. Some fundamental lack chose the religion and then chose a place to flourish. Some seeds are blown upon the rocks and are forced to take root there; they soon die, starved or burned out. Others choose the rock because it is all they need. It is cheap and sentimental to talk about the nation being so young. Savages have and are producing significant and permanent Art. Americans always talk and act as if all individuality, all nationality and race-consciousness were inevitably washed away, in the Atlantic, from everyone who dared to come to America. If there is to be Art in America, no fear: Art will have its way. The appalling and unholy thing is a nation that is satisfied and thinks it can exist without Art. It has no precedent, no parallel in history.

Amy Lowell's Loose Criticism

Miss Lowell showed a nice touch in naming her latest book *Tendencies in Modern American Poetry*. I flared up for just a second on opening it not to find Eliot or Pound included. But when I did not find Amy either I calmed down and discovered the reason: Pound is a force, not a tendency; Eliot sprang full-fledged perhaps; and Amy Lowell has answered for herself in her work. It's a little hard on H. D. to put her in such company . . .

I am not going into a discussion of the book. My ideas of life and art are so opposed to those expressed by Miss Lowell that to do the thing properly I should have to write another book perhaps longer than hers.

The first sentence in the preface I think has been proved untrue by many artists by whom I think we can judge values. Yeats has not known there was a war. Jean de Bosschere, a Belgian of whom I shall write later, has created well without mentioning the war. I should say from where I stand that Art and the war have only this relation: the war is only a disturbance, a distant dust raised in the road by a mighty Passing. Art preceeded the passing.

Miss Lowell believes she can understand and criticise these poets better because she knows them personally. Miss Lowell believes in friends and enemies in Art. I thought we were so far beyond the personal life criticism of a man's work that all the

people who ever did it were long dead. Our only concern is with the poetry. The poetry, if it be art, contains the ultimately differentiating stamp of the man.

Miss Lowell has become the guide, philosopher and friend of her contemporaries. In one place in the book she gently warns them against "seeing life through the medium of sex". In a recent article T. S. Eliot also took a rap at "those American poets who study Freud." Why warn them or jeer them about Freud? If it has taken all the men of science all the ages to discover something of what the first poet knew, why fear for the poets? I believe these scientists have depended entirely upon Art for their researches. Life is so short—to live at all. But to live one's life and one's immortality at once is what the artist must do. To be an artist one must be born containing an intense vision of the spirit of life; he must grip the fundamental qualities in the work of the past and in the little space of a life master a method or form of presenting himself.

If American writers have to study Freud to discover the spirit of life,—in other words, if they have to make themselves poets before they can begin to make poetry, it isn't warnings and jeerings they need: it's pity. Life is so short. But if reading Freud will influence any one in this country to believe that the force which produced him regulates his whole life, if anything can make the rawness in the general attitude toward sex a little less raw, boil the whole nation in Freud!

Miss Lowell's book is a book of loose thinking, of what I might call *cliché* psychology. When she compares poets to painters or dilates on the effects of environment she is as indiscriminate as a club-woman.

Jean de Bosschère

A case in illustration of my talk about the critics is Jean de Bosschère's *The Closed Door* (John Lane, New York), translated into English by Mr. F. S. Flint.

In August 1916 we printed "Ulysse Fait son Lit", and in January 1917 "L'Offre de Plebs",—both poems now included in the book. At the time they appeared in *The Little Review* not a single critic, poetry expert, or Friday Supplement editor gave a sign of recognition. But now that the poems come in a book, translated

into the one language in their reportory, with a preface by May Sinclair, this chorus of safety first in criticism bursts into praise, taking the two poems above as special examples of DeBosschers's "anarchism of soul",—as "deep and beautiful and terrible poems" This might be a compliment to May Sinclair, but

What interests me is Jean de Bosschere. I can't understand why this man must be called mystic, symbolist, or Catholic by anyone. Even May Sinclair discusses his "mysticism".

If I should tell an intelligent but unread man that I had seen the sun shining at midnight in Norway I should think him a fool if he took me for a mystic and thought that I was referring symbolically to the spiritual state of the Norwegians. My interest in telling of this aspect of nature may not have been in the fact that the sun shone at midnight, but in a more or less diverting mental game of seeing opposites as the same thing in aspect; and in this way getting the most intense contrast of the two things in spirit.

Jean de Bosschere (I am speaking only of the poems in *The Closed Door*) writes of the aspects of life. He does not explain, he does not comment. He leaves you to make the emotional and intellectual connection with the spirit of life. He has made it for himself in silence.

There is something akin to the Norsk in the way Jean de Bosschere, the sophisticated man, the intellectual, sees life. The Norwegians are often called mystics. Again the intense similarity of opposites. There is an immense simplicity of vision in the people of the North which gives them the power to see the thing as it is, not all disorganized by hopes and fears and doubts that it may be otherwise. They too are called austere, unemotional, uncompromising. You can be emotional about life and its details, but you can not be emotional about the naked eternal spirit of life, nor about Art. They exist outside of emotions.

Jean de Bosschere builds his poems in the same proud, clean, glad way in which he has Ulysse build his house. "There is hardly need for him to add a table, a chest, an altar".

This book will show you something that you would not find for yourself. I have found something in it that is my own.

"Peter Ibbetson"

Among intelligent people everywhere in the country there is a dissatisfaction with the theatre. It is expressed and dissipated by the public in little theatre movements and drama-league revival

meetings; by actors and playwrights in ravings at the theatrical trusts.

Once in a season there may come a play like *Peter Ibbetson*, over which even the intelligent theatre-goer takes hope and talks of "a beautiful play",—"here at least is something with a different quality",—"a play the young must be taken to see to develop a taste for the good things in the theatre", etc.

Peter Ibbetson is the worst kind of thing from the standpoint of Drama that the stage has to offer. *Peter Ibbetson* "made from the book". Nothing has been made: no drama. It comes on the stage a cut-down acting version of the book, and is called a play. Reality is forced upon the audience at every turn. Reality is substituted for imagination even in the dreams. It is a wearing thing,—this constant frustration of the imagination. The personality of the actors is so intrusive that in one of the "intensest" moments some one in the audience whispered: "Oh now he looks just like Ethel!" I believe it would have done something for the play if Ethel had taken the part of the Lady of Towers. The concentrated Barrymore charm could have perhaps produced some kind of emotion. I have never seen a Barrymore who seemed to know an emotion except as such,—as a human emotion. An art emotion is beyond them.

As it was given the play was a kind of grown-up, uninspired, metaphysical Alice in Wonderland. It dripped sentimentality. I myself had that reflex action of sentimentality called tears. But an onion too makes me weep.

The most beautiful and weepy scene is the last, in which the Lady of Towers returns from the dead to encourage the dying Peter. I don't know what the book has her say about the state after death, but in the play she says: "Peter, where I am it is all eye and all ear; it is seeing, hearing, feeling and smelling all in one". This is indeed something to fever and struggle and die to attain. It is the state of an oyster. But the play is "beautiful"

The Washington Square Players

The most popular attempt to establish something better than the Broadway production in the theatre is the Washington Square Players. And they are the most futile.

I have never seen them when they were able to create even a feeling of the theatre. The Drama must exist in its own world, not in ours. That world is the theatre. The Drama is a creation of art, the theatre a creation of science and art. This world must be created. The last time I saw them, in a little piece of propaganda, *The Family Exit*, they created no more than a disturbance in public.

There was no dividing line between the audience and the stage. One scene is a family row. Being let in on a family row in this way is as annoying as it ever is in life, and no different.

The Greenwich Village Theatre

The Greenwich Village Theatre, which opened last month in Sheridan Square, proved in its first bill that it was no reaction against the tiresomeness and conventions of the uptown theatres. It is no fresh start for the drama: it is a Broadway theatre slightly converted to the beliefs of the little theatres: a new playhouse designed and built by a real-estate architect in a fascinating location.

The first play, an inconsequential thing in verse, was overloaded and overpowered by an extravagantly gorgeous setting, decorative and period costumes, and bad actors. Sidney Carlyle as the melancholy Pierrot saved it from complete futility. He at least played with distinction and as if he had heard of a theatre before. I think it was some other idea than his that made him play the part with so much stress and vim. His perfect resemblance to the statue of the young Augustus gave to his Pierrot a subtle irony.

Fania Marinoff, the Columbine, could not be borne.

The second play, *Efficiency*, illegitimately depended on the war-time feeling in the audience for its entire support.

In *The Feast of Bacchus* Mr. Conroy did the best work of the company. I find the little psychological and intellectual stunts of Schnitzler just as interesting to read as to see acted. They are not drama, but if they are put on the stage they must be done by people of some intelligence. Fania Marinoff's conception of the sophisticated wife and comrade of a distinguished dramatist was a brainless thing: a third-rate actress off stage and not an interesting one. Her voice and manners were *recht ordinaire*; in other words, she was crass.

The Provincetown Players

Where there is nothing there may still be hope. I don't exactly mean that about the hope

The Provincetown Players in their bleak room in MacDougal Street, with their home-made plays and their wobbly scenery, have a set purpose: to give American plays to promote the art of the drama in America. That spirit about the arts will block any one or anything from getting on and up.

But in all this welter of theatres they alone have an actress: Ida Rauh. Here is a woman who contains the qualities of an actress. She is akin to the great ones, Bernhardt, Duse and Rejane, in that

fundamental quality and force of being. It is such an undeniable force that even the spectator without imagination (vision) becomes aware of it and is held.

There is an absolute lack of scientific training or direction in the Provincetown Theatre. It seems to be an art theatre of the "natural" kind. Many of the players will never develop into amateurs; few of them will ever recognize the difference between Ida Rauh and themselves.

With a ban on everything but American plays there is little possibility of finding a role with enough resistance in it for this kind of actress. No dramatist has shown himself of enough intensity and sophistication. There is no reason why such an actress should be sacrificed to the commercial theatre. The only thing left for her is to create through and over and beyond weak plays, as Duse did.

The Drama as Art

It is useless to go on talking about the theatre as it is. The theatre as a place of Art is dead. Some of us who recognize this and have not reached a state in our development where we can suavely and unselfishly permit the dead to remain with us, cry out crudely: Life is for the alive; the theatre is dead; bury it or resurrect it Alive.

But the drama is one of the great Arts. It can neither be killed nor buried alive. In all the other arts the modern artist has cut away tradition and convention, stripped down to the very soul, and given a chance for a new intense life. Only the dramatist lies inert, helpless, buried under the theatre, literature, the system, and the public.

There is nothing else to believe but that in time Drama will extricate it self from all the systems that have fastened upon it. There is some interest in trying to hasten this time, for our own sake. I should like to make clear a simple suggestion, without getting into a treatise on the Drama.

For years men in Europe have been working to establish the drama as an art, but in America the whole idea seems to have been to make it a branch of Social Service Work.

As one of the Arts it is almost unrecognized in the theatre. In its place we have literature and very much not-literature, novels illustrated with voice, gesture, costume and scenery of endless varieties; we have propaganda,—moral, social, political, religious.

The little theatres in their protest have expended all their energies upon the externals: scenery and lighting. They have weakly

discarded the technique in voice and acting which they had never acquired.

But "talk", the real curse of the theatre today, they hug to themselves: and as so much else is lacking, seem to be the exponents of the "talk", "discussion", and "domestic relations plays".

Drama is emotion expressed in motion (action). Words are not needed to evoke the emotion or to explain the action. Words belong to literature. Only a setting is needed which shall stay a setting and not become a painting, interior decoration, or nature. And actors with enough personality to impersonally transmit the emotion.

Several months ago we printed some experiments by John Rodker called the Theatre Muet. I should like to see them tried out in one of our theatres.

In sculpture we have had the design simplified and intensified for its own sake rather than for the sake of expression. In painting we have gone to the extreme of throwing down all representation and presenting the abstract. Poetry and music have had their revolutions.

When the emotions that are eternal have been rescued from the confusion of our brutally taxing physical life and the emptiness of our psychology, which deals too much with the details and too little with the spirit of life, we will have a new drama. I do not think that it will be the theatre muet, any more than I believe that this painting will remain abstract forever. Representation will return to painting. The artist will be consciously or subconsciously influenced in a world of representations. I do not mean representation as imitation or illustration, but as an interpretation of the inner relation of things to life. We will have our theatre staging emotions in action with dialogue that is not conversation but rather an accompaniment.

That Boston Paper Again

London Office:

One of the younger Irish essayists has just been in with yet another prize tale of *The Atlantic Monthly*. It seems that one of the Garnett family had delivered himself of a more than usually typical article in that pipe organ of Massachusetts kultur; our Irish contemporary wrote to them outlining a reply and rebuttal of Garnett. *The Atlantic*, ever priceless, *The Atlantic* replied to him that they thought his idea a good one, and would entrust it to one of their regular contributors.

POEMS OF PO CHU-I*

(772-846 a. d.)

Translated by Arthur Waley

The Harper of Chao

The singers have hushed their notes of clear song;
The red sleeves of the dancers are motionless.
Hugging his lute, the old harper of Chao
Rocks and sways as he touches the five chords.
The loud notes swell and scatter abroad:
"Sa, sa", like wind blowing the rain.
The soft notes dying almost to nothing:
"Ch'ieh, ch'ieh", like the voice of ghosts talking.
Now as glad as the mag pie's lucky song:
Again bitter as the gibbon's ominous cry.
His ten fingers have no fixed note;
Up and down—"kung", "chih" and "yu"¹
And those who sit and listen to the tune he plays
Of soul and body lose the mastery.
And those who pass that way as he plays the tune
Suddenly stop and cannot raise their feet.
Alas, alas that the ears of common men
Should love the modern and not love the old!
Thus it is that the harp in the green window
Day by day is covered deeper with dust.

¹ Notes of the scale.

* I reprint these poems from the October number. They are too good for any one to miss. — M. C. A.

On the Way to Hangchow: Anchored on the River at Night

Little sleeping and much grieving, the traveller
 Rises at midnight and looks back toward home.
 The sands are bright with moonlight that joins the shores;
 The sail is white with dew that has covered the boat.
 Nearing the sea, the river grows broader and broader:
 Approaching autumn, the nights longer and longer
 Thirty times we have slept amid mists and waves,
 And still we have not reached Hangchow!

Immortality

Boundless, the great sea!
 Straight down,—no bottom: sideways,—no border.
 Of cloudy waves and misty billows down in the uttermost depths
 Men have fabled, in the midst there stand three sacred hills.
 On the hills thick growing,—herbs that banish death.
 Wings grow on those who eat them and they turn into heavenly
hsien.
 The Lord of Ch'in¹ and Wu of Han² believed in these stories;
 And magic-workers year by year were sent to gather the herbs.
 The Blessed Islands, now and of old, what but an empty tale?
 The misty waters spread before them and they knew not where
 to seek.
 Boundless, the great sea!
 Dauntless, the mighty wind!
 Their eyes search but cannot see the shores of the Blessed Islands.
 They cannot find the Blessed Isles and yet they dare not go back;
 Youths and maidens that began the quest grew gray on board
 the boat.
 They found that the writings of Hsü Fu were all boasts and lies;

¹ The "First Emperor," B. C. 259—210.

² The Emperor Wu, B. C. 156—87.

To the Great Unity and Lofty Principle they had raised their prayers
in vain.

Do you not see

The graves on the top of Black Horse Hill and the tombs at
Mo-ling?¹

What is left but the sighing wind blowing in the tangled grass?

Yes, and what is more,

The Dark and Primal Master of Sagas in his five thousand words

Never spoke of herbs: never spoke of *hsien*,

Nor spoke of climbing in broad daylight up to the blue of heaven.

The Two Red Towers

(A Satire Against Clericalism)

The Two Red Towers

North and South rise facing each other.

I beg to ask, to whom do they belong?

To the two princes of the period Cheng Yüan.²

The two princes blew on their flutes and drew down faries from the
sky;

Who carried them off through the Five Clouds, soaring away to
Heaven.

Their halls and houses, that they could not take with them,

Were turned into Temples, planted in the Dust of the World.

In the tiring-rooms and dancers' towers all is silent and still;

Only the willows like dancers' arms, and the pond like a mirror.

At twilight when the flowers are falling, when things are sad and
hushed,

One does not hear songs and flutes, but only chimes and bells.

The Imperial Patent on the Temple doors is written in letters of gold;

For nuns' quarters and monks' cells ample space is allowed.

¹ The burial places of these two Emperors.

² 785—805 A. D.

For green moss and bright moonlight—plenty of room provided;
In a hovel opposite is a sick man who has hardly room to lie down!
I remember once when at P'ing-yang they were building a great
man's house:

How it swallowed up the housing space of thousands of ordinary
men.

The Immortals¹ are leaving us, two by two, and their houses are
turned into Temples;

I begin to fear that the whole world will become a vast convent!

On Board Ship:

Reading Yuan Chen's Poems

I take your poems in my hand and read them beside the candle;
The poems are finished: the candle is low: dawn not yet come.
With sore eyes by the guttering candle still I sit in the dark,
Listening to the waves that strike the ship driven by a head-wind.

Arriving at Hsun-Yang²

A bend of the river brings into view two triumphal arches;
This is the gate in the western wall of the suburbs of Hsün-yang.
I have still to travel in my solitary boat three or four leagues—
By misty waters and rainy sands, while the yellow dusk thickens.

We are almost come to Hsün-yang; how my thoughts are stirred
As we pass to the south of Yü-liang's Tower and the east of P'en port.
The forest trees are leafless and withered, — after the mountain
rain;

The roofs of the houses are hidden low among the river mists.
The horses, fed on water-grass, are too weak to carry their load;

¹ The Emperor's relatives.

² He was banished to this place in 815 with the rank of Sub-prefect.

The cottage walls of wattle and thatch let the wind blow on one's
bed.
In the distance I see red-wheeled coaches driving from the town-
gate;
They have taken the trouble, these civil people, to meet their new
Prefect!

After Getting Drunk, Becoming Sober in the Night

Our party scattered at yellow dusk and I came home to bed;
I woke at midnight and went for a walk, leaning heavily on a friend.
As I lay on my pillow my vinous complexion, soothed by sleep,
grew sober;
In front of the tower the ocean moon, accompanying the tide, had
risen.
The swallows, about to return to the beams, went back to roost
again;
The candle at my window, just going out, suddenly revived its
light.
All the time till dawn came, still my thoughts were muddled;
And in my ears something sounded like the music of flutes and
strings.

Last Poem

They have put my bed beside this unpainted screen;
They have shifted my stove in front of the blue curtain.
I listen to my grandchildren reading to me from a book;
I watch the servants heating up the soup.
I move my pencil, answering the poems of friends;
I feel in my pockets and pull out the medicine money.
When this superintendence of trifling affairs is done
I lie back on my pillows and sleep with my face to the south.

AVIATION IN MUSICAL CRITICISM

Margaret Anderson

I HAVE heard a great deal of music lately. I have sat at concerts with the critics and listened to their strange discussion of it, and I have sat alone and wondered how such a wierd and sterile race of beings ever happened to be produced in the world.

First of all, New York will go into raptures over Galli-Curci. I say this now before New York has heard her, because I am already suffering over the things I will have to listen to about her. The critics will call her a great artist and the public will rave in the same key. And the only true thing that can be said of Galli-Curci is that she has a remarkable vocal organ which any intelligent being will listen to with the same type of interest he has for a tight-rope performance.

Any one grown enough to classify his emotions will know this at once. To say that she has a marvelous voice is not to say that she has an art, that she is capable of art, that she has anything more to do with Art than a toadstool has. The fact is that she was not born an artist, that she will never become one (you can't, of course), and that she probably hasn't enough knowledge of what the word means even to wish to become one.

I heard her debut last year in Chicago. She did her stunts with the facility of a bird, and so there was a great clamour. I can imagine how Campanini rushed to sign contracts with her, how he suddenly discovered that he had been concealing a jewel from the public, how the legend of her greatness was the easiest thing in the world to create, etc, etc. This is a country where everyone believes that a stunt superbly done is an art. They don't exactly call baseball playing one of the arts, but anything comparable to the "form" needed to pitch a ball properly becomes art when they recognize it in a voice, on a piano or a vilon. In literature they can't yet recognize when a stunt has been properly accomplished, so any one who writes at all is regarded as an "artist"; he may do the worst poetry or novel-writing of his generation, but the mere fact of his being engaged in *writing* is enough to include him in the cult.

But Annette Kellerman is not an artist, despite the grace and dexterity of her diving; and Theodore Dreiser is not an artist, despite the interesting books he has written; and Mrs Fiske is not an artist, even if she has mastered the technique of the stage; and Bar-

rie's plays are not Art even if they do contain a complete and exquisite knowledge of human nature; and Isadora Duncan is not an artist even if she does move many people profoundly; and Rudolf Ganz is not an artist even if he does play the piano with utter and absolute and delightful virtuosity. And Paderewski and Kreisler and Bauer and Bernhardt and Mary Garden are artists because they were born with creative imagination. And Galli-Curci is not an artist, by virtue of that lack. These home-truths, I regret to say, are still unrecognized.

Galli-Curci is a very unattractive little person without presence, personality, charm, brains, taste, spirit, or looks. She is awkward and silly on the stage, simpering and excessively saccharine, untrained in any of the beautiful uses of the body. She has one of two gestures, like Melba, for all kinds of emotion, and uses them continuously, with an awful coyness, without regard to what is going on in the music or in the drama. All the most stupid affectations of the old opera ideals are in her performances. I believe she is supposed to have said that she likes singing with Caruso and dislikes singing with Muratore. Whether she said it or not it would have to be true. She and Caruso are on about the same intellectual level: what Muratore conceives as the art of opera belongs to an air which they cannot breathe. I am not trying to disparage the gift of voice which Galli-Curci has. I am merely objecting to the riot of idiocy through the country which calls that voice art. And I am trying to express my contempt for the New York audiences that will go into ecstasies over this woman next month and refuse to understand the great art which Mary Garden has to give them.

The musical sensation of the year is Jascha Heifetz. Before I heard him I was told that he played the violin more beautifully than Kreisler, that he was the most wonderful phenomenon that has ever come to these shores, etc., etc. When I went to his concert I heard this: a triumph of virtuosity, as definitely and forever removed from comparison with Kreisler as Godowsky is from Harold Bauer.

Heifetz plays with more ease than any violinist I have ever seen. He is very young, very graceful and charming and appealing, and the chief characteristic of his music is flawlessness. One enthusiast told me she loved his playing because he did such unexpected things, you could never tell what he was going to do next, etc. But he does no unexpected things. His playing is perfection. He hasn't even a touch of that "exaggeration a propos" which is the gauge of personal quality, and without which a man cannot put the stamp

of himself upon his work. Such playing is not the playing of a master but of a perfect pupil. Heifetz is like that: the essence of all the things that can be taught seem to have come together in him. He has not discarded any values handed on to him and replaced them with his own. He has not outstripped his teachers. He gives no indication of the thing which cannot be taught. He is the perfect artist, and as such he won this tribute from one critic: "Heifetz does not intrude himself upon the music." Exactly. That is the trouble.

I had looked for some of the richness of the Slav in Heifetz. They say he has a weary face. I was not close enough to see, but certainly his music has no weariness. It is not interesting enough for that. My informants may be quite mistaken about his look. He may have merely a sad face. Certainly in his pictures he hasn't "the" look.

It is really quite too naive of the newspaper critics to have compared him with Kreisler. One of the more conservative remarks carefully: "I cannot agree with those who, on the inspiration of the moment, instantly sweep away all the favorites of the day. Kreisler still remains my ideal of violinists". Good heavens! this is all but pitiable. Kreisler's quality is that of the trained human being, a nervous concentration of imagination and intellect and passion turned upon a finely conscious idea; Heifetz's quality is that of the un-selfconscious, unaware human being, dedicated to the beautiful playing of music as some one else has conceived it. "But Kreisler is mature and Heifetz is so young. Wait a bit", etc., etc. This is banality. I am talking of the quality each man had at birth, and of absolutely nothing else. There was more art in Kreisler's playing of his arrangement of Paderewski's minuet than in Heifetz's whole program. David Hochstein's playing is more nearly like Heifetz's than that of any one else in this country. But David Hochstein plays with more interest in the quality of his feeling. He hasn't such a range of virtuosity, but why does New York care more for virtuosity than for anything else?

No, Heifetz is not the great new violinist. And another thing: whenever a great new violinist does appear his audiences will be startled by one difference at least, whatever else they are able to perceive. They will discover a quite different kind of accompanist at the piano, and a quite different kind of sound coming from that instrument. No great musician of the future could stand the strain of the horrible sounds made by the hack pianists that serve today as the best accompanists. The things they do to the piano are fearful. I always have a nightmare afterward of their loose, flat, unfeeling, unsensitive,

untrained (not in the sense of technique but of touch) hands flopping up and down on the keyboard,—hands that can keep good time, but that know no differentiations of sound except loud and soft. I keep thinking "Oh, great heavens, in a few minutes he'll play *loud*, but not a contained loud—a brassy loud as if the sound were in shreds." It is very awful.

IMPROVISATION

Louis Gilmore

Blue night
Powdered with stars
Haggard moon
With late hours
Mandolins

M. l'Abbe
In mauve trousers
Shapely hand
Pulling flowers
Violins

Marquise
By greenish taper
Sly mask
Ogling a sailor
Tambourins

A SOLDIER OF HUMOUR

Wyndham Lewis

PART I

SPAIN IS AN overflow of sombreness "Africa commences at the Pyrenees." Spain is a check-board of Black and Goth, on which Primitive Gallic chivalry played its most brilliant games. At the gates of Spain the landscape gradually becomes historic with Roland. His fame dies as difficultly as the flourish of the *cor de chasse*. It lives like a superfine antelope in the gorges of the Pyrenees, becoming more and more ethereal and gentle, Charlemagne moves Knights and Queens beneath that tree; there is something eternal and Rembrandtesque about his proceedings. A stormy and threatening tide of history meets you at the frontier.

Several summers ago I was cast by Fate for a fierce and prolonged little comedy, — an essentially Spanish comedy. It appropriately began at Bayonne, where Spain not Africa begins.

I am a large blonde Clown, ever so vaguely reminiscent (in person) of William Blake, George Alexander, and some great American Boxer whose name I forget. I have large strong teeth which I gnash and flash when I laugh, as though I were chewing the humorous morsel. But usually a look of settled and aggressive naivety rests on my face. I know I am a barbarian, who, when Imperial Rome was rather like Berlin to-day, would have been paddling about in a coracle. My body is large, white and savage. But all the fierceness has become transformed into laughter. It still looks like Visigothic fighting machine, but is really a laughing machine. As I have remarked, when I laugh I gnash my teeth, which is another brutal survival, and thing Laughter has taken over from War. Everywhere where formerly I would fly at throats, I howl with laughter!

A German remains in a foreign country for thirty years, speaks its language as well as his own, and assimilates its ideas. But he is the ideal spy of Press-Melodrama, because he remains faithful in thought to his Fatherland, and in his moments of greatest expansiveness with his adopted countrymen, is cold, more or less:— enough to remain a German. So I have never forgotten that I am really a neo-Teuton barbarian. I have clung coldly to this consciousness with an almost Latin good sense.

I realise, similarly, the uncivilized nature of my laughter. It does not easily climb into the neat Japanese box, which is the "cosa sallada" of the Spaniard, or French "esprit." It sprawls into everything. It has become my life.

All this said, I have often passed quite easily for a Frenchman, in spite of my Swedish fairness of complexion.

There is some Local genius or god of adventure haunting the soil of Spain, of an especially active and resourceful type. I have seen people that have personified him; for the people of a country, in their most successful products, always imitate their gods. You feel in Spain that it is safer to seek adventures than to avoid them. You have the feeling that should you refrain from charging the windmills, they are quite capable of charging you; in short, you come to wonder less at Don Quijote's eccentric behaviour. But the diet of this volcanic soil has become more or less civilised. —My analysis of myself would serve equally for him in this respect. —Your life is no longer one of the materials he asks for to supply you with constant amusement, as the conjuror asks for the gentleman's silk hat. Not your life,—but a rib or two, your comfort or a five pound note are all he needs. With these things he juggles and conjures from morning till night, keeping you perpetually amused and on the qui vive.

It might have been a friend: but as it happened it was the most implacable enemy I have ever had that Providence provided me with as her agent representative for this journey.

The comedy I took part in was a Spanish one, then, at once piquant and elemental. But a Frenchman filled the principle rôle. When I add that this Frenchman was convinced the greater part of the time that he was taking part in a tragedy, and was perpetually on the point of transplanting my adventure bodily into that other category; and that although his actions drew their vehemence from the virgin source of a racial hatred, yet it was not as a Frenchman or a Spaniard that he acted,—then you will conceive what extremely complex and unmanageable forces were about to be set in motion for my edification.

What I have said about my barbarism and my laughter is a key to a certain figure. By these antecedents and modifications of a modern life, such another extravagant warrior as Don Quijote is produced, existing in a vortex of strenuous and burlesque encounters. Mystical and humourous, astonished at everything at bottom (the settled naivete I have described) he is inclined to worship and deride, to pursue like a riotous moth the comic and

unconscious luminary he discovers; to make war on it, and cherish it, like a lover.

It was about ten o'clock at night when I reached Bayonne. I had started from Paris the evening before.

In the market square near the station I was confronted with several caravanseris shamelessly painted in crude intimate colours; brilliantly shining electric lights of peculiar hard, livid disreputable tint illumined each floor of each frail structure; eyes of brightly frigid invitation. Art of Vice, cheap ice-cream, cheaply ornamented ice wafers on a fête night, were things they suggested. "Fonda del Universo," "Fondo del Mundo": Universal Inn, and the Inn of the World, two of them were called. I had not sufficient energy left to resist these buildings. They all looked the same, but to keep up a show of will and discrimination I chose the second, not the first. I advanced along a narrow passage-way and found myself suddenly in the heart of the Fonda del Mundo. On my left lay the dining-room, in which sat two travellers. I was standing in the kitchen,—a large courtyard round which the rest of the hotel and a house or two at the back were built. But it had a glass roof on a level with the house proper.

About half a dozen stoves with sinks, each managed by a separate crew of grimy workers, formed a semicircle. One had the impression of hands being as cheap, and every bit as dirty as dirt. You felt that the lowest scullery maid could afford a servant to do the roughest of her work, and this girl in turn another. The abundance and prodigality of beings, of a kind with its profusion of fruits and wine. Instead of buying a wheelbarrow would not one attach a man to one's business?—instead of hiring a removing van engage a gang of carriers? In every way that man could replace the implement he would here replace it. An air of leisurely but continual activity pervaded this precinct, extensive cooking going on. I discovered later that this was a preparation for the morrow, a market day. But to enter at ten in the evening this large and apparently empty building, as far as customers went, and find a methodically busy population in its midst, cooking a nameless Feast, was naturally impressive. A broad staircase was the only avenue in this house to the sleeping apartments; a shining cut glass door beneath it seemed the direction I ought to take when I should have made up my mind to advance. This door, the stairs, the bread given you at the table d'hôte all had the same new, unsubstantial appearance.

I stood waiting, my rug on my arm, before penetrating further into this enigmatical world of the "Fonda del Mundo." Then the hostess appeared through the glass door—a very stout woman in a dress like a dressing gown. She had the air of sinking into herself as if into a hot enervating bath, and the sleepy leaden intensity of expression belonging to many Spaniards. Her face was anance of the South seemed manifesting in this way, as well, in a so still and impassable that the ready and apt answers coming to one's questions were startling. The air of dull resentment meant nothing except that I was indifferent to her. Had I not been so this habitual expression would not have been allowed to remain, a cold expressionlessness would have replaced it.

She turned to the busy scene at our right and called out with guttural incisiveness several orders in Spanish, all having some bearing on my fate; some connected with my supper, the others with further phases of my sojourn in her house. They fell in the crowd of leisurely workers without causing a ripple. But they gradually reached their destination.

First I noticed a significant stir and a dull flare rose in the murky atmosphere, as though one of the lids of a stove had been slid back preparatory to some act of increased culinary activity. Then elsewhere a slim, handsome young witch left her cauldron and passed me, going into the dining-room. I followed her and the hostess went back through the cut glass door.

Supper began. The wine may have been Condé's Fluid. It resembled it, but in that case it had been many years in stock. I made short work of the bacalao (cod,—that nightmare to Spaniards of the Atlantic seaboard). The stew that followed had no terrors for me, a spectator would have thought. But the enthusiastic onlooker at this juncture would have seen me suddenly become inert and brooding, would have seen my knife fall from my nerveless right hand, my fork be no longer grasped in my left. I was vanquished. My brilliant start had been a vain flourish. The insolent display of sweets and dessert lay unchallenged before me. Noticing my sudden desistance, my idle and defenceless air, the only other occupant, now, of the *salle à manger*, and my neighbor, addressed me. He evidently took me for a Frenchman. I could maintain that rôle, if need be.

"Il fait beau ce soir!" he said dogmatically and loudly, staring blankly at me.

"Mais non, voyons! It's by no means a fine night! It's cold and damp, and, what's more, it's going to rain."

I cannot say why I contradicted him in this fashion. Perhaps the insolent and mystical gage of drollery his appearance generally flung down was the cause.

My neighbor took my response quite stolidly however, and probably this initial rudeness of mine would have had no effect whatever on him, had not a revelation made shortly afterwards at once changed our relative positions, and caused him to look on me with different eyes. He then went back, remembered this first incivility of mine, and took it, retrospectively, in a different spirit to that shown contemporaneously. For he now merely inquired,

"You have come far?"

"From Paris," I answered, gazing in consternation at a large piece of cheese, which was about to advance upon me at every moment, and finish what the cod, its sauce and the dreadful stew had begun.

The third occupant of the *salle à manger* had just retired to rest a few moments before this dialogue began after a prolonged and apparently drawn battle with the menu, for he looked by no means unscathed. He had been hard pressed by the sweets, that was evident. You felt that had not the coffee been the last item of the bill of fare, he would inevitably have succumbed. Honour was saved, however, and he hurried to bed head erect, but legs,—that part of his person farthest removed from the seat of his indomitable will,—in palpable disarray. As to the individual who had addressed me, he showed every sign of the extremest hardness. He lay back in his chair, his hat on the back of his head, finishing a bottle of wine with bravado. His waistcoat was open, and this was the only thing about him that did not denote the most facile of victories. I considered this as equivalent to a rolling up of the sleeves; it was businesslike, it showed that he respected his enemy. Had his waistcoat remained buttoned down to the bottom, it would have been more in keeping with the rest of his fanfaronading manner. But after all, it may have been because of the heat.

His straw hat served rather as a heavy coffee-coloured nimbus,—such a nimbus as some Browningsque Florentine painter, the worst for drink, might have placed, rather rakishly and tilting forward, behind the head of a saint. Above this veined and redly sun-burnt forehead gushed a lot of dry black hair. His face had the vexed, wolfish look often seen in the Midi. It was full of character, but had no breadth of touch; it had been niggled at and worked all over, at once minutely and loosely, by a hundred little mows and chissellings of fretful passion. His beard did not sprout with any shape or symmetry. Yet in an odd and baffling way there was a

breadth, a look of possible largeness somewhere. You were forced at length to attribute it to just that *blankness* of expression I have just mentioned. This sort of blank intensity spoke of a real possibility of real passion, of the sublime. (It was this sublime quality that I was about to waken, and was going to have an excellent opportunity of studying).

He was dressed with a sombre floridity. In his dark grey-purple suit with thin crimson lines, in his dark red hat band, in his rich blue tie, in his stormily flowered waistcoat, one had a feeling that his taste for the most florid of colouring had everywhere struggled to assert itself, and everywhere been overcome. But by what? That was one of this man's secrets, and one of the things that made him a pubbling person. Again, the cut of his clothes, in a kind of awkward amplitude, seemed out of place.

He was not a commercial traveller. I was sure of this. For me, he issued from a void. I rejected in turn his claim, on the strength of his appearance, to be a small vineyard owner, a man in the automobile business and a 'rentier'. He was part of the mystery of this extraordinary hotel; his solitude, his ungregarious appearance, his aplomb before that menu!

In the meantime his little sunken eyes were fixed on me imperturbably, blankly.

"I was in Paris last week," he suddenly announced. "I don't like Paris. Why should I?" I thought he was becoming rather aggressive, taking me for a Parisian. "They think they are up-to-date. Go and get a parcel sent you from abroad, and go and try and get it at the Station Dépôt. See how many hours you will pass there trotting from one little bureau clerk to another before they give it to you. Then go to a café and ask for a drink! The waiter will upset half of it over your legs! Are you Parisian?" He asked this in the same tone, the blankness slightly deepening.

"No, I'm English," I answered.

He looked at me steadfastly. This evidently at first seemed to him untrue; then he suddenly appeared to accept it implicitly.

After a few minutes of silence, he addressed me, to my surprise, in my own language, but with every evidence that it had crossed the Atlantic at least once since it had been in his possession, and that he had not inherited it but acquired it with the sweat of his brow.

"Oh! you're English? It's fine day!"

Now, we are going to begin all over again. And we are going to start, as before, with the weather. But I did not contradict him this time. My opinion of the weather had in no way changed. I disliked that particular sort as much as ever. But for some reason

I withdrew from my former attitude of uncompromising truth, and agreed.

"Yes," I said.

Our eyes met, doubtfully. He had not forgotten my late incivility, and I remembered it at the same time. He was silent again, evidently turning over dully in his mind the signification of this change on my part; and, before my present weak withdrawal, feeling a still stronger resentment in remembering my wounding obstinacy of five minutes before. Yes, this was now taking effect.

And then, almost threateningly, he continued,—heavily, pointedly, steadily, as though to see if there were a spark of resistance anywhere left in me, that would spit up under his trampling words.

"I guess eets darn fi' weather, and goin' to laast. A friend mine, who ees skeeper, sailing for Bilbao this afternoon, said that mighty little sea was out zere, and all fine weather for his run. A skipper ought' know, I guess, ought'n he? Zey know sight more about zee weader than most. I gess zat's deir trade,—a'nt I right?"

A personal emotion was rapidly gaining him. And it seemed that speaking the tongue of New York helped its increase considerably. All his strange blankness and impersonality had gone, or rather it had *woken up*, if one may so describe this strange phenomenon. He now looked at me with awakened eyes, coldly, judicially, fixedly. But he considered he had crushed me enough, and began talking about Paris,—as he had done before in French.

He spoke English incorrectly, but, like many foreigners, the one thing linguistically he had brought away from the United States intact was an American accent of the most startling and uncompromising perfection. Whatever word or phrase he knew, in however mutilated a form, had this stamp of colloquialism and air of being the real thing. He spoke English with a careless impudence at which I was not surprised; but I had the sensation besides that the vague but powerful consciousness of the authentic nature of his accent, made him still more insolently heedless of the faults of his speech. His was evidently to the full the American, or Anglo-Saxon American, state of mind: a colossal disdain for everything that does not possess in one way or another an American accent. It seemed almost that my English, grammatically regular though it was, lacking the American accent was but a poor vehicle for thought compared with his most blundering sentence.

Before going further I must make quite clear that I have no more prejudice against the American way of accenting English

than I have against the Irish or English. The Irish brogue is prettier than English (despite Irishmen's alternate disparagement and exploiting of it); and American possesses an indolent vigour and dryness which is a most cunning arm when it snarls out ironies. The American accent is the language of Mark Twain, and is the tongue, at once naive and cynical, of a thousand inimitable humourists.

I remember at the three or four schools I successively went to, that at all a curious and significant belief prevailed. I always understood, up to my seventeenth year, that an Englishman could reckon, without undue vanity and as a matter of scientific fact, on overcoming in battle seven Frenchman. That he need feel by no means uneasy if threatened by twenty, or fifty, for that matter; but that the sort of official and universally acknowledged standard was one Englishman corresponding to seven Frenchmen. I remember also a conversation I had in Paris with a young Englishman. We were both nineteen, and very tall and lanky. He was a slow, awkward and rather timid youth. We were discussing nocturnal aggressions, and he said quietly that these Paris roughs "wouldn't ever tackle an Englishman." "They knew better."—This same young man also was very conscious of the difference of his walk from that of Frenchmen. He referred to it quite seriously as "the walk of the conquering race." I could never see any difference myself, except that his legs were disproportionately long, and he seemed a rather incompetent pedestrian.

Now I have met nowhere else in Europe with this excellent illusion of national superiority. A Frenchman knows he will have to use his utmost cunning to circumvent and eventually exterminate or main one single German. The German reflects he will have to eat a great deal of Leberwurst and Sauerkraut to be able to crush with his superior weight the nimble Frenchman. "The God's Own Country" attitude of some Americans is more Anglo-Saxon than their blood. I can now proceed without fear of misinterpretation on the part of my American friends.

I had before this met Americans from Odessa, Buda Pesth and Pekin. Almost always the air of the United States, which they breathed for a month or two, had proved too much for them. They were never any good for anything afterwards, became wastrels in their own countries,—poets and dreamers.

This man at once resembled and was different from them. The case of this difference became apparent when he informed me that he was a United States citizen. I believed him unreservedly and on

the spot. Some air of security in him that only such a ratification can give, convinced me.

He did not tell me at once. Between his commencing to speak in English and his announcing his citizenship came an indetermined neutral phase in our relations. In the same order as in our conversation in French, we progressed from the weather topic, — a delicate subject with us,—to Paris.

Our acquaintance had matured wonderfully quickly. I already felt instinctively that certain subjects of conversation were to be avoided; that certain shades of facial expression would cause suspicion, hatred or perplexity in his soul.—He, for his part, evidently with the intention of eschewing a subject fraught with dangers, did not once speak of England. It was as though England were a subject that no one could expect him to keep his temper about, and that if a man *did* indeed come from England he would naturally resent being reminded of it,—as though he might feel that the other was seeking to take an undue advantage of him. He was in fact indulgently pretending for the moment that I was an American.

"Guess you' goin' to Spain?" he said. "Waal, Americans are not like' very much in that country. That country, sir, is barb'rous; you *kant* believe how behind in everything that country's is! All you have to do is to *look* smart there to make money. No need to worry there. No, by gosh! Just sit round and ye'll do bett' dan zee durn dagos!"

The American citizenship wiped out the repulsive fact of his southern birth, otherwise he would have been almost a dago himself, being a Gascon.

"In Guadalquiver,—waal—kind of State-cap'tle, some manzanas or kind shanties, see?—waal!"—

I make these sentences of my neighbour's much more lucid than they were in reality. But he now plunged into this obscure swirl of words with a story to tell. The story was drowned in them, but I gathered it told of how, travelling in a motor car, he could find no petrol anywhere in a town of some importance.

He was so interested in the telling of the story, that I became rather off my guard, and once or twice showed that I did not quite follow him, did not quite understand his English. He finished his story rather abruptly and there was a silence. It was after this silence that he divulged the fact of his American citizenship.

And now things took on a very gloomy aspect.

With the revelation of this mighty fact he seemed to consider it incumbent upon him to adopt an air of increased arrogance.

He was now the representative of the United States. There was no more question of my being an American. All compromise, all courteous resolve to ignore painful facts, was past. Things must stand out in their true colours, and men too.

As a result of this heightened attitude, he appeared to doubt the sincerity or exactitude of everything I said. His beard bristled round his drawling mouth, his thumbs sought his arm-pits, his feet stood up erect and aggressive on his heels, at the delicate angle of a drawing by Pascin. An insidious attempt on my part to induct the conversation back into French, unhappily detected, caused in him a sombre indignation. I was curious to see the change that would occur in my companion on feeling on his lips once more and in his throat, the humbler tongue. The treachery of my intention gradually dawned upon him. He seemed taken aback, was silent and very quiet for a few minutes, as though stunned. The subtleties, the ironies, to which he was exposed!

"Oui, c'est vrai", I went on, with frowning, serious air, over palpably absorbed in the subject we were discussing, and overlooking the fact that I had changed to French; "les Espagnols ont du chic à se chausser. D'Ailleurs, c'est tout ce qu'ils savent, en fait de toilette. C'est les Américains surtout qui savent s'habiller!"

His eyes at this became terrible. He saw through it all. And now I was *flattering*, was flattering Americans, and above all, praising their way of dressing. The guile of this was too much for him. He burst out vehemently, almost wildly, in the language of his adopted land:—

"Yes, *sirr* and that's more'n see durn English do!"

He was a typical product of the French midi. But, no doubt, in his perfect Americanism—and at this ticklish moment, his impeccable accent threatened by an unscrupulous foe, who was attempting to stifle it temporarily—a definite analogy arose in his mind. The red-skin and his wiles, the hereditary and cunning foe of the American citizen, no doubt came vividly to his mind and he recognized, in its evoking this image, the dastardliness of my attack. Yes, wiles of that familiar sort were being used against him, Sioux-like, Blackfeet-like manœuvres. He must meet them as the American citizen had always met them. He had at length overcome the Sioux and Mohican. He turned on me a look as though I had been unmasked, and his accent became more accentuated, rasping and arrogant. I might say that his accent became venomous. All the elemental movements of his soul were always acutely

manifest in his American accent, the principal vessel, as it were, of his vitality.

After another significant pause he brusquely chose a subject of conversation that he was convinced we could not agree upon. He took a long draught of the powerful fluid served to each diner. I disagreed with him at first out of politeness. But as he seemed resolved to work himself up slowly into a national passion, I changed round and agreed with him. He glared at me for a moment. He felt at bay before this dreadful subtlety of mine. Then he warily changed his position in the argument, taking up the point of view he had begun by attacking.

We changed about alternately for a little. At one time, in taking my new stand, and asserting something, either I had changed too quickly, or he had not quite quickly enough. At all events, when he began speaking, he found himself *agreeing* with me. This was a terrible moment. It was very close quarters. I felt as one does at a show, standing on the same chair with some uncertain tempered person. I was compelled rapidly to disagree with him and just saved the situation. A moment more, and we should have fallen on each other, or rather, he on me.

He buried his face once more in the sinister poiton in front of him, and consumed the last vestiges of the fearful aliment at his elbow. I felt the situation had become perfectly blood-curdling.

We had not been once interrupted during these happenings. A dark man, a Spaniard, I thought, had passed into the kitchen along the passage. The sound of bustle came to us uninterruptedly from within.

He now with a snarling drawl engaged in a new discussion on another and still more delicate subject. I renewed my tactics, he his.

Subject after subject was chosen, and his voltes-face, his change of attitude in the argument, became less and less leisurely and more and more precipitate, until at length whatever I said he said the opposite brutally and at once. But still my cunning was too great for him. At last, pushing his chair back with a frightful grating sound, and thrusting both his hands in his pockets—at this supreme moment the sort of large blank look came back to his face again—he said slowly:—

“Waal, zat may be so—you say so—waal! But what say you to England, ha! England!—England! England!”

At last it had come! He repeated “England” as though that word in itself were a question—unanswerable question. “England”

was a question that a man could only ask when very, very exasperated. But it was a thing hanging over every Englishman, the possibility of having this question put to him. He might at any moment be silenced with it.

"England! ha! England! England!" he repeated as though hypnotised by this word; as though pressing me harder and harder and finally "chawing me up" with the mere utterance of it.

"Why, mon vieux!" I said suddenly, getting up, "how about the South of France, for that matter—the South of France, the South of France!"

If I had said "America" he would have responded at once, no doubt. But "the south of France"! A look of unutterable vagueness came into his face. The south of France! This was at once without meaning, dispiriting, humiliating, paralysing, a cold douche, a stab in the back, an unfair blow. I seemed to have drawn a chilly pall suddenly over the whole of his mind.

I had fully expected to be forced to fight my way out of the *salle-à-manger*, and was wondering whether his pugilistic methods would be those of Alabama or Toulouse—whether he would skip round me with his fists working like piston rods; or whether he would plunge his head in the pit of my stomach, kick me on the chin and follow up with the "*coup de la fourchette*", which consists in doubling up one's fist, but allowing the index and little finger to protrude, so that they may enter the eyes on either side of the bridge of the nose.

But he was quite incapable of dealing adequately with this new situation. As I made for the door, he sat first quite still. Then, slowly, slightly writhing on his chair, his face half turned after me. The fact of my leaving the room seemed to find him still more unprepared, to dumfound him even more, than my answer to his final apostrophe. It never had occurred to him apparently, that I should perhaps get up and leave the room!—Sounds came from him, words too—hybrid syllables lost on the borderland between French and English, which appeared to signify protest, pure astonishment, alarmed question. I got safely out of the kitchen.

In the act of lighting my candle I heard a nasal roar behind me. I mounted the stairs three steps at a time, with the hotel boy at my heels, and, ushered into my room, hastily locked and bolted the door.

I knew perfectly well that I had not treated the little Frenchman at all well. To drag in France in that way—"the south of France",—was brutalising to this tender flower of the Prairies of the West. But to leave the room at that point of our conversation, at that point in our relationship, was still more unpardonable.

My room was at the back. The window looked on to the kitchen; it was just over the stairs leading the bedrooms. From that naturally unfresh and depressing port-hole above the cauldrons, I could observe my opponent in the murky half court, half kitchen, beneath. He looked very different, inspected from this height and distance. I had not till then seen him on his feet. His Yankee clothes, evidently cut beneath his direction by a Gascon tailor, made him look as broad as he was long.

His violently animated leanness imparted a precarious and toppling appearance to his architecture. He was performing a war-dance in this soft national armour just at present beneath the sodden eyes of the Proprietress. It had shuffling cake-walk elements, and cacaphonic gesticulations of the Gaul. It did not seem the same man I had been talking to before. He evidently, in this enchanted hotel, possessed a variety of incarnations? Or it was as though somebody else had leapt into his clothes, which hardly fitted the newcomer, and was carrying on his quarrel. The original and more imposing man had disappeared, and this little fellow had taken up his disorganised and overwrought life at that precise moment and place, at exactly the same pitch of passion, only with fresher nerves, and identically the same racial sentiments as the man he had succeeded.

He was talking to the proprietress in Spanish—much more correct than his English. She listened with her leaden eyes crawling swiftly over his person, with an air of angrily and lazily making an inventory. In his fiery attack on the adamant depths of langour behind which her spirit lived, he would occasionally turn and appeal to one of the nearest of the servants, as though seeking corroboration of something. What was he accusing me of? I muttered rapid prayers to the effect that that mock-tropical reserve might prove unassailable. For I might otherwise be cast bodily out of the Fonda del Mundo, and in my present worn-out state, and with a dyspeptic storm brewing in this first contact with primitive food, have to seek another and distant roof. I knew that I was the object of his discourse. What effectively could be said about me on so short an acquaintance? He would, though, certainly affirm that I was an extremely suspicious character, unscrupulous, resourceful, slip-

pery, diabolically cool; such a person as no respectable hotel would consent to harbour, or if it did, would do so at its peril. Then he might have special influences with the Proprietress, be a regular customer and old friend. He might only be saying, "I object to that person; I cannot explain to you how I object to that person! I have never objected to anybody to the same fearful degree. All my organs boil. My kidneys are almost cooked. I cannot explain to you how that Island organism tears my members this way and that. Out with this abomination. Oh! out with it before I die at your feet from over-heating and plegm!!!"

This way of putting it, the personal way, might be more effective. I went to bed with a feeling of extreme insecurity. I thought that, if nothing else happened, he might set fire to the hotel. I slept quite soundly in spite of the dangers obviously infesting this establishment for me.

In the morning breakfast passed off without incident. I concluded that the complete American was part of the night-time aspect of the Fonda del Mundo and had no part in its more normal day-life.

The square was full of peasants, the men wearing dark blouse and beret connected with Pelota. Several groups were sitting near me in the *salle-à-manger*. A complicated arrangement of chairs and tables, like man traps in their intricate convolutions, lay outside the hotel, extending a little distance into the square. From time to time one or more peasants would appear to become stuck, get somehow caught, in these iron contrivances. They would then, with becoming fatalism, seeing they could not escape, sit down and call for a drink. Such was the impression at least that their gauche and embarrassed movements in choosing a seat gave one.

A train would shortly leave for the frontier. I bade farewell to the Patrona, and asked her if she could recommend me a hotel in Burgos or in Pontaisandra. When I mentioned Pontaisandra, she said at once—"You are going to Pontaisandra?" She turned with a sluggish ghost of a smile to a loitering servant and then said, "Yes, you can go to the Burgaleza at Pontaisandra. That is a good hotel."

I had told her the night before that my destination was Pontaisandra, and she had looked at me steadfastly and resentfully, as though I had said that my destination was Heaven, and that I intended to occupy the seat reserved for her.

I regarded the episode of the supper room, the night before, as an emanation of that place. The Fonda del Mundo was a very

mysterious hotel, despite its more usual aspect in the day time. I imagined it inhabited by solitary and hallucinated beings, like my friend of the night before— or such as I myself might have become. The large kitchen staff was occupied far into the night in preparing a strange and excessive table d'hôte. For the explanation of this afforded me in the morning by the sight of the crowding peasants did not efface my impression of midnight. The dreams caused by its lunches, the visions conjured up by its suppers, haunted the place.

This is the spirit in which I remember my over-night affair.

When I eventually started for the frontier, hoping by the inhalation of a Picadura to dispose my tongue to the coining of fair Spanish, I did not realise that the American adventure was the propenitor of other adventures; nor that the dreams of the Fonda del Mundo were to go with me into the heart of Spain.

(*To be continued*)

JUDICIAL OPINION

(Our Suppressed October Issue)

Margaret Anderson

AS EXPLAINED in the last issue, our October number has been held up by the Postoffice because of a story by Wyndham Lewis, called "Cattleman's Spring Mate", which the Postoffice solicitor judged to be obscene.

We took the case to court, where it was brilliantly and, because of the irony of the situation, homourously defended. But much to our surprise a decision was rendered against us.

I quote from the opinion of Judge Augustus N. Hand:

This is a motion to restrain the Postmaster of New York from denying the use of the mails to the October issue of *The Little Review*. This publication was suppressed upon the advice of the solicitor of the Post Office Department on the ground that it was non-mailable under Section 211 of the United States Criminal Code which provides:

"Every obscene, lewd, or lascivious, and every filthy book, pamphlet writing or other publication of an indecent character is hereby declared to be non-mailable matter and shall not be conveyed in the mails or delivered from any post-office or by any letter carrier".

The publication which is particularly objected to by the Postal Authorities is a short story about a soldier in the British Army who reflects upon the topsy-turvy condition of the world and feels that gigantic forces, which he is pleased to call those of nature, are arrayed against the individual—forces that in most cases will overpower him. He regards his own destruction in the present European conflict as more than likely, and under all these conditions feels at war with the world. With satirical satisfaction he seduces a young girl and disregards her appeals when she becomes a mother. In his revolt at the confusion and injustice of the war he feels justification at having wreaked his will and obtained his satisfaction—thus, as he says, outwitting nature.

It may be urged that this story points various morals. One may say it shows the wickedness of selfishness and indulgence. Another may argue that it shows the degradation of camp life and the demoralizing character of war. It naturally causes a reflecting mind to balance the heroism and self abnegation that always shines forth in war, with the demoralization that also inevitably accompanies it. The very old question suggests itself as to the ultimate *values* of war.

But no outline of the story conveys its full import. The young girl and the relations of the man with her are described with a degree of detail that does not appear necessary to teach the desired lesson, whatever it may be, or to tell a story which would possess artistic merit or arouse any worthy emotion. On the contrary it is at least reasonably arguable, I think, that the details of the sex relations are set forth to attract readers to the story because of their salacious character. I am of course aware that mere description of irregular things in relation to sex may not fall with the Statute.

The whole subject involved in this case is beset with difficulties and the duty of the Postmaster General in administering the Act is a most delicate one. Few would, I suppose, doubt that some prevention of the mailing of lewd publications is desirable, and yet no field of administration requires better judgment or more circumspection to avoid interference with a justifiable freedom of expression and literary development. I have little doubt that numerous really great writings would come under the ban if tests that are frequently

current were applied, and these approved publications doubtless at times escape only because they come within the term "classics", which means for the purpose of the application of the statute, that they are ordinarily immune from interference, because they have the sanction of age and fame and usually appeal to a comparatively limited number of readers. It is very easy by a narrow and prudish construction of the Statute to suppress literature of permanent merit. These considerations of administration, however, are not for the courts except in cases where the judgment of the Postmaster General has been wholly arbitrary and without foundation.

While it has been urged with unusual ingenuity and ability that nothing under consideration can have the tendency denounced by the Statute, I do not think the complainant has made out a case for interfering with the discretion lodged in the Postmaster General whose "decision must be regarded as conclusive by the courts unless it appears that it was clearly wrong." *Masses v. Patten*, N. Y. *Low Journal*, Nov. 5, 1917. *Smith v. Hitchcock*, 226 U. S. 58.

The motion is denied.

Augustus N. Hand.

It would be ridiculous for me to conceal my complete disagreement with Judge Hand and the Postoffice. I disagree even with the best arguments that could be presented in a contemporary court-room about the merits of such a story. *The Little Review* was founded in direct opposition to the prevalent art values in America. It would have no function or reason for being if it did not continually conflict with those values.

In the first place "Cantlemap's Spring Mate" is a piece of literature, over and beyond being merely a good story, because its author knows the difference between writing a story and making a piece of prose. The latter means that he is master of the mysterious laws by which words are made into patterns or rhythms, so that you read them for the spirit contained in the rhythm,—which is the only way of getting at the context; which in fact is a thing of distinct and separate entity, existing above and beyond the context. Many fairly good writers and critics do not understand these laws. It is not surprising that the Postoffice department does not understand them.

For instance, to say that "Cantleman walked in the strenuous fields, steam rising from them as from an exertion" is prose; but to say that "Cantleman took a walk in the fields from which steam was rising, as if the ground had been exerting itself in a strenuous struggle" would have no relation to prose. To say "and sit forever in a

formal and gentle elation" is prose; or "to see this face constantly was like *hearing* perpetually a cheap and foolish music"; or "since he was forced back, by his logic and body, among the madness of natural things"; or "and gaze bravely, like a minute insect, up at the immense and melancholy night, with all its mad nightingales and misty useless watchmen",—these things come within the laws which separate what is good from what is bad. "Good" and "bad" in literature have no other connotation than this.

As for the content of the story, that is not separable from its form, once you grant it to a piece of Art. But if we *must* strip the meaning from the form, I could argue for several days with any one who had enough interest to listen to me. The only intelligible things that can be said today in a court-room, arguments carefully calculated to meet the intellectual capacity of those who are trying to prove immoral something they cannot even understand, is that the story is a brutal one containing a lesson and a terrible warning, and therefore salutary in its effect. If one still thought about life in terms of destruction or salvation, it would be perfectly legitimate to say that the influence of this story would be "good" rather than "bad". But one doesn't think in such terms any more. Scientists have never thought in such terms; neither have philosophers. There is no law by which the Postoffice department of any country can force scientists or philosophers or artists to think in such terms. Some children, many parents, religious people, club ladies, roués, etc., think this way. But we cannot do it. I hope our foreign subscribers will forgive me the boredom and obviousness of these arguments. It is necessary in America. Our Postoffice is the supreme authority on all matters of intellectual interest.

I can see nothing brutal in "Cattleman's Spring Mate". I can see no warning or lesson in it. It is a story of two people who answer the call of sex. The woman does it quite instinctively, being a creature of instincts; the man does it with certain intellectual reservations, being a civilized product. Both are in the situation merely because they want to be there. No force except that of nature compelled them to be there. Nature cannot be called either moral or immoral. The popular mind argues that the girl's life is destroyed. But nothing can "destroy" life. Any life that is capable of being destroyed, in the popular sense of the term, *should be destroyed*. It might then take on that tragic significance which would make it material for Art. That these arguments may still be regarded as childish or immoral by the majority of the world is the supreme human joke. That I could be called an "iconoclast" for making them is a measure of contemporary fatuity.

IN SHADOW

Hart Crane

Out in the late amber afternoon,
Confused among chrysanthemums,
Her parasol, a pale balloon,
Like a waiting moon, in shadow swims.

Her furtive lace and misty hair
Over the garden dial distill
The sunlight,—then withdrawing, wear
Again the shadows at her will.

Gently yet suddenly, the sheen
Of stars inwraps her parasol.
She hears my step behind the green
Twilight, stiller than shadows, fall.

"Come, it is too late,—too late
To risk alone the light's decline:
Nor has the evening long to wait",—
But her own words are night's and mine.

VULGAR INFATUATIONS*

Israel Solon

All religions have this in common, in that they offer us an escape from psychic tension, by eliminating uncertainty and suspense.

The iconoclast is more devout than the priest, who is merely a follower.

All our systems are finished and dead systems; and all our laws and logics are human and arbitrary, being but the products of lazy men infatuated with idleness.

The artist cuts across the flowing, inchoate and lawless and articulates it into the definitive and never changing.

The beautiful realises our conceptual ideals of arrested flow, violent ease, tense repose, — galloping tragedy halted at the climax.

In so far as we love the comic it is because it enables us to live outside, yet close by, the stream of life, in a quiet nook and still waters.

Laughter is creative, in that it shows us that the universe and ourselves are two; laughter is the measure of man's freedom, just as infatuation is the measure of his slavery. We laugh on suddenly discovering that we may behave in our habituated way where we had feared we should have to learn new tricks; we laugh when the new and terrifying proves to be the tame and familiar; we laugh when, on entering the lion's den, we find the lion absent.

*[*Editor's note:* In our September number we published Wyndham Lewis's "Inferior Religions." It is not extravagant to speak of this essay as one of the most profound of our time. But if there were ten people in the United States who realized this fact they have not mentioned it to me. Some several hundred have written to say that they can find so sense or interest in it — that it is quite unintelligible. I thereupon asked Mr. Solon (one of the possible ten who appreciated the essay) to write a digest of it for the puzzled reader. He replied: "That is hardly possible, since Mr. Lewis has himself condensed his thought to the utmost; but I shall herewith attempt a restatement of the chief ideas of his essay, though without adhering to their original order. Attend!"]

We call a man strong who has come nearest to destroying himself, who has succeeded in making an automaton of himself; we consider a man to be rising in strength according as he succeeds in transforming himself into a machine and everything and everybody that he deals with into materials such as can be worked by a machine; our conception of a superman is one who is able to drive out of life all that is strange, fantastic and wild, replacing these by the known, the orderly and the lawabiding—by the dull angels of a Prussian Paradise.

Because we cannot see beyond the present, since we do not remember the beginning and do not know the end, because we are propelled by attractions and repulsions, by loves and hates, and not by visible and palpable wires, we fail to see that we are but following out the set figures of a dance, a dance in which we may take, but in which we but rarely find, joy; and it is only by grace of our ignorance that we are enabled to become infatuated with our puppet-like antics, mistaking these for behavior that is new, unique, personal and wilful. We chatter about the mountains of the moon, about world-views and cosmic consciousness; and are content to remain in utter ignorance of our neighbor five yards away, whose serene smile may be screening a smoking vulcano, a vulcano that is perhaps kept from erupting only by our childish faith in our security.

The King of the Show is not a Person or Being, but an Ever-Present Menace, resulting from the fact that Life has not alone Death for neighbor, but an infinity of other neighbors as well, whom we may crush, suppress and enslave, but who may one day rise in revolt against us, rush in upon us and destroy us; since, for all we know, all our assumptions, all our habits and laws, and all the wiles and tricks that we have mastered through countless ages of travail and pain, may at any moment break down and fail us, loosing upon us in one blinding flash the awful terror that is without face or form, inconceivable and unimaginable, the appalling Host inhabiting the Black Silence around us.

EDITORIAL ON SOLICITIOUS DOUBT*

Ezra Pound

VARIOUS people have expressed certain doubts as to whether . . .
The Little Review . . . etc . . .

Good people, be at rest: the price of *The Little Review* will never be raised for present subscribers or for those who subscribe before January 1, 1918. After that we can make no promises. The quality will not decline; if we give "twice as much of it" the new readers will have to pay more. If we had given you only Mr. Yeats's fourteen poems we would already have given you more literature than is to be found in the "four big" magazines since the beginning of our present volume.

Mr. Lewis, after having been in some heavy fighting is now in hospital, and that leisure has made sure the supply of his prose for some time. I have now at my elbow the first eighty-eight pages of the best book Ford Madox Hueffer has written. Why "the best book"? Five years ago Mr. Hueffer read me this manuscript, an unfinished work for which there was presumeably "no market". I read the typescript which was brought me last evening; so familiar is the text that I can scarcely convince myself that it is five years since I heard the even voice of the author pronouncing it. I do not think my memory is particularly good, I think there must be some quality in a man's style and matter if it is to stay fresh in another man's mind for so long. Mr. Hueffer's *Women and Men* will run in *The Little Review* from January 1918 to May 1919 inclusive, unless interfered with by force majeure. Perhaps it is not his best book.

Lest there be any confusion about Olivers, Madoxes, Madox Browns, Francis Hueffers, etc. Ford Madox Hueffer is the author of various novels, and of *The Heart of the Country*, *The Soul of London*, *Ancient Lights*, *Collected Poems*, of *On Heaven*, the first successful long poem in English vers libre, after Whitman. This poem appeared in *Poetry* for June 1914, and has certainly as much claim to permanence as, say, Meredith's *Love in the Valley*.

Besides his own achievement, Mr. Hueffer has done one definite service to English letters. This service is unquestioned, and recognition of it does not rest upon any personal liking or disliking of

* Repeated from the October number.

Mr. Hueffer's doctrines of writing. In 1908 he founded *The English Review*; for a year and a half he edited that magazine and during that time he printed work not only by the great men of letters, Anatole France, Thomas Hardy, Swinburne, Henry James, not only by men of public reputation like Wells, and Conrad and Bennett, but also by about all the younger men who have since made good. For example by Lewis (in 1909), and by other now well-known young men who have both made good and declined since that date. His editorship of the review marks a very definite period; at the end of it, as its glory was literary, not commercial, it was bought by certain jews, who thought Mr. Hueffer a damn fool (possibly because of his devotion to literature), and who gave the editorship into other hands. Comparison of current numbers of *The English Review* with the first numbers issued from 84 Holland Park Avenue, will give any thinking person all the data he wants in deciding between the folly of Hueffer and the folly of manufacturing, political hebrews. In fact, if a crime against literature could bring any shame upon that class of person, this family would go into penitence, which needless to say they will not. But the careful historian of literature will record and remember their shame. The files of the review being stored in the British Museum, the data will continue available. There will be no faking the records.

The Little Review is now the first effort to do comparatively what *The English Review* did during its first year and a half: that is, to maintain the rights and position of literature, I do not say in contempt of the public, but in spite of the curious system of trade and traders which has grown up with the purpose or result of interposing itself between literature and the public.

We act in spite of the public's utter impotence to get good literature for itself, and in despite of the efforts of the "trade" to satiate the public with a substitute, to still their appetite for literature by providing them, at a cheaper rate and more conveniently, with a swallowable substitute.

Whereanent a very successful journalist has said to me: We i. e. we journalists, are like mediums. People go to a spiritist séance and hear what they want to hear. It is the same with a leading article: we write so that the reader will find what he wants to find.

That is the root of the matter; there is good journalism and bad journalism, and journalism that "looks" like "literature" and literature etc

But the root of the difference is that in journalism the reader finds what he is looking for, what he, the reader wants; whereas

in literature he must find at least a part of what the author intended.

That is why "the first impression of a work of genius" is "nearly always disagreeable", at least to the "average man". The public loathe the violence done to their self-conceit whenever an author conveys to them an idea that is his, not their own.

This difference is lasting and profound. Even in the vaguest of poetry, or the vaguest music, where in a sense the receiver may, or must, make half the beauty he is to receive, there is always something of the author or composer which must be transmitted.

In journalism, or the "bad art" which is but journalism thinly disguised, there is no such strain on the public.

THE READER CRITIC

Longfellow's "Birthplace" is in the act of being preserved to the nation. The White House, the two living ex-whitehouses, the State of Maine (prohibition), the Senate (not dry by any long extended tradition), various governors, *not* including those of North and South Carolina, have spotted up their selected dollars, or perhaps being vice-presidents they have not been asked to spot up, for the reservation and preservation of the "rare old colonial mansion" inhabited by Longfellow before the birth of his whiskers. The house wherein this eminently moral and eminently proper and eminently "suitable for the school-child" luminary mewled and peuked, is to be taken on as national shrine, by the "International Longfellow Society", and the mortgage on it removed.

It is not proposed that the house should be made an official residence for some living Longfellow, some worthy, elderly, more or less broken-down emeritus; for let us say, Edwin Markham, who would, of course, ornament any shrine with a venerable and befitting appearance.

It is in fact an eloquent tribute to the popular lust after some place where they can leave orange peel, and feel that they have "shown reverence", without troubling their cerebra with such detail as standards of literature.

Longfellow was the ideal poet for a prohibitionist state. It is however interesting to note how the diverse pieties have gathered about his remains.

Cardinal O'Connel writes: "To all who love beautiful sentiments admirably expressed, the works of Longfellow are dear; but they are

especially dear to the hearts of Catholics. At a time when the Church was little understood and less appreciated, Longfellow, with true religious insight, placed before the reading public the fervor of the Church's spirit and the lofty idealism of its mission. His beautiful poems help to make our faith better understood and appreciated." ("Fervor" is, of course, le mot juste).

The United Society of Xtn. Endeavour writes: "I spent seven very happy years in Portland. . . . The site of this old home, and memories which it will arouse, will be an inspiration to many young people in all the future years, to live a worthy poem if they cannot write one."

Faithfully yours, *Francis E. Clark.*

Rabbi Enlow writes: "My admiration for the work of the poet makes my appreciation more keen. Longfellow, like Browning, was one of the poets who were alive to the grandeur and heroism of Jewish history, as is witnessed by several of his best-known poems. This has added to his popularity with Jewish readers."

(News Item: A point of similarity between Browning and Longfellow has at last been described on the horizon.—E. P.)

A Difference of Opinion

M. T., Chicago:

If you really do like criticisms, may I ask why you can't mix in with your London stuff a little other stuff? Perhaps the London stuff might be "shown up"? Well! In any event this is my sincere correct opinion: you need very badly a warmer quality in your magazine. I'm not speaking about "emotion", "human interest", "life", etc. But you cannot make me believe that Art is not vital. Now I am saying that there is very little which might truly be called vital in the last issue. The play of course is good. Bodenheim is readable—usually. However you can't depend on Bodenheim to put any of this "big fine sweep" into your pages. He is merely one of those happy "holidays" in a real snappy water-color.

A. S., New York:

"As for Bodenheim, he is so bone ignorant.

His general claim is passable, or good enough, but the needless remark about "words practically ignored by writers of Christian era" . . .

This is the kind of thing that weakens terribly. Bodenheim simply doesn't *know* any literature, foreign or english. Half the latins were of the christian era. Periods in Italian, Chinese, Gongorism in Spain, Euphuës in England, to say nothing of all the Mallarméen period in France, and the Parnassians. (To say nothing of Stirling sunk in a welter of verbosity and proclaimed by Bierce in America ten years ago!) All these sets of people intent on words, and most of them much more skilled in them than Bodenheim.

I don't mind his blowing off his rather unoriginal opinions, but sheer hoggish ignorance ought to be barred.

The Waley translations look to me the best Chinese we have had in English save a couple of things in "Cathay."

Ezra's Indian Summer

What was the tune you heard on the way
that you must dawdle here,
cut a reed like any truant,
cut crooked holes in the reed,
and dabble with burbling phrases
which can only tremble and halt
no matter how fearfully carefully you blow?
The tune you heard didn't limp?
Time, you're a dunce.
My word on it —
you should have, could have
breathed echo when the air was near —
now it's a wraith
beyond even tiny embodiment!
That amorphous haze,
arpeggic fall of those leaves,
glint of that bird — or was it a squirrel? —
they ought to preach your heedlessness —
had it been a rat it would have bitten you! —
no man can essay a pavanne
with his phrases at variance —

it is a pavanne, don't deny it!
And why propose a pavanne
when nobody dances pavannes,
and why ask a flute
to mime the tone of a spinet?
Dear dunce —
your tune begins to sound feminine —
go away —
the phrases are exquisite daggers —
move along, move along —
we have all sought the same lady twice!

Alfred Kreymborg

Advice to a Young Poet

The following letter may interest many aspiring poets:

"The opening sentence of your note shows a lamentable unfamiliarity with the work of Homer, Villon and Catullus . . . not to mention such lesser lights as Dante, Gautier, Cavalcanti, Li Po, Omar, Corbiere, or even Shakespeare (to cite a familiar example). You are evidently ignorant as Ham of both prose and poetry. You appear to have read next to nothing. Stendhal, Fielding, Flaubert, Brantome,—what have you read or studied anyhow?

How do you expect to make yourself interesting to men who have hammered their minds hard against this sort of thing?

And as for what is called "knowledge of the human heart"? It needs intellect as well as intuition.

If you knew more of what had been done, you wouldn't expect to make people fall before you in adoration of what you take to be "new and colourful combinations", but which people of wider reading find rather worn and unexciting.

You began with a certain gift, a sort of emotionée decorativeness, vide small boy by brick wall, impressions of scenes, etc. That's all very well, and very nice, but what the hell do you know or feel that we haven't known and felt already? On what basis do you propose to interest us?

There's plenty of this decoration in Spenser and Tasso, etc., etc., in French of the last half century, 1850—1900, etc. AND one is fed up with it.

If you could persuade yourself to read something, if you could persuade yourself really to find out a little about the art you dab at . . . you might at the end of five years send me something interesting.

The fact that you like pretty things does not distinguish you from 500,000 other people, young impressionist painters still doing not-quite-Monet, etc., etc.

Lewis, Joyce, Eliot all give me something I shouldn't have noticed for myself.

You won't better your art by refusing to recognize that at twenty-four you haven't knocked the world flat with admiration of your talents. You simply haven't begun the process by which the young person of temperament hammers itself into an artist (or into nothing, depending on the capacity for being self-hammered inherent in the personal substance).

You might begin on Aristotle's *Poetics*, Longinus "on the Sublime, Dante's *De Vulgari Eloquentia*. Scattered remarks of Coleridge and De Quincey, and the early elizabethan critics would do you no harm. You also need to educate yourself, as said above, in both prose and poetry.

Because the native American has nearly always been too lazy to take these preliminary steps, we have had next to no native writing worth anything.

Mastering an art does not consist in trying to bluff people. Work shows; there is no substitute for it; holding one theory or another doesn't in the least get a man over the difficulty, etc., etc.

Poetry has run off into Gongorism, conceits, etc., at various times, odd words, strained metaphors and comparisons, etc., etc. We know perfectly well all about that. At twenty I emitted the same kind of asinine generalities regarding Christianity and its beauties that you now let off about poetry."

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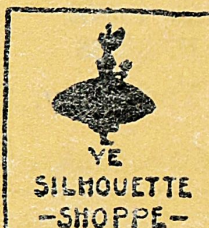
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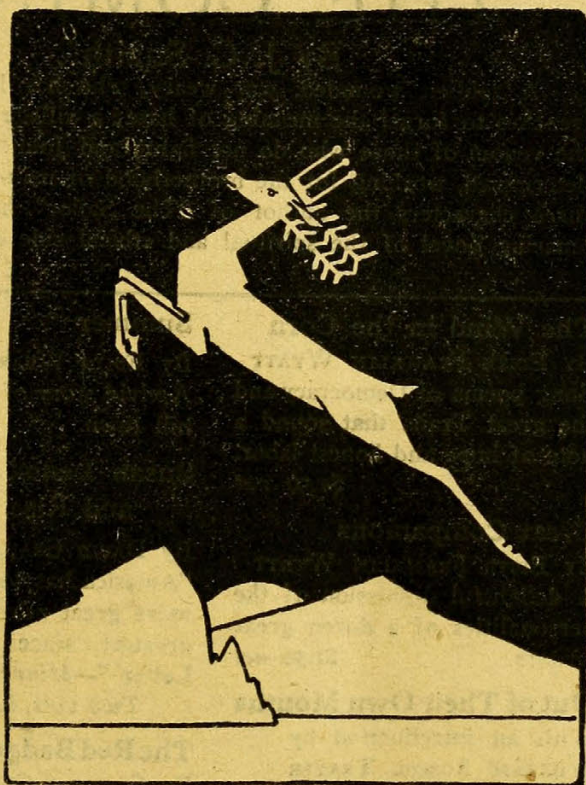
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