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PLATES

ALVIN LANGDON COBURN.

I. Wier's Close — Edinburgh.
II. The Bridge — Sunlight.
III. After the Blizzard.
IV. Decorative Study.
V. The Bridge — London.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW.

VI. Portrait of Alvin Langdon Coburn.
"PAST THE WIT OF MAN TO SAY WHAT DREAM IT WAS."

How I found my way thither, I have no idea. Who can explain the manner of coming and going in a dream? And, as I look back upon it, a dream it must have been: one of those fantastic visions that one wakes from, to wonder what could have started such a medley of foolishness and how things non-existent could seem to have had such a semblance of reality.

No, strictly speaking, it was not an arsenal, my guide explained; nor a sportsman's gun-room, for I had observed the racks of guns and rows of lockers that seemed to be the chief furniture of the place; nor a collector's museum of curios, for I further noticed that the guns were of various times and sizes and makes, some dusty with age, others smart and perky, many of very strange construction, but all, fortunately, labeled, as were the lockers.

"Well, then"—I began inquiringly. But my guide touched me on the lips, not roughly, yet with a decision that checked my babble. Then, bringing his mouth close to my ear, he whispered in a voice so mysterious and bated that it seemed less like articulated speech than like the echo of a breath, "It's the Temple of Criticism!"

I think it is to my credit that I was "on to him," as we say in our wanton waking moments, "like a breeze." Instinctively I assumed something of his reverential behavior; my knees sagged a little, my shoulders hunched themselves humbly, and I heard a voice that I should not have recognized as my own but for the spasm in my throat as it rumbled forth, "How interesting!"

My changed demeanor was not lost upon my guide; he turned upon me a gaze such as one sees in a horse's eyes before he has the staggers, as with suppressed emotion he murmured, "Very."

Nothing further passed between us for some minutes. There was no need of speech. These few words had established between us a sympathetic understanding. Of what, I cannot tell you; nor did I know then—indeed, I remember we seemed to be in a vacuum from which thought had been exhausted. What need was there of thought, when we had such a mutuality of understanding? It was very soothing.

So we stood; how long I know not; time does not enter as a consideration into these finer raptures. Then I slid into a consciousness of the place. There was a shocking draught, and yet the Temple, I noticed, had no windows. Nor roof, either; one looked up into what seemed an endless cylinder, and soon I realized that the Temple was a huge Leyden jar. This explained the previous sensation of being in a vacuum, and the present one of being in a draught, for now the lid was off. The temple was on a lofty eminence, far up in the clouds; and some of these were flocking in at the top, slowly surging round and round and settling in layers like clammy fleeces, so that the atmosphere became chill and oppressive.
I turned to my companion, but his look, that lately had expressed such rapture of soul-communion, now discouraged intimacy. He seemed as if oppressed with ponderous thought. His brows had settled down upon his eyes in bristly ridges and furrows, and his lips, pressed firmly together, made a line of ridges parallel with his brows. And even while I watched him, the latter, yielding to their weight of thought, descended slowly till they mingled with his mouth; his chin sank into his chest; his chest into his stomach; his stomach into his legs; and his legs, I suppose, into themselves. For the whole figure was closing down upon itself, until at last it squatted on the floor like a toad, with one lustrous but expressionless eye. This, however, I discovered shortly was a fancy button on the lapel of his coat. For now the figure began to lengthen up again, as slowly as it had sunk. Again the clouds were rising, and my companion gradually resumed his stature. But the remarkableness of the phenomenon did not stop here; for the air was sucked up by the retreating clouds—at least this seemed to be the explanation at the time—and once more a vacuum was formed in which my companion, leaving the floor, began to float with a soulful smile upon his face and affected gestures of the limbs, that reminded me of Perugino's Angels.

By this time, I had no need of a guide. As one got used to the atmosphere of the place, it had the remarkable effect of creating in one a consciousness of “knowing it all,” so that although I witnessed many strange things, they were quite intelligible and seemed to be even reasonable. It was such an atmosphere as I had never experienced before and never expect to find anywhere else. Indeed, it was this virtue that gave to the Temple its sacred character and induced in its habitual devotees those alternating phases of elated rapture and of compressed turgidity. But the Temple had another function. It was also a laboratory in which the members practised their own peculiar kind of scientific research; a court of no appeal, in which they sat as judge and jury, and a sort of Inquisition butcher-shop, in which truth was ascertained by torture and the guilty were treated to their deserts.

For other persons began to appear. The patients, or were they victims?—I was not quite clear upon this point—were brought in by the Temple-members. There was a constant coming and going and much diversity in the manner thereof. For example, some were dragged in by their whiskers or long hair, protesting bitterly; others bore a look of sullen contempt as, propelled by kicks, they spun through the air and alighted on the floor. Others, on the contrary, were ushered in with bows and smiles and seated ceremoniously on a throne, while the Temple-members stood around, saluting in the Japanese manner with repeated bowings, and cantillating a choral-song of adulation. Some of these favored persons accepted the homage with serious complacency, and when, at the conclusion of the chorus, a chalice filled with melted butter and molasses was handed to them, sucked the mixture down, licked the sides of the chalice with their fat tongues and held out the vessel for another filling. But there were others that, as the
recital of their excellences proceeded, looked bored and, at the passing of the cup, waved it away with deprecatory fannings of their hands, as if their stomachs revolted at the slimy stuff.

These recipients of flattery, it appears, were persons whose reputation was so big that it was policy to enhance it, or persons, on the other hand, whose merits were so much beyond the comprehension of the Temple-members that they saved their faces by excess of appreciation.

But, as one grew acquainted with the Temple practices, it was more and more a matter of wonder that many persons actually made their own way into the place and begged to be examined and pronounced upon. There were many methods of procedure, but the one which seemed most in favor, whether the person were a voluntary or involuntary patient, consisted of two parts—the diagnosis and the treatment.

"Placing the subject" was, I discovered, the technical expression for the former. And now I found the use of what I had supposed to be lockers. When pulled out, like the drawers in a card-catalogue, they proved to be six feet long and resembled sarcophagi. That is to say, their insides contained a hollow for the reception of a body: practically, they were matrices of human forms. And, if you ran your eye along the rows of labels, you realized that the Temple was also a huge catacomb, filled with rows upon rows of empty shapes, molded from life or from what the Temple-members had imagined of the figures of those long dead.

Scarcely had I recovered from the surprise of this discovery, than I recognized the ingenuity of the contrivance as a formula for exact criticism. The patient, having been laid upon a sort of operating-table, was looked over by the experts, who, according to the particular bias of their spirit of research, would thumb and pinch and probe his flesh, turn back his eyelids, or draw out his tongue with tweezers and explore the laryngeal cavity. Then would follow a solemn pause, as if each were waiting for some one else to venture the word. Chafing under the strain of silence, a member would hazard the name of some master, dead or living, whereat, maybe, the whole membership would wag their heads in assent and, gaining courage from one another, vociferate the master's name. But more often the venturesomeness of the first silence-breaker would arouse dissent, which, under cover of the general confusion, would assert itself in pops of sound about the circle, as one or another propounded his diagnosis.

Then, in either case, whether of dissent or unanimity, the diagnosis was put to the test. If unanimity prevailed, the sarcophagus of that particular master was drawn out and the patient carried from the table and put therein. If any part of his figure failed to fill the mold, it was marked with tailors' blue chalk, while such parts as proved refractory by their size were squeezed and shoved and pinched into place, so that they were sufficiently indicated by the black-and-blue bruises. Then the patient was laid again on the table and subjected to a series of injections and blood-lettings that respectively enlarged and reduced the parts so as to secure a better fit. He suffered a good deal in the process, but what of that? It was no good for him to
repeat in gradually fainter accents that he was Washington P. Smith, as the case might be, and didn’t aspire to be Michelangelo Buonarroti. The Temple-members owed a duty to the Public, the Press, and Themselves, and they performed it.

Sometimes, however, they tempered duty with tenderness. The patient, you see, might be a fellow clubman of one or another of the experts, or a person of some social importance, or in hard luck, or the friend of some one else whose interest it was the interest of some other body’s interest that the experts should consider. In cases such as this, while the membership as a body did its duty, it was recognized as expedient, and, therefore, correct that individuals should assuage the patient’s suffering with ointments and cooling sprays, or, in certain special cases, administer an anesthetic before the operation and apply such assuagements of discomfort afterward, that neither his friends nor himself would know that he had been operated on at all.

But in the majority of cases there was no tenderness displayed. Nor always rigor. To many patients that applied for treatment, no attention whatever was paid, and they wandered out again disconsolately into the unknown. Many others, too, who had been haled into the Temple, rounded-up in the course of a rush around the town and marked with a tick to be examined later, were crowded out of attention by lack of time or space. A few might be hastily herded into batches and marked like cattle with some of the branding-irons that hung handy; but, further than that, there was no effort to “place” them, and they were turned loose again with the still greater number that failed to receive even such curt discrimination.

It was with those, however, who were found difficult to “place” that the rigor was busiest and brutalest. They were too big for this mold, too short for others; respectively, too fat, too lean, too angular, too curved, and I know not what. The creak of each grim sarcophagus as it was drawn out; the groans of the patient as he was rammed into one and then another; the snapping of tendons as his legs were stretched upon the rack; the thud of mallets on his muscles and the crunching of the bones by the reducing-forceps; the poor, limp pulp of humanity that lay upon the table, palpitating and twitching, while the Temple-members paused to wipe the sweat from their faces—I shudder even now as I recall the horror. Nor did it end here, for they who finally baffled the effort to “place” them, were fastened up, Sebastian-like, against a pillar, while each member selected from the gun-racks, according to his fancy or convictions. Various, indeed, were the projectiles discharged upon those unhappy victims—duckshot, buckshot, grape, and slugs. There were also diverse kinds of squirt-guns for the propulsion of acids, pulverized dirt, and foul gases. One member had a little gun, of devilish ingenuity, that worked like a miniature gatling, emitting, with extraordinary rapidity, a shower of pin-darts. These, by a skilful action of his wrist, he directed so that they were pricked into the cushion of lacerated flesh, in the shape of an insulting epithet. But even his colleagues, hardened as they were to inflicting pain, seemed to disapprove of the gratuitous fiendishness of this proceeding.
Yet I noticed, on the other hand, that the more self-respecting the
patient might be, the more distinctive and dignified his general bearing, the
more fierce was the fusillade with which they all assailed him. One man
was markedly superior to the majority, and there was not a gun or squirt in
the whole arsenal that was not emptied at him.

However, the dreary horror of the proceedings was interrupted by a
comical incident. There entered a small creature, a mere child, but having
an air of self-esteem and quite extraordinary self-possession.

"I'm Photy," he said in reply to their inquiries.

"Photy what?" they asked.

"Photy Graphy," was the quick response, uttered as if it explained
everything.

"Ahem, my little man," said one, "I think you have lost your way."

"Guess not," he answered pertly; "ain't this the criticism-shop?"

"The Temple of Criticism," some one gravely corrected.

"Well, I ain't quarreling over words," responded the Kid. It was
curious how his pert words belied the gravity and sweet purpose of his face.

"Call it what yer like, but I'm here to be diagnosed."

There was a little ripple of sound, as the amusement of the Temple-
members declared itself.

"And what is your medium, my dear?" said one old fellow.

The Kid produced a box with a bellows-arrangement like a concertina.

"Ah, musical, I see!" exclaimed the group.

"Not on yer life," replied the Kid—"pictorial." It would be hard to
describe the empressement—I am compelled to use a French term—that the
Kid put into that one word. Some of these hardened experts even shivered,
as well they might, for it preluded one of those novelties that are always so
disturbing to the level tenor of criticism.

"What do you call this thing?" they asked, touching the box gingerly,
as if they feared it might go off.

"A camera."

Some searched the shelves, others, the big encyclopedias and diction-
aries that were stacked around.

"We don't know it," they said; "there is no precedent for it here."

"That's why I fetched it around," was the Kid's naive reply; "I
thought you might be interested."

The company shook their heads. The child had yet to learn that
precedent and tradition were the dogmas of the Temple.

"And what do you do with this mechanical toy?" was asked.

"Express myself," replied the Kid. I wish you could have seen the
flash in his eyes and the way he drew up his little back as he said this.

"Rot," said a tall, lean man with a look of settled discontent upon his
face. "Damned rot," he added, as he worked himself into a rage, after
which he took the floor and delivered himself of a violent harangue, the pur-
port of it being that, what had not existed in the past, could not be conceived
of as having any right to existence in the present or the future.
The Temple-brethren wagged their heads in assent. It was their Credo and they reverently subscribed to it, while the child, over whom this torrent of argument was poured, smiled absently, as if he, too, despite his tender age, had heard this sort of talk before.

Indeed, the Kid’s possession of a mens conscia recti was so noticeable that one of the Temple-members — for even in critics, the desire to know more than they have hitherto known is not entirely dead — inquired what they could do for him.

“Well, just diagnose me,” he said.

The member smiled, not unkindly, as he waved his hand toward the sarcophagi. “They are all too big for you.”

“But I’ve brought along my little box,” replied the Kid, presenting his camera; “you can ‘place’ me in my little box.”

“It’s where you belong,” snarled the tall, lean man; “but your little box has no place here.”

The Kid looked pained.

“You must grow up to be a painter-man,” said the kindlier member, “then we’ll place you fast enough.”

“But I don’t want to be a painter-man,” the Kid replied ruefully. “I want to work with my little camera. I’m already getting to be able to do all kinds of things with it, and I think I shall soon do more.”

The simple answer seemed to them a very labyrinth of sophistication. They explained to him at much length — I was astonished at their patience — that there are certain recognized mediums of pictorial expression, and they are final. To bring forward another is to upset the whole equilibrium of preconceived ideas, which is absurd.

The tall, lean member went a step further in analytical precision.

“The brush and pencil, the burin and etching-needle,” he observed gravely, “have the indorsement of science as well as of art. Each represents a straight line, the shortest distance between two points, between the brain of the artist and its expression on paper or canvas. This box is of quadrilateral formation. No artist would go around corners to reach directness of expression.”

And the tall, lean member turned wearily away, with the air of one who has attained to the finality of truth. Indeed, his proposition was so self-evident that a deep chorus of amens resounded through the Temple. It did not seem to impress the Kid.

“I guess you are not on to my point of view,” he said.

Sharply, as if he had been stung by a mosquito, the tall, lean man turned on his heel, then strode forward to the Kid. Over the shock of hair that reached no higher than his waist he sawed his index-finger up and down, as if he were splitting kindling-wood.

“Your point of view, you manikin. Who cares a tinker’s trouser-button what you think you are aiming at? The only point of view that is conceivable is the one that is formulated in the Temple.”
“And that is Legion,” replied the Kid, looking up with a mischievous grin.

The tall, lean member gasped, but at this point a fat and pleasant gentleman intervened.

“Let’s hear the Kid,” he said; “it will be food for easy mirth.”

“And for gibes,” added the fiendishly-inclined, toying with the handle of his gatling.

For a moment, it seemed as if the Kid would be permitted a hearing. But now one of the members began to drum upon a gong till the air rocked with its din; speech was impossible, and one had much ado to breathe.

It was the great argument-squelcher, handed down in the Temple from hoar antiquity, its most cherished and sacred possession. Any one of the members might sound that gong in cases of extremity, either to drown the opposition of the outer world or to quell discussions within the Temple itself.

The din gradually dissolved and left the members mute as oysters. Any ordinary patient would have taken the hint and retired, but the Kid held his ground.

“J’y suis, j’y reste,” he piped.

Such indifference to authority in one so young was appalling.

They rolled out of a dark corner the great gun, seldom needed and only used in last resort—the Big Bombaster. They directed its wide, brazen mouth at the Kid and trained it down to his small stature.

At this moment the Temple-lid arose and the clouds descended in clammy layers. The members sank into themselves till their forms squatted, toad-like, about the dark floor.

A flash and an explosion—the Kid and his little box had disappeared.

I awoke. It was “a most rare vision.”

Charles H. Caffin.
THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE CURVE.

The inability of artists and critics to satisfactorily explain why some kinds of lines appear to us beautiful, and others ugly, has encouraged the scientific men to attempt the solution of the problem on a purely materialistic basis. There are several such explanations, but the most generally accepted is the physiological one—the kinesthetic theory. It holds that the esthetic sensations we feel when looking at the outlines of objects lie not in their being intrinsically beautiful or ugly—it denies the existence of abstract qualities of beauty—but in the physical pleasure or discomfort certain muscles of the eye derive from the exercise of directing it in its efforts to follow the movements of those same curves, straight lines, and angles.

To explain: Attached to the back of the eyeball are muscles whose coordinate action enables us to direct the eye where we choose. The theory claims that these muscles are in more constant use than we would imagine, for it so happens that the retina of the eye is not equally sensitive over its whole surface; it is only capable of clear vision on a very small area at its center, and, to understand the appearance of any given object, it is necessary to carefully scan it so as to bring every part into this "field of clear vision"—which means, of course, much muscular activity. To even grasp the construction of the simplest geometrical pattern, it is said that we must exactly trace each of its lines and angles. The consequence of all this is that if we study a pattern which contains many similar forms, thus requiring the frequent repetition of the same muscular (kinesthetic) action, the eye becomes fatigued; or, if the forms are so arranged that there is brought into play only one set of muscles to the exclusion of the others, the eye is similarly fatigued. Nor would it appear to take much to tire these little bundles of flesh; a series of vertical lines, or of horizontal, or even a single vertical connected with a horizontal line into a right-angle, is distressing to behold. In the case of the right-angle the eye uses first the muscles at the two extremes of one axis, and then abruptly shifts the burden to those attached to the other axis, and this sudden change appears to be irritating. Jumps and breaks also irritate, but oblique lines are soothing, for, owing to the situation of the muscles, it is necessary to use several at the same time, thus not throwing too great a strain on any single one. Looking at curves, however, gives the greatest pleasure, not merely because all the muscles are employed, but every instant a lesser or greater portion of work falls to each, and this rhythmic change of labor is gratifying. Ellipses, possessing more variety of curve than the circle, are more satisfying; parabolas still more so, and so forth.

In other words, this physiological theory of beauty maintains that, although the muscles in the eye are willing to do their work, yet, like human beings, they want to do as little of it as possible, and to do it in the easiest and most comfortable way, and, if they are flattered, they call things...
delightful and beautiful; but if they are annoyed, they say things are horrid and ugly.

Now, while admitting that some of what we term beauty of line may be due to kinesthetic pleasure or pain, I deny that these kinesthetic sensations are the whole, or even more than a very small part of the causation of the feeling of beauty. The eye, unless it is expressly forced to do so, never looks at objects in this exact mathematical way, and, although it is not equally sensitive over its whole surface, yet it can and does see sufficiently well (aided by guess-work and past experience, I admit) to almost instantly — before it has had a chance to move and bring into play the muscles — recognize the difference between curves and angles, and also between curves and curves, and this sufficiently exactly to enjoy or dislike accordingly. The truth of my assertions becomes evident the moment we view diagrams of geometrical patterns under the illumination of the electric spark. The duration of the spark is so short that the eye can not possibly move, yet it recognizes distinctly what it sees: Hogarth’s curve as well as all other kinds. Also, when watching the cinematograph, our vision is of the same order.

The truth seems to me to lie in a totally different direction. Beauty of line I believe to be a matter of association—an association with those animal movements which express joy, pride, strength, and life. But in advancing this theory I make no claim that it is entirely new, only I have carried its roots down deeper; and I also contend that beauty is, in its relation to man, an absolute quality, and not, as is so generally held by scientists, a relative one.

It appears, according to anatomical investigation, that when we (human beings) feel pleasure, we exhibit this pleasure by the use of the extensor muscles; when we feel pain, we exhibit it by the use of the constrictor muscles. (The extensor muscles are those which raise, expand, and stretch out; the constrictor, those which contract and depress.) Now, while we are employing the extensor muscles, the contours of our features and body become curved and stretch out; while we are employing the constrictor muscles, the contours of our body and features become straight, angular, and contracted. This is so true that we rarely seek any other evidence to determine whether those around us are happy or miserable than that furnished by their curves and angles. When we see a face in which the lines are curved up—that is, in which the corners of the eyebrows and eyes and mouth are raised, and the cheeks are curved out—we know that the possessor of those curves is under the influence of a pleasurable sensation—or assuming to be so; while, if these same corners droop and the lines run down, we recognize the cause to be a disagreeable one. (Note that the kinesthetic theory takes no cognizance of lines that run up, or lines that run down; to it they are the same—they are merely oblique.) When men are in pain, their movements are jerky and angular, and their outlying members are drawn in to themselves, as it were: the teeth are set, the eyebrows are lowered, the hands are clenched, and the arms contracted toward the body, and possibly the legs are doubled in; every muscle that pulls downward and together seems
to be brought into action. And who of us has not observed that in old age and under the influence of sorrow, action is slow and even, the head and limbs droop, and although the constrictor muscles may not be used, yet the extensor muscles have become lax. But, in the young and joyful, the head is lifted and thrown back, the chest curved out, the arms are raised and waved in quick but curved motions, and so, too, the legs; the constrictor muscles are employed the minimum amount, and the extensor the maximum.

This habit of judging by flesh-shapes is so habitual to us that we not infrequently lead ourselves astray: we often think that fat men and women, with their faces and bodies all puffed into curves, are contented, when on occasions they may be quite the reverse; and hollow-cheeked, angular people can be really joyful when we are considering them morose. Nor do we, in our "reasoning by analogy," stop here: certain of the "moods" of trees and landscapes are but the result of our unconscious and fallacious reasoning. The weeping willow, for example, has always been held to be an emblem of sorrow; the curves of its drooping branches suggest sorrow, and we feel its presence in the graveyard to be in harmony with the surroundings; the elm, on the other hand, somehow does not fit there so well. A series of long, low, horizontal clouds in the sky, suggesting lack of motion, particularly when the horizon of the landscape is also a long horizontal line, are productive of a feeling of melancholy, and this even when the sun is shining over all; but the moment the long clouds are replaced by a large cumulus, with its mountainous curves, all sadness disappears and joy takes its place. The slowly undulating curves of the hills in the American Berkshires are apt to be dreary, while the pointed peaks of Switzerland express energy. And further: not merely do we let the forms in landscape influence our feelings, but the outlines of the furniture in our houses act in the same way, although not nearly so strongly—except when they are very ugly.

It may be objected to my argument that the color and "effect" of a landscape cause the very mental phenomena I am attributing to line. True, so they do, and color in landscape, just as in a picture, is sometimes the more powerful element; but other things being equal, line acts exactly as I have described, as may easily be proven by studying different portions of a landscape under the same effect of light. According to my reasoning, then, it would appear that line, in the human being, is but the physical and visible expression of the emotions, and that similar emotions we unconsciously imagine inanimate objects to be possessed of, that is, when their lines in the slightest degree correspond to those of the human figure. Also, we find these lines, in man or nature, beautiful or ugly, or sad or joyful, just as they happen to express beautiful, or sad, or ugly feelings, and we enjoy them accordingly.

But there is a deeper and more profound meaning in line than all this. The most recent biological research gives the key to a far-extending conception of the significance of curves and angles. It appears that in the vorticella, as well as all one-celled organisms, there are no extensor muscles;
these only exist in more highly evolved forms of life. "The history of the motor function," writes the French physiologist Bridon, "starts from a primitive stage, where only the constrictor muscle exists. The extensor muscle becomes differentiated from this primitive form by insensible transition; later it affirms its predominance, becomes supple, and is perfected in turn. Each phase of this development corresponds to a parallel degree of affective evolution. The heart can manifest only the violence of passion, the momentary agitation of life. . . . Every perfecting of the motor function, every step in the organic hierarchy, adds its note and its tonality to the expression of feeling. In its totality, the progress of the neuromuscular apparatus expresses the joy of living, the continued elevation of desire and sympathy. Under the influence of grief, or of depressing or morbid acts, life takes no new direction; it persists in its optimistic will and its tendency to rise." In other words, those muscles which express the feelings of joy are lacking in the lower animals; they only gradually become developed as evolution progresses to the higher states, and are the material expression of an increasing joy in life, of that force metaphysicians refer to as the desire to live, and it is this expression of the desire to live that so palpably evinces itself in curved forms. Therefore: Beauty of line is the physical expression of advance and of the desire to live; and, conversely: Ugliness of line is the expression of depression and pessimism and death.

There is a practical application in the above philosophy. In selecting and arranging motifs for pictures the greatest care should be taken to see that the quality of line harmonizes with the character of the subject. Children, in whom the desire to live is intense, and whose moon-faces and round eyes strongly express this same desire, should be dressed in puffs and fluffs and frills, the curves of which help to carry out the feeling of joy; their arms and legs should be spread and, if possible, in such a manner as to indicate motion. The background should contain few, or no curves, and this for the sake of contrast. If straight lines are used in the background, the horizontal should be avoided as much as possible, for they express neither motion nor life; the vertical are better. Very fat men should never be portrayed sitting. They should always be made to stand, with the paunch well exposed and silhouetted, the head thrown back, one arm akimbo, and a smile on the face. They may object, but that is of no account. Fat women are at their best when an enormous flouncing and encircling skirt repeats the joyful lines of their busts and faces. Old people, in whom the desire to live has begun to ebb, look most in harmony with themselves when their pose is somewhat angular, and a few large, gentle curves on the background, indicating what they have passed, contrast well. If old people are very fat and, at the same time, morose and dejected in facial expression, they should not be portrayed at all; they jar, from the artistic standpoint; only thin people have a right to look morose.

In landscape the same principles hold: A garden, with winding walks, rolling lawns, circular ponds, rounded rocks, long-necked swans, playing fountains, pear-shaped trees, arching arbors, curving flowers and willowy
maidens, is a typical expression of joy, and when painted by the old masters, was always represented as luxuriating beneath the dome of a cumulous cloud. The Japanese put architecture in which the lines of the roofs arise, instead of drop, into their gardens, and this adds to the joyousness of effect. Gardens, however, are not considered very paintable in the present day. On the other hand, we associate sadness in landscape with the straight, motionless pine and its drooping branches, with pointed and angular crags and level clouds. The desert and prairie, in their unbroken horizontalism, make us think of what is gloomy, and of death.

Roland Rood.
EDUARD J. STEICHEN.
I. Experiment in Three-color Photography.
BERNARD SHAW'S APPRECIATION OF COBURN.

During the months of February and March of the present year, an exhibition of Mr. Alvin Langdon Coburn's photographs took place in the rooms of the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain, London. The exhibition aroused unusual interest, not only through the actual merit of the work shown by this Photo-Secessionist, but through the exceptionally enthusiastic Appreciation from the pen of Bernard Shaw prefacing the catalogue. The Appreciation has made copy for virtually every photographic magazine in the English language, and has also appeared as an original contribution in one of our prominent New York popular monthlies. We nevertheless feel impelled to reprint it, not only as a matter of record—Coburn being one of the leading spirits in the class of photography we are so deeply interested in—but because it is especially opportune in this number.—Editor.

Mr. ALVIN LANGDON COBURN is one of the most accomplished and sensitive artist-photographers now living. This seems impossible at his age—twenty-three; but as he began at eight, he has fifteen years' technical experience behind him. Hence, no doubt, his remarkable command of the one really difficult technical process in photography—printing. Technically, good negatives are more often the result of the survival of the fittest than of special creation: the photographer is like the cod which produces a million eggs in order that one may reach maturity. The ingenuity of development which are so firmly believed in by old hands who still use slow "ordinary" plates and develop them in light enough to fog a modern fast color-sensitive plate in half a second, do not seem to produce any better results than the newer timing system which is becoming compulsory now that plates are panchromatic and dark-rooms must be really dark. The latitude of modern plates and films, especially those with fast emulsions superimposed on slow ones, may account partly for the way in which workers like Mr. Evans get bright windows and dark corners on the same plate without overexposure in the one or underexposure in the other. And as to choosing the picture, that is not a manipulative accomplishment at all. It can be done by a person with the right gift at the first snapshot as well as at the last contribution to The Salon by a veteran. But printing remains the test of the genuine expert. Very few photographers excel in more than one process. Among our best men the elder use platinotype almost exclusively for exhibition work. People who can not see the artistic qualities of Mr. Evans' work say that he is "simply" an extraordinarily skilful platinotype printer, and that anybody's negatives would make artistic pictures if he printed them. The people who say this have never tried (I have); but there is no doubt about the excellence of the printing. Mr. Horsley Hinton not only excels in straightforward platinotype printing, but practices dark dexterities of combination printing, putting the Jungfrau into your back garden without effort, and being able, in fact, to do anything with his methods except explain them intelligibly to his envious disciples. The younger men are gumists, and are reviled as "splodgers" by the generation which can not work the gum process.
But Mr. Coburn uses and adapts both processes with an instinctive skill and range of effect which makes even expert photographers, after a few wrong guesses, prefer to ascertain how his prints are made by the humble and obvious method of asking him. The device of imposing a gum-print on a platinotype—a device which has puzzled many critics, and which was originally proposed as a means of subduing contrast (for which, I am told, it is of no use)—was seized on by Mr. Coburn as a means of getting a golden-brown tone, quite foreign to pure or chemically-toned platinotype, whilst preserving the feathery delicacy of the platinotype image. Lately, having condescended to oil-painting as a subsidiary study, he has produced some photographic portraits of remarkable force, solidity, and richness of color by multiple printing in gum. Yet it is not safe to count on his processes being complicated. Some of his finest prints are simple bromide enlargements, though they do not look in the least like anybody else's enlargements. In short, Mr. Coburn gets what he wants one way or another. If he sees a certain quality in a photogravure which conveys what he wants, he naively sets to work to make a photogravure exactly as a schoolboy with a Kodak might set to work with a shilling packet of P. O. P. He improvises variations on the three-color process with casual pigments and a single negative taken on an ordinary plate. If he were examined by the City and Guilds Institute, and based his answers on his own practice, he would probably be removed from the classroom to a lunatic asylum. It is his results that place him hors concours.

But, after all, the decisive quality in a photographer is the faculty of seeing certain things and being tempted by them. Any man who makes photography the business of his life can acquire technique enough to do anything he really wants to do; where there's a will there's a way. It is Mr. Coburn's vision and susceptibility that make him interesting, and make his fingers clever. Look at his portrait of Mr. Gilbert Chesterton, for example! "Call that technique? Why, the head is not even on the plate. The delineation is so blunt that the lens must have been the bottom knocked out of a tumbler, and the exposure was too long for a vigorous image." All this is quite true; but just look at Mr. Chesterton himself! He is our Quinbus Flestrin, the young Man Mountain, a large, abounding, gigantically cherubic person who is not only large in body and mind beyond all decency, but seems to be growing larger as you look at him—"swellin' visibly," as Tony Weller puts it. Mr. Coburn has represented him as swelling off the plate in the very act of being photographed, and blurring his own outlines in the process. Also, he has caught the Chestertonian resemblance to Balzac, and unconsciously handled his subject as Rodin handled Balzac. You may call the placing of the head on the plate wrong, the focusing wrong, the exposure wrong, if you like, but Chesterton is right, and a right impression of Chesterton is what Mr. Coburn was driving at. If you consider that result merely a lucky blunder, look at the portrait of Mr. Bernard Partridge! There is no lack of vigor in that image; it is deliberately weighted by comparative underexposure (or its equivalent in
underdevelopment), and the result is a powerfully characteristic likeness. Look again at the profile portrait of myself *en penseur*, a mere strip of my head. Here the exposure is precisely right, and the definition exquisite without the least hardness. These three portraits were all taken with the same lens in the same camera, under similar circumstances. But there is no reduction of three different subjects to a common technical denominator, as there would have been if Franz Hals had painted them. It is the technique that has been adapted to the subject. With the same batch of films, the same lens, the same camera, the same developer, Mr. Coburn can handle you as Bellini handled everybody; as Hals handled everybody; as Gainsborough handled everybody; or as Holbein handled everybody, according to his vision of you. He is free of that clumsy tool—the human hand—which will always go its own single way and no other. And he takes full advantage of his freedom instead of contenting himself, like most photographers, with a formula that becomes almost as tiresome and mechanical as manual work with a brush or crayon.

In landscape he shows the same power. He is not seduced by the picturesque, which is pretty cheap in photography and very tempting. He drives at the poetic, and invariably seizes something that plunges you into a mood, whether it is a mass of cloud brooding over a river, or a great lump of a warehouse in a dirty street. There is nothing morbid in his choices. The mood chosen is often quite a holiday one; only not exactly a Bank Holiday: rather the mood that comes in the day's work of a man who is really a free worker and not a commercial slave. But anyhow, his impulse is always to convey a mood and not to impart local information, or to supply pretty views and striking sunsets. This is done without any impoverishment or artification. You are never worried with that infuriating academicism which already barnacles photography so thickly—selections of planes of sharpness, conventions of compositions, suppression of detail, and so on. Mr. Coburn goes straight over all that to his mark, and does not make difficulties until he meets them, being, like most joyous souls, in no hurry to bid the devil good morning. And so, good luck to him, and to all artists of his stamp.

G. Bernard Shaw.
PLATES

GEORGE H. SEELEY.

I. No Title.

II. No Title.
PHOTO-SECESSION NOTES.

THE LITTLE GALLERIES.

THE series of exhibitions held at the Little Galleries of the Photo-Secession was brought to a close May first. As Mr. Caffin proposes to deal with the series as a whole in the next issue of Camera Work, we shall merely enumerate the exhibitions as they were held and not recorded in the last number of this publication.

Exhibition IV was devoted to the work of Mrs. Gertrude Kasebier, of New York; and of Mr. Clarence H. White, Newark, Ohio. Each was represented by twenty-seven prints.

Exhibition V consisted of British work. Mr. J. Craig Annan, of Glasgow, Scotland, was represented by a series of portraits, landscapes, studies, etc., etc.; Mr. Frederick H. Evans, of London, by a series of his well-known architectural subjects; and D. O. Hill, R.S.A., deceased, by a remarkable collection of photographic portraits made some sixty years ago.

Exhibition VI was devoted to the photographic work of Eduard J. Steichen, taking place simultaneously with his one-man show of paintings at the Glaenzer Galleries. Both exhibitions were brilliant successes artistically. This juxtaposition of mediums was of itself an interesting event, and the fact that the selling-power of the photographs reached the brilliant success of the paintings is another milestone passed upon the road to appreciative recognition of photography by art-collectors and connoisseurs.

Exhibition VII consisted of the work of the Viennese Trifolium, Messrs. Kühn, Henneberg, and Watzek (deceased), and of one print by the Germans, Theodore and Oscar Hofmeister, of Hamburg. Eighteen pictures were hung; fifteen were large multiple gums (Kühn, ten; Henneberg, three; Watzek, one), and three platinotypes by Kühn. Most of the pictures shown in this collection were of unusual importance as prints, in fact, were remarkable from every point of view.

During the five months that the seven exhibitions were open—they were closed evenings, Sundays, and holidays—the galleries were visited by 15,000 people. In all 384 prints were hung on the walls; of these 249 were for sale and no fewer than 61 found purchasers at an average price of $45.86 per print, equal to $2797.46 for the total sales. It is gratifying to note that most of the pictures went to collectors who have begun to realize that photographic prints have an individual value, and that there is generally a vast difference in the quality of those made from one and the same negative.

THE PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY OF THE FINE ARTS.

One of the avowed objects of the Photo-Secession from its inception has been the compelling of the recognition of photography as an additional medium of individual expression; an avowal which in a diminishing degree has been the cause of some ridicule and the source of much amusement. The exhibitions held during the past winter at the Little Galleries up to the present, the culminating expression of the influence of the movement, have
in varying degrees changed this ridicule to silence and the amusement to conviction, and at the end of this successful but arduous season, it comes as a peculiarly gratifying climax to our endeavors that the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, one of the foremost and most influential of the American art institutions, has, unasked, requested us to select and hang an exhibition of photographs on its walls.

Notwithstanding the unexpectedness of the invitation and the short time given to prepare, on April thirtieth, “An Exhibition of Photographs arranged by the Photo-Secession” was opened at the Academy in Philadelphia, Messrs. Joseph T. Keiley, Eduard J. Steichen, and Alfred Stieglitz having personally done the hanging of the one hundred and thirty-two prints shown. The foreword of the catalogue read as follows: “The pictures in this exhibition have, with very few exceptions, been chosen from those which were hung in a series of exhibitions at the Photo-Secession Galleries in New York, during the present season. They summarize in a broad way the trend of that international movement of which the Photo-Secession is the organized American exponent, a protest against the conventional conception of what constitutes Pictorial Photography.”

The photographs were hung in three rooms. The following photographers were represented: C. Yarnall Abbott, Philadelphia; J. Craig Annan, Glasgow, Scotland; Mrs. Jeanne E. Bennett, Washington, D. C.; Miss Alice Boughton, New York; Mrs. Annie W. Brigman, Oakland, California; John G. Bullock, Philadelphia; Sydney Carter, Toronto, Canada; Alvin Langdon Coburn, New York; Robert Demachy, Paris, France; William B. Dyer, Chicago; J. Mitchell Elliot, Philadelphia; Frederick H. Evans, London, England; Herbert G. French, Cincinnati; Hugo Henneberg, Vienna, Austria; David Octavius Hill, R. S. A., deceased; Theodore and Oscar Hofmeister, Hamburg, Germany; Mrs. Gertrude Käsebier, New York; Joseph T. Keiley, Brooklyn; Heinrich Kühn, Innsbruck, Austria; Miss Céline Laguardie, Paris, France; René Le Bègno, Paris, France; Miss Helen Lohman, New York; Charles H. MacDowell, Chicago; William J. Mullins, Franklin, Pennsylvania; Frederick H. Pratt, Worcester, Massachusetts; C. Puyo, Paris, France; Mrs. Sarah C. Sears, Boston; George H. Seeley, Stockbridge, Massachusetts; Mrs. Mary R. Stanbery, Zanesville, Ohio; Eduard J. Steichen, New York; Alfred Stieglitz, New York; Edmund Stirling, Philadelphia; Hans Watzek, deceased; Clarence H. White, Newark, Ohio; and S. L. Willard, Chicago.

Taken collectively, as well as for the individual merit of practically every print shown, this exhibition was, without doubt, the high-water mark of photographic exhibitions held either in this country or abroad.

42
THE A. B. C. OF PHOTOGRAPHY.

A is the artist, whose care
Is his ego for us to declare
   In stone, or in rhymes,
   Or in paint— though at times
His ego runs mostly to hair.

B’s for bichromate, a sensitive chemical
With tendencies outré and unacademical.
   A dangerous drug
   In the hands of the smug—
But a godsend to critics polemical.

C is C-cession—a tale
Ever old, ever new, never stale.
   The identical dope
   Luther gave to the Pope;
The game Jonah came on the whale.

D is Daguerre, an old fogey
Whose process was clever but logey.
   He was IT once, but say!
   He’s six down, two to play,
In a match where George Eastman is “Bogey.”

E’s for esthetic, a word
Which you possibly never have heard,
   Though it’s one the hot-airy
Use often, to vary
Such terms as “queer,” “odd,” and “absurd.”

F’s for foreshort’ning, the ultimate germ
Of perspective in art, it’s a technical term
   For to do—with a lens,
   Or with pencils or pens—
What the dicky-bird does to the worm.

G’s what they say when they see
The things in the Little Galleree.
   I’ve watched, and I know.
   They come into the show,
And they stop, and look ’round, and say, “Gee!”

J. B. Kerfoot.
OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

Our prospectus for 1906 announced that Number XV of Camera Work would contain some of Mr. Coburn's newer work. Since this announcement was made, Mr. Coburn's exhibition in London has attracted a widespread attention which will give an added interest to the five photographs which we reproduce. They have been made from the original 10 x 12 negatives, and although in the reduction some of the power and quality of the original prints have been necessarily lost, yet the photogravures give a very adequate idea of Coburn's work in that particular line from which our selection is made.

In spite of the fact that in the London exhibition Mr. Coburn's portraits received the more definite appreciation, we have not reproduced any of them, as the quality of the prints is mainly dependent upon the printing medium employed—a combination of platinum and gum—and they would in consequence lose so much of their charm in reproduction as to do him, as well as ourselves, an injustice.

In the portrait of the above artist, also included in our plates, we are enabled to offer our readers a photographic, as well as a critical, interpretation of Mr. Coburn by G. Bernard Shaw. The edition is printed from a photogravure plate etched by Coburn himself from Shaw's original negative, this making the portrait doubly "authentic."

In the two pictures, "No Title," by George H. Seeley, of Stockbridge, Massachusetts, recently elected Fellow of the Photo-Secession, we introduce the work of a comparative newcomer.

The experiment in three-color photography, by Eduard J. Steichen, is produced solely for the purpose of showing what can be accomplished by straight three-color photography. No chemical manipulation or retouching whatever was resorted to, either in the original negatives or diapositives, nor was there any local retouching or tool-work put on the three half-tone plates made directly from the three diapositives furnished by Steichen to the engraver. The edition was printed on the printing-press from the three half-tone plates in yellow, red, and blue.
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- Moonlight (photogravure in two colors)
- The big white cloud
- Rodin—Le Penseur
- J. Pierpont Morgan Duse
- Maeterlinck
- In Memoriam
- Solitude
- Wm. M. Chase
- Double Portrait—Evening Poster Lady
- Landscape in two colors
- The model and the mask
- Spring
- Profile
- The white lady

As but a limited number of these not subscribed for have been printed, the price of this supplement will be, for the present, seven dollars.

Together with No. XIV, the regular number containing ten Steichen prints, the price for the present will be ten dollars.

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Sixty-five (65) signed and numbered copies, of which but forty copies are for sale, contain twenty-nine specially selected proofs of Mr. Steichen's work mounted on special paper about 13 x 19 inches. The book is bound in a specially designed stiff board cover. Price, until October first, thirty dollars; thereafter, fifty dollars.

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