11-26-1925

The Wellesley News (11-26-1925). Literary Supplement vol. 3, no. 1

Wellesley College

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SORRENTO NIGHT

Alice leaned over the rail of the balcon
y watching the endless Tarantolli
in the courtyard below. She had seen it
so many times in the past few
weeks that she felt perfectly capable of
executing its brazen whirls and
flourishes herself, but Jimmy hearing
the music as she had hoped
wouldn’t, had pleaded, and she had
weakened since it was their last night.
He gurgled as loudly as ever at the
men trying to hit each other’s hands,
and the “dear little children dancers,
mmmEEE!” She squeezed him to show
that she appreciated them deeply, and
found two lire in her purse which he
threw that enormous distance and the
children scrambled for. At this he
squirmed to such an extent that the
steamer rug which she had thrown
over the rail to save his pyjamas
slipped over and hit Mr. Foster on
the head. He peered up into the darkness
when he had extricated himself, and
with an indefinite upward wave disappeared below and was on the balcony
beside them in a minute. He draped
the blanket around her shoulders.

“This, dear Mrs. Conant, is to teach
you not to laugh at gentlemen after
you pelt them with rugs; first because
your laugh is quite unmistakable
and second because you are very, very
rude. I see you don’t like it over your
shoulders—I only refrained from mak-
ing a camera man out of you, as you
did me, because women are so sensi-
tive about their hair.”

“Thank you, sir! And I apologize
for laughing—the honor of blanket
throwing belongs to Jimmy—but my
airplane view really was delightful!”

He rolled Jimmy into the rug and
jousted him. “You’re a brute, Jimmy,
taking advantage of a man from above.”

Jimmy rolled out of the rug onto
the floor screaming with such Tar-
antolli. I’ve a headache. I’m going to
add one redeeming sentence to a per-
fectly miserable letter and go to bed.”

“Why, Mrs. Conant!” And at the
shocked disappointment of his voice,
she took another step or two in the
direction of the door. “Mrs. Conan,
please! We’ll do anything you like—
over to the Vittoria and watch them
dance—dance ourselves if you’ll for-
give my antiquated lope again, and you
can have your favorite ginger beer,”
he teased her, “in a tall, tall glass, and
it will be icer and creamier than
ever. If you don’t want that please
consider the beach, which the moon,
there is a moon, has turned into a
smooth piece of frosting. And we’ll
walk up and down on it, and astro-
nomer and you will convert me to your
philosophy at last.” And then with a
change of tone, “I’m really quite seri-
ous. You realize, don’t you, that you
are leaving tomorrow. To-night—well,
I hardly think that the usual ‘cele-
brate’ is the term to apply to it—but I
strongly feel that we should mark it
in some way, if only by our footprints
on the beach.”

“I’m sorry; I wish I could. And
thank you. It’s sweet of you to think
about my last evening. We don’t
leave till about nine in the morning,
so I’ll surely see you again.”

“In the morning then. I’m sorry
you won’t change your mind. Good
night, Mrs. Conan. Good night, en-
emy,” and he gave Jimmy a farewell
squeeze.

Jimmy in bed, Alice undressed very
leisurely, walking round the room as
she did so, examining vacantly the
painted birds and dragons festooned
on the walls, as though filling in time.
But she went to the mirror decisively,
and brushed her short, black hair
with vicious strokes. Suddenly she
leaned forward. “You are a beauty,
aren’t you!” she exclaimed, carefully
flattening each line in her forehead.
But she did not think about the way
her hair grew back from her temples,
showing her youthfulness and softness
or the determined forward curve of
her chin revealing her real strength.

“Ugh!” With a final look she flew
to her desk, and finished a letter to
her mother. As she wrote the final
sentence, “Jimmy sends his love to his
dear Grandma!” she thought of her
remark about a redeeming sentence to
Jerry Foster and laughed.

Switching off the light, she caught
her yellow robe around her, picked
up a chair, and stepped out on to the out-
side balcony. As she curled up in her
chair and lit a cigarette, she looked
at the bedroom cabinets, and the
small child behind the bars.
Her hair, brushed behind her
ears, curled halfway inside
the collar of her blue pyjamas, and the
sunburn of her arms, where the ki-
mona fell back, seemed a rather in-
definite dirt color in the neutralizing
moonlight.

The beach was indeed frosting, if
only they could have been walking up
and down the sand; she sighed regret-
fully. How long ago the trip across
seemed, that darling time with Co, the
first time since they’d put him into
the praiser end of the business that
they had really all been together for
any length of time. What a dear he
had been on that last day when it sud-
tenly occurred to him that she couldn’t
take care of Jimmy alone, the absurd
dear, as if she hadn’t taken care of
Jimmy for four years without its ever
having occurred to him before. It had
been nice, in spite of the expense, and
if she hadn’t let him he would have been
so disappointed; his forehead would
have wrinkled the way it did over im-
portant business worries, and his
mouth would have puckered fretfully
like Jimmy’s. That was what always
happened; she knew so surely what
his reaction would be, and arranged
things accordingly. How sweet he had
been at the last on the Capri-Sorrento
boat, never saying a word about leav-
ing, and being obvious and kind and
naive all at once. He insisted on mak-
ing absurd comments on the sea-sick
people. The middle-aged bride across
from them had amused him greatly.
She sat there, poor dear, so emar-
rassed and distraught, clinging to her
newspaper as to a kind friend, and
reading it upside down, so that it was
obvious that she didn’t care for it be-
cause of its literary quantities. Co had
taken out his watch. “In two minutes,”
she said, and then, “Oh, poor darling,
you are afflicted with a vulgar hus-
band, aren’t you?”

But how far away all that when she
considered the dreamy inertia of the
past four weeks. Nothing to do but
sit down—like that—

“Noo,” she murmured, “I’m going to
take a letter and bring a cer-
tificate of term.”

She leaned her chin on her hand,
and thought, “What a beastly ex-
eriment to bring her—what a beastly
thing for her to learn—that that
man—what a beastly man!” She
smiled at that, and leaned her
head to the side to look across
at her Jimmy, and thought, “She
oughtn’t to—she oughtn’t to—it
oughtn’t to—she oughtn’t to have
brought that—she oughtn’t to
have brought that.”

She thought of the letters she
was writing to Co, and thought of the
letters she wasn’t writing to Co, and
thought of his beautiful letters to her,
and thought, “I’ll write him a letter
and begin to say ‘dear Co, my love—’
or ‘dear Co, my dear—’ or ‘dear Co—’
and I will write him that letter
and that letter and that letter all in
one—indeed, I will—indeed, I will—
indeed, I will.”

She leaned her head to the side
again, and thought of the letters she
wasn’t writing to Co, and thought of
the letters she was writing to Co, and
thought of the letters—her letters—
and she curled her hair around her
chin, and thought, “I will—indeed—
indeed—I will.”

And there she was, leaning—

Wellesley College News
LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

VOL. III, NO. 1

NOVEMBER, 1925
She particularly liked their teas together, for he—even more than most Englishmen—could indulge in tea leisurely and gracefully without feeling himself any the less a man. Almost all American men were impossible in that respect, sitting on their chairs at tea as if not quite accustomed to them, and ultimately being rather proud of their masculinity. Co was somewhat that way, but then Co was nothing but a great blundering baby, when she insisted on coming to his teas. She invariably found him in a corner playing bridge with three of her most attractive guests. And always he would look up with his appealing smile, "Thought I'd suck myself over here, dear. So much less trouble for you!"—But Jerry Foster as a tea companion was incomparable. They had it in the garden every day, and the sultan, proprietary waiter, whose name they could never discover, brought it to them in a prompt and reckless fashion. Then she would pour—Foster somehow made you feel as though you were being minorly patronized, probably because you knew he appreciated the art—and he would send long streamers of gray smoke into the yellow sunlight, and look the epitome of reclusion. They never felt that they must talk, but they always wanted to. She felt her conversation to be always typically G."

"Damnish!" in deliberate and clear tones, Jerry Foster had almost died. His tremendous laugh had actually brought the goon back, who never appeared for fear something might be wanted—Then they were eternally discussing literature and philosophy—literature especially. He knew a good deal, and she—well, chunks here and there. When she didn't know anything she let him talk, and of course later that would be what he remembered her as knowing best. That was one of the few points in which he was at all typical, and because there were a few and so very few, he was particularly nice. But recently wasn't he—she hated to phony, because those he was so sensitive and so thoughtful—well, he was perhaps a little too interested in her. She was going away at exactly the right time; it would never do to avoid him, and she couldn't without being very crude; she would hate, hurt his feelings. How fortunate it was that the ship was due now, and Co would meet her tomorrow in Naples.

She uncurred herself dazedly at the sound of the window being opened on the adjoining balcony. She felt moonlight-white and pinched in spite of the heat; her whole side had gone to sleep with long and pointed prickers. Perceiving the noise she had got up and was stretching when Jerry Foster stepped out on the balcony.

"Good evening, Mr. Foster. When did you move up to my level?"

"Why when I left you and went down-stairs, our stoneman asked me if I'd mind changing. They're shifting everyone more or less to accommodate your husband's cagey people tomorrow. It's such an event just now that I imagine it takes them a day or so to get adjusted."

He edged over toward the window as he talked, and Alice, contrite about her obvious excuses to go to bed, said, "Please don't go in. You can sit on our mutual ledge and chat very comfortably with me for a few minutes, I need some one to wake me up before I go to sleep." She laughed, "That's paradoxical, but really I feel rather drugged and my brain is fuzzy."

For a few moments, however, they sat in silence. He made no effort to summon his usual fund of conversation, and she was content to let him talk. Finally he spoke: "It's such an impractical night; it's nothing really—neither sliver nor gold, nor black, nor gray, nor earth, nor sea, nor sky—a sublimation and fusion of all those things—and the absolute is the moon. It's impractical because it excludes all action and all thought. People become superconscious, almost; they take on a sort of lunar luminosity of soul as well as of body, and they act—well, they don't know how to act. They are afraid because a night like this demands so much, and makes such fools of those who can't fulfill its demands, because at this time there is only a hair's breadth dividing the sublime and the ridiculous."

She wondered how long he would keep it up, and her mind closed to it so that she listened only to the sound of his English voice, watched his firm chin outlined against the sea. She felt as though she could sit there always; it wouldn't matter much whether he talked or not. Suddenly she realized that he had gotten up and was going in.

"You must go in," he was saying, "I've nearly talked you to sleep, poor child."

She stumbled in murmuring a goodnight:

"I've nearly talked you to sleep, poor child. I've nearly talked you to sleep, poor child."

"Asleep! Why, she had never been more wide awake in her life, electrically, vitally, tingling awake. And he had actually had his resolution to go in—"to send her in—on this last wall when she was stammering like a fool, and she dragged—not with sleep, most certainly not with sleep! But—but that meant that she felt—and what about Co! Yes, what about Co? Oh, no—then never for a minute had she forgotten him. That was unthinkable; why she loved him. She sat down on the bed. She must see it clearly. Yes, she had forgotten Co—for a minute, an hour, it didn't matter. It was true in their sad life they were a comatose state, and had wished, subconsciously or consciously,—terrifically either way—that Jerry Foster would kiss her. And he had been kind enough and wise enough to send her in, while she had been worrying about his becoming too "interested." She said hoarsely that surely he knew the unimportance of all that; for although Co loved her, although she loved him as much, more than ever before, she could never feel now that it quite belonged to her. And she knew swiftly and certainly that this was the worst thing that could come to her.

M. H., 1927.

SULAMITH

The candles were lit. Softly, one by one, they became visible in the recession; in unseen depths they burned. A man's given face lighted up, like a three pointed star away from it. Rose before the spectral candles, and then slowly disappeared, first mouth, then eyebrows, then each hair separately vanished. Like an ever the flames, dying down, removed the image, line by line. But there was a vestige of it left, the page was slightly smudged. The candles burned on unsteadily.

Sulamith, the face sharp down to a pointed chin, dug her pointed elbows hard into the stones of the hearth. Her eyes, green and red, transfigured by her closeness to the flames, burned with a mysterious light. The fire stirred uneasily. There came the sound of supplicating feet, and somehow music swelled and the feet moved rhythmically. Sulamith pushed back her sliding hand impatiently, and wriggled closer, her face almost one with the blueness of the light.

The candles burned bright, the feet became hurried. Sulamith pulled herself up, her eyes still in the heart of the fire. Slowly she swayed, slim foot propped, body back. Drawing back, she twirled, and the candles twinkled in her head. Deep, deep they burned, as her head touched the floor.

Suddenly she felt free, light. The candles were gone. There were people, in gold and silver, with diamonds in their hair, watching her. Her feet were not with her any longer. She danced as if she lived in air.

Then the slow rhythm of dispointed feet came to her ears. She danced as one possessed. She stamped her feet, she flung herself before them. But they trampled her over. Slowly, slowly she crept to the fire, and closed her eyes. Candles, circle on circle, the face of the man with the star-shaped hair, shone for a moment. Then, with the swiftness of wings, everything was black.

Gertrude Kerner, 1927.
The day was done. The gap in the low-lying ridges to the west showed a cool, wintry little afterglow from the splendours of purple and hot gold of sun's outgoing. From the hills the twilight spread out, crossing and re-crossing its gossamer folds until all the little creek world seemed caught up and dimly held in a slow moment, apart from the passing of time.

The water over the stones made a faint, shallow sound, sleepy and far away. The insistent chirring of the katydids from thin tentative pipes, wiggled together in one subdued burst of harmony that rose and became woven in the silence and the dark. At intervals along the creek bank, the bullroarers called to each other in deep throaty voices. It was as dark as pitch along the big road, for the trees and the hill on one side stood right over it. The creek was very near on the other side. 

Marth-Ellen and Little John walked very close together without saying a word.

"Ker-chug, Ker-chug," a big bullfrog bellowed from the edge of the creek, so near that Little John jumped nervously and looked over his shoulder. "Knee-deep, knee-deep," another one wailed back from the middle of the creek and farther off an old big, grand, father one invited heartily. "Come-under-my-root, come-under-my-root."

"Air you 'traid, Marth-Ellen." Little John's voice was thin, trying to be brave. They were goin' down to the store for oil, and it was awful late and they would have to pass by the "hant" rock.

Marth-Ellen was glad that Little John had spoken; it was awful lonesome. Right down ther above the pawpaw patch was the "hant" rock. Cousin Marth saw a hant ther once. Somethin' white that looked like a sheep and like a bird at the same time. Someone saw her grandfather's spirit there after he was killed.

"No, I haint afraid. They haint nuthin' to be fraid o'v. But her teeth clicked together in a funny way and she walked closer to Little John. "I'll carry half," she volunteered in a whisper, taking hold of the handle of the oil can which Little John was carrying.

They walked fast in spite of themselves and kept their eyes straight ahead, but it was impossible not to see the awful blackness all along under the trees.

"Marth-Ellen, wait!" Little John felt, as though he were being left behind. He wanted to cry, "Marth-Ellen, don' chu byer somethin'?"

"Shucks, they haint nutthin' to byer." She forced herself to walk for they were passing the "hant" rock.

Little John was sure a great big bear was coming right down the road behind them, maybe just out of sight in the dark. He began whispering softly. "Somthin's comin'."

They were past the "hant" rock. Marth-Ellen wouldn't look for anything. But they could run now, it was behind them. "Les run a piece. We'll be right a-gittin' that."

But it was no use to run. It was right at their heels. The night got bigger and blacker, and more smothery.

"Run, Little John, run." Marth-Ellen's voice was an hysterical sob. She was whispering too. They panted and whispered together.

"Wait, Marth-Ellen, wait." The thing was reaching out to grab him and Marth-Ellen was about to get ahead of him. He stumbled and fell, and the can went banging over into the rocks. He yelled, lying on his back in the dust. He wasn't hurt, but it was a relief to scream. It made him not afraid of any old thing anymore.

"G'yu harti yerself," Marth-Ellen was anxious. She had forgotten the thing, and at least she wasn't scared now. When Little John fell she had faced squarely about and looked everywhere for the thing. She looked up at the "hant" rock, but there was only dark everywhere.

"Sit up, Little John, ye neec'nt be afraid. Haint nuthin' to bother us. We're nearly thar now. Anyhow, Pa would be ready to come home with them.

"Haint afraid, I told ye," hollered Little John. "Haint no old bear no-how." He resigned himself to be afraid now that he wasn't a bit. "You was a runnin' off an' leavin' no'," he accused stubbornly.

"I wasn't done no sich a thing." Little John poked along, digging his fists in his eyes and bawling with enjoyment. "There was a good one, went like a horse." He tried it again with better success. One's voice sounded awful square crying. "You can, you can," he finally thought to answer Marth-Ellen.

"Shut up, I wasn't. Food all night and we'll never get that." She wanted to spank him, but she said, "Baby" instead in a scornful tone.

"I haint."

"You sit."

"I haint, I haint." "Yair, yair, yair."

"I'll slap you drectly if you don't rush."

"Just slap me and see what'll happen; they'll be two a shappin' 'bout that time. Now hurry, Little John, and stop foolin'."

She tramped along the river, month. "I'll pick up a big ole rock drectly and knock you down." But Marth-Ellen had decided to have no more foolishness. She was walking very fast and Little John suddenly had to run not to be left. He looked fearfully behind him. He felt that the bear was sneaking up again. "Wait, Marth-Ellen," he begged hambly.

USA RITCHIE, 1926.

"ET EGO IN ARCADIA!"

I sing of the hat, and the man—or rather of the Professor. The hat was coming out of a thirty-five-story building which the Professor knew because he had bought new spectacles there only last Saturday, and walked, immediately afterward, into a lamp-post. But that belongs to another epic. The Professor, at the present moment, was thinking of nothing but the fact that this was the following Saturday. As to the hat, it had a red feather—none of your Campbell Soup-carnarines, or Herings-reds, but red such as the apple that caused the first freeway complex, such as that of a pre-Volstole nose, such as the Tennessee mountaineers who, when you mention our common ancestor, the Pithecopsanthus Erectus. It drooped mysteriously from the hat, his feather, like a crimson question-mark. And something about it set the Professor's heart a-flutter, as it had not fluttered since the day when the old-dazed Mr. Wrigley's Chewing Gum won the war.

Now the Professor was an insignificant man. In fact, I think he was the most insignificant man in the world, if you except the Vice-president of the United States. Besides being near-sighted, he had little hands. To be sure, if we were Trakob, I could make a lot of that asthma. I could turn it into consumption, for instance, and kill the Professor after the proper introduction of a conversation about God and cockroaches in the cabbage soup. Or if I were O. Henry, I could make a neat appoggiatura about an undesired cure, and let him marry his nurse, who turns out to have asthmas, too. But I hope you didn't think that asthma had anything to do with this story. It hasn't, except to help you place the Professor immediately. Of course you knew that, like most people who hold the title, he wasn't really of them. All the same, he was a manuscript reader in the Midland Page Publishing Company. Every day he read an average of fifteen works of embryonic art, sorting out the lesser from the great—and using the lesser. That is how he became near-sighted. You should have guessed it.

I mentioned that it was Saturday. But did I add that it was spring? Spring is important, because it combined with the red feather to produce a peculiar and hitherto unobserved effect on our worthy Professor. The Professor knew it was spring, for he had tripped in a marble-hole that vary spring. Besides, his brain had that airy, vacant feeling that comes with the thawing of ice, and the spring cleaning. He felt a little alarmed at the puncity of his thoughts. "My mind is quite empty," he said to himself. "No—not quite empty, for if it were, I wouldn't be thinking it yet." This, however, was growing a bit involved—something on the order of Eddie Foy's imitation of Elsie Janis's
imitation of himself,—when the red feather flashed into his view. Then for the first time in his life the Professor did not have time to save himself before he followed the red feather.

Pursuit of the female by the male is a primitive institution, antedating even marriage and the use of oyster-forks. It goes back to pre-Homerian times—which might mean almost anything. There is a moment in the life of every Daphnis when there is always Jove. But enough of classics. Apollo never wore convex glasses that made everything a pleasant blur beyond a radius of five feet. Apollo didn't have a small wrinkled forehead that extended indiscernibly backward toward the posterior end of his collar. Daphne could have led him a prettier chase through lower Fifth Avenue than through the Olympic forests.

The Professor felt an agreeable tingle in the pit of his stomach (cf., The Good Man and The Good). For forty-nine years, now, he had forgotten that the ROMANCE that the poor fools wrote about, that he had assassinated, and that his firm had published might really have a basis in fact. Now in a moment it had forced itself upon him with a warm, sudden pognancy. He ought to recognize it. He had read enough about it.

The red feather—for the Professor could not see the rest of the hat—dodged through the Sweat-Shop Parade that lined the Fifth Avenue sidewalk, as if a little bewildered. Thus the Professor's imagination, trained in the classic channels of Mr. George Gibbs, and Miss Ethel M. Dell, began to work. Our other respected friend, Mr. Bernard Shaw, would, then, analyze the deductions of his brain into something like this:

"A foreigner. Yes most decidedly a foreigner. She has trouble finding her way. What nationality? Italian? French? No; she would ask some one. A Russian? Ah, that is it. Yes, a Russian certainly—one of those war refugees, and probably a countess. New York is full of them. Only the other day there was a newspaper account of one who poured tea in a modiste shop for a living. She would be beautiful. They always are dark, with long, trailing hair, or eyes, or half of half French accent. She probably has a past (the Professor felt the slightest bit wriggled at this.) She has known a great deal of sorrow, . . ." he added for his conscience.

The slanting light of Forty-second street flashed: the piece of paper was to be known that Allah was Allah, and Mike O'Halloran at the corner of Thirty-sixth street was his prophet. Fifth Avenue stopped, and the rest of the numbers on the abacus moved. The feather proceeded on through the next block, leaving the Professor, small, breathless and stranded on the other side of the street. He feared he might lose the feather now. But no. There it was in the next square. And what was this?

He saw the owner of the feather approach. He accepted him immediately, then retreat a few steps, and hurry on, manifestly perturbed. At least, he judged she was perturbed, for the feather had lurched as if startled. Long ago, when the Professor was reader for the Cosmopolitan, he had made up an anecdote by John H. Scudder, worthy, in which the possible interpretations of one scene are given. But with his present observations of the Russian Countess, only one solution was possible: it was an official of the Soviet government. The countess had made her last, proud plea for mercy, and had been rebuffed. (Remember that literature has a pernicious influence on the average mind. Schopenhauer and Mr. Ring Lardner would tell you there was no average mind. But I merely mention it for a moral.)

At any rate, the Soviet official melted into the blur, and the red feather, followed by the Professor, proceeded more swiftly, then hesitating turned and entered a shop. The pursuer held back, preferring to keep his distance. The feather rushed out of the shop, and the Professor, on passing, recognized the rampant lions of Benson and Hedges. For a moment, he was paired. She might not be a countess, after all, but a college girl. Then he remembered: (Of course. We could have told him that.) All Russian countesses smoke long cigarettes. She was only fulfilling her role. They use white jade holders, and puff dreamily, and say, perhaps, "Nichel's," which, freely translated, means, "What the devil does it matter a hundred years from now?" (Perhaps that last manuscript was not so bad after all. To be sure, the hero would have to change his political views, not being a Republican.) Yes, the countess would say "Nichel's" with the same exquisite charm she used in dressing. He could not, of course, distinguish anything but the red feather. But his little, alarm-clock heart gave another jump every time he looked at that, with its interrogative curl. No husband would ever let his wife wear aURING color like that. Other women would not approve of the eyeshades, either, and yet, for instance, would consider her "queer."

"What's the hurry, little one?" beloowed a voice with the dulcet accents of Danton. The Professor felt himself fish Essay bodily out of the surging stream of the street, and deposited on the honking of the ears, the wailing of the eyes, and the sound of the traffic signs yet," went on the pleasant murmur. But the Professor's departure from the nunomial to the phenomenal was momentary. He was back again in an instant.

The sun was low, casting the proverbial rosy glow over everything including the Professor's mentality. (I mentioned that it was spring.) Our hero was on the brink of sentimental-ity. He fell in with a splash. Every dog has his day, the worm and various other carnivora will turn. Why not our academic specimen of Gena Romanova? Apollo hurried to catch a final glimpse of the incipient laurel-tree. Our vigilant professor hastened thru the bucolic fastnesses of Fifth Avenue. He must see the face of the Countess once before he lost her forever. But the dens ex machina was working.

She crossed to the policeman. The Professor fell from the upper reaches with a flutter of wings. It was evident that she had noticed him following her. He couldn't expect her to be as nearighted as he was. There is one thing for a gentleman to do in a case like this: he must display a light pair of O'Sullivan's. The Professor was a gentleman.

For the fugitive and the working man, all New York is divided into three parts—the subway, the surface, and the "L." The Professor descended by the Russian? -Minna was in the kitchen.

"Hello! she answered. "Snapper's not quite ready. Did you see about your课题? I've been having trouble with it tonight. I went to the occultist today."

"What did he say?" The Professor asked. "He didn't say anything."

"Oh, he said I'm getting as bad as you. He put drops in my eyes, and I'm as blind as a hat. Only think—I spoke to a strange man, thinking it was Charlie."

The Professor squirmed. But of course no one would look at Minna. Minna was the Professor's wife.

I felt so embarrassed. I walked into a cigar store. I had to ask a policeman what street it was. I couldn't see the sign. Oh—and I bought a new hat. I'm afraid you won't like it. But I jest so tired of blue. Wait till I drey my hands."

"You stood in the door. The Professor looked up. As to the hat, it had a red feather in it.

1926.

I will sing of the women of Ulster—How they laugh, with their long, throats a-quiver. How they laugh like a ripple of silver Alight on the river.

1926.
She did not wonder very much why her sister Alice, passing quickly through the dining-room, cast that smile at her, although she noticed vaguely that it was a smile with something concealed for the moment under it, a smile procured, even distracted perhaps, like those we exchange at social functions, smiles performed mechanically under the pressure of conventional habit only, yet often laden with delayed confidences. Pending Alice’s return to the table, Mary began her salad—the veriest hearts of lettuce and slender celery stalks in laid with pungent dressing and speckled with pepper the color of rust. Who Alice’s visitor, out in the living-room was, and why Alice had left this person to hurry into the kitchen for the landlady of Le Chateau, Mary wanted very much, in a subdued, in- active sort of way, to know, sitting there keeping the peace by merely waiting. Had it not been contrary to her code of deportment on all but the most trivial matters, she might have followed after her sister to solve the mystery. But there was something in the situation and in the smile—something conveyed to her in a way she could not have expressed even if she were sufficiently conscious of the messages, that made her sit and wait and do so, she knew immediately, intuitively, after a fashion sub-consciously, was her part, for the moment, in what was going on.

Something not ordinary had come to her sister’s knowledge. The smile and the look said, “I have no time for you, but wait.” While Mary was doing so, her mind no more than her body sought consciously to discover the truth, nor were its processes more disturbed. Although she was perfectly aware that something unusually im- portant might have happened, she thought this no more probable than that something merely interesting had occurred. It was her habit to be pre pared for whatever might attack her in life by anticipating every imagi nable incident according to her belief, that, once prepared, “Nothing can be too bitter for my high heart.” To practice this theory she had in the course of her life entertained a flowing stream of dramatic experiences, that formed in her mind a unit collected around the nucleus-idea of stoic fortitude. A formula for reaction to blows that grades the metal of men occurred to her now, for, it seemed, no reason at all. Stand square on your two feet and keep your mouth shut.

These thoughts Mary recognized, were rather suggested by her own im- aginative treatment of the situation than by any really positive evidence that they were relevant right now. All this speculation and reaction occupied only the periphery of her mind, not only the knack of standing firmly on both feet and keeping her mouth shut was a habit with her now, but also of “taking away with futile apprehension.”

Alice passed back into the living room, without a glance this time. Mary heard mumbling, the slam of the heavy front door, a moment of absolute silence inside, and of steps down the stairs, till at last, there, a pause like a gathering of resolutions, before Alice tiptoed back into the dining room up to her chair, with the same masking smile, that had nothing of mirth or joy in it, and only a recognition of what is expected of us, perhaps, and behind it, something that was to be told.

Alice sat down: Mary waited a mo ment. Then, “What was it?”

“Cousin Jim. He just drove up from home—for us. He says Dad has the grip—rather badly. We are to go home to help because everyone is worn out, and they can’t get enough nurses. Not of your choosing, Mary, you see, but there’s no help. Everyone was, all clear and vastly important, was the crux of her speculation, for if she had seen how Jim looked, she would have known all, beyond the need of a question. There was one question that she would ask Jim. Was it pneumo nia? She would sit in the front seat so that the noise of the engine would prevent her voice from reaching Alice. The answer would tell her definitely whether she was coming home to life or to death, while meantime she would show how she could face this thing, or rather refuse to face it, talking about this and that, —oh, even laughing loudly, —that was the sportsmanlike thing to do, to laugh in the face of death, and the more nonchalant one, was the more brave.

Mary played her part for a whole half-hour of their two-hour drive home; then suddenly she remembered her question, and with the recollection, arose a giant problem for sons solved, the an swer knew but the problem still lingering in the mind, like old memo randa of things done, came the realiza tion of a different point of view, of the conviction in her heart that she need not ask the question, that somehow she had known the answer from the time that the problem had presented itself,—that it had offered itself simply because it was the truth. She had not even needed the confirmation of Jim’s face. She had hardly noticed it.

For a long moment Mary was silent; more than ever was she sensitive to Mary’s silence and to the innate marks of Jim, who thought that she did not know. Perhaps she knew more than he now. But she was conscious, too, that she had been and was still building up, building up, for the emergency, which she now saw clearly face-to-face. In her imagination she saw a rope unravel and curl again about her body; she did not enjoy her stoicism, but she felt sure of it. She
THE MASTER OF THE STORE

The sun was just rising out of a bank of snow clouds as Ed. Hinchley's grey figure trudged up the hill past the new minister's house. He stopped as he passed the kitchen porch, to shift his tightly clenched umbrella from his left hand to his right, and straightened his gaunt frame with visible effort so as to include the whole rear of the house in his approving gaze. "Hiram did a good job, and to fit a minister's pocket-book" was his tacit comment as he gripped the umbrella afresh and bent his back to the hill. His long upper lip pressed firmly against the loose snow as the sun shone suddenly over the waking town. The great saws were gaining momentum for a new day as he passed the sawmill; the station agent was clanking empty milk cans down from the freight platform in time for the early trains which was but now going up the valley, whistling as the crossing four miles below the village, at South Shaftsbury.

Ed Hinchley's store stood beside the station, grown grey from the sight of six daily trains for forty years. He paused on the second narrow step, as he always did, to pull his homespun cap over his keen grey eyes for a good look down the western valley that he might forecast the weather for the rest of the morning, just as a ground-hog scans the hillside before he backs into his hole for a nap. His comprehensive glance returned from the banked clouds to the umbrellas and he shook it toward the valley as if to say, "I'm all ready for you!"

With his verdict of the weather established for the morning, he pulled out a bunch of assorted keys, jingled them until the worn brown store key came to his gnarled fingers, and pushed it into the lock. Inside, the store was a dungeon of piled cereal boxes, lighted only by a yellowish kerosene night-lamp. Ed's motloms were those of one accustomed to his task. He walked to the shelves at the back of the store, putting up shades and blowing out the lamp as he passed, stood his umbrella in a corner, took off cap, overcoat, and shoes, and dyed a corn-cob pipe. Then he shook down the stove and hurled great thumping logs upon the red embers. Threading his way between crates of grapefruit and piles of tarred rope, he stooped down among the flour barrels and pulled out by the tail a rat dangling to the ceiling, disappeared from a front water-tight recess of the back of the store for a moment and came back with a cobweb in his grizzled hair and an empty trap in his hand. By carefully circumventing a rack of whips and bending to avoid a bunch of green bananas, he reached the chipped door of the safe and drew out three great ledgers. Then he disappeared from view behind the safe. The scratching of the minister's pen held the only sound in the store, save the ticking of the big Ben and an occasional squeak or rustling of mice among the sacks.

Half an hour passed before the ledgers were returned to the safe with the thud of old pigskin against old nails. Ed Hinchley's farm bobbed behind the counter as he peered at a shelf of books above the safe. His pipe protruded stiffly from tight lips; his leather forehead was puckered, as he felt along the shelf for the eighth book.  

Zane Grey's "Border Legion." He thumbed the dirty cover as he stumbled back to his chair between the window and the safe. Again silence fell upon the store, except for the gentle puff-puff from the corn-cob pipe and the creak-creak of rockers on the rough boards.

"How much are cranberries this morning?" Ed asked a voice as rasping as the belt saws at the lumber mill. A rusty head was thrust in at the door.

The rocking ceased as the master of the store rose and surveyed the generous form of his customer. "Thirty-five a quart," he judged.

"Give me a quart, then, while I go after that dangerous man," and the man was gone, lumbering up the road after his horse which was strolling up to the side of a grain car. He brought her around with a jerk and an oath, and joined Ed, who was shaking the cranberries into a paper bag.

"Jane having company?" Ed queried.

"My minister's coming to supper she says. By the way, got any chair glue, Ed?" A search followed, in which Ed dislodged all the safety pins and Sloane's liniment, and finally a dust-swathed bottle of glue.

"What do you think of the new minister, Ed?"

"Seems like a decent. God-fearin' man enough. He's been talking to me about buyin' seeds for a garden, and I says to him 'Ther ain't any use in plantin' in Vermont before the first of May, Rev. Jefferies.'"

"You send him to me when he wants to buy seeds, Ed? Don't let him talk Ed up to supper with those fancy seed catalogues."

"So long. The ma'am got her eye on that grain car again. So long."

He had hardly taken up the train of his story again when the latch clicked and the door opened with a screech. Ed's minister's tall black form loomed dark among the boxes. He came and looked over the counter at Ed Hinchley and his book.

"Good morning, Mr. Hinchley. You're early at your reading this morning, earlier than I ever get down to mine."
Ah—good morning, Mr. Jefferies. Yes, I'm always reading at Zane Grey. I've read all of them in the fifth time. I don't seem to fit tired of that kind of reading. What can I do for you this morning?"

"I'd like a can of your best peas, please.

"I have some at thirty and some at twenty-five. I'd advise you to take the twenty-five. They're more appealing."

"I knew you'd always believe in saving a few cents whenever you can. I've always prided myself on thrift, Mr. Jefferies. Being the treasurer of the town and the church and the school has made me know the value of dollars and cents. I say any man can live on nine hundred a year if he's saving, like me."

"That's a fine record, Mr. Hinckley. I think Mrs. Jefferies would rather have me bring the thirty-cent kind this time. I'll take half a dozen bananas, too—oh, the rippee, please."

He paid his money out of a limp leather purse, bundled the bags under one long arm, and bowed "Good day" at the door. Ed stood at the window, arms akimbo, pipe at a belligerent ninety-degree angle, as the minister whisked and a bouncing Alfreda left the station cat clinging to the lamp-post to gallop after him. "Ump," he thought. "Wonder if that dog's a thoroughbred."

* * *

At home, as he drew his chair up to the dinner table, laid his napkin across his vest, and jerked his coat together, he looked over the generous dishes of corn-beef and creamed cabbage and a pitcher of amber maple syrup and at his pretty young wife who was pouring him a glass of milk. "Any callers this morning, Emily?" he asked, as he plunged a knife into the bread. It was his own particular brand of corn-beef and he enjoyed the well-cured, wholesome look of it. It was like Emily to have his favorite meal for dinner when the morning had been rather dreary. "Pretty bad under foot, though it turned out bright after all."

"No callers, dear. I've been busy every moment with just a glance at Mary and the new baby on my way to the post office and the rest of the time struggling with the grate in the kitchen range. I think I'll have to drive to Bennington this afternoon to have the clinker mended. That's why we haven't any baked potatoes, as I intended, for dinner."

The meal proceeded silently. Ed Hinckley enjoyed his dinner. He enjoyed the picture his wife made in front of him, her dark head framed in the brightness of the window, her cheeks as pink as the roses in the cheery print dress she was wearing. She looked twenty years his junior with her youthful face and strong, capable figure, and he loved her for it.

As he helped himself to the syrup for the griddle-cakes, which his wife brought steaming from the kitchen, he said thoughtfully, "The minister came up to the store this morning, Emily."

"Did he seem glad to have the painting over?"

"I didn't ask him. He bought some peas and bananas and went out before I had a chance. Eri says he's thinking about a garden already. Shows he's not acquainted with Vermont, doesn't he?"

"Yes, but don't you think it's a pleasure to talk to someone from the city? He's always so cordial when I meet him."

"Jane and Eri are having Mrs. Jefferies and he to supper tomorrow. Don't you think we ought to ask them to dinner soon? Seems as if the treasurer of St. James' ought to be the first to entertain the minister. How would Sunday be?"

"All right as far as I'm concerned, if you'll stop at Polly Groff's and ask her if she'll send Martha in to help me with the serving and the dishes. We must have something real good. Have you any sweet potatoes up at the store? I'll get Brussels sprouts and salad and other fixings down in Bennington this afternoon. You pick me out a nice fat chicken sometime before Sunday, so's it can drain."

"But, Emily, can't we have the minister to dinner without buying town food and killing the chickens? Recall, they're getting pretty thin out here with these pesky skunks, and I have plenty of canned goods up at the store we can have. Those twenty-five-cent peas of mine are fit for anybody."

"Why, Ed, what's the matter! We can't skimp the minister! Remember your mother's old motto: 'Give the cat and the minister the top of the milk!'"

"I don't want any of his fastidious city notions to make him expect more than he's going to get here. He's going to be extravagant enough, from all I hear. I'd like to teach him that country dogs and peas and dinners are good enough for any minister. Pretty soon he'll be asking for a car and, when electricity comes, he'll be wanting that."

"But, Ed, you don't mind my Buick. Why shouldn't the minister have a car?"

"Pshaw, Emily. You don't understand. I've got to keep to my word. I never claimed you could live on nine hundred a year, but / can, and I won't have him walking over me in money matters. Go to town and get your things, but don't tell them they don't come from Hinckley's store!"

Ed Hinckley, with the dignity of the occasion in every line of his face, though his eyes twinkled through their bushy brows, stamped into his rubbers and slung himself into his coat. "Want me to bring the car out, Emily?" he called from the open door. Emily stopped crumbling the table and whistling. "Pop goes the weasel!" long enough to call back, "No, thank you, dear. I'll put the market baskets in before I back out of the garage."

He slammed the door and strode up the street, hands in his pockets. As he walked he began to whistle, and as he whistled he walked faster. No one would expect that those tight lips could form such cheerful sounds as those which were falling on the crisp air. Something seemed to be tugging at the brass buttons on his coat. . . . After all, these were pretty good days. The town, the school, and the church showed for his good management. . . . His wife was a wonder. She might be right. . . . Should he stop at the library and get "The Lone Star Ranger" on his way to the store? . . . Maybe he'd brought up enough ministers in the way they should go. Maybe he'd give young Mr. Jefferies more of a free rein. Perhaps nine hundred was a bit stiff with a dog like that and a new church in the country. . . . Speeded on by such thoughts, he had reached his chair by the window behind the store safe. His book fell open to page twenty-five as he picked it up. The comfortable creak-creak, creak-creak of the rockers and a spiral of blue smoke from a corn-cob pipe were the only signs that the master of the store was ready for business.

Constance Gilbert, 1926.

The Grackle

Wings a-tremble of purple-black,
Wings shined like a silver knife
Glean and glow like an oxyn plaque
Where the shotting sun warms the stone floor.

Swooping down from the thinner air,
Sweeping down from the tip of the pine.

And the pinnacle sways as he settles there,
Shivers the tree with his weight,
Malnian.

A Dis of the skies all black at night:
In day with royal purple feathered,
Kingly, silent, and erudite
With wisdom from magic pine cones pecked.

He has no realm, and he has no power
His might is the glow of sumbit hour.

J. C. S., 1927.

To A Mountain in Bethlehem, PA.

You rise with dignity to bear
The wild sweet weight of sky and air.
With body bowed, you calmly know
The clouds and rain and winds that so
Whisper of crazy fate.

But you were never meant to hear
The dirty town that sprawling there
Grips your great sides. Send crashing down
That greedy, soiled, smoke-filtered town
With one fierce thrill of hate!

And then forget. Proud, mighty, high,
Unblemished, carry clouds and sky.

Alice Hickey, 1926.
As our train lumbered through the quiet dusk of early morning I had been straining to see the dim outline of the Sacré Coeur etched against the smoky mist. It was too dark to see at all until we were quite close, but presently, out of that pervading gloom, pierced occasionally with a flickering yellow light, it began to assume some shape: a pearly, oriental structure, with its minarets and towers bizarre and ghostly, fading into blurs of indistinctness. It looked like something a little more than earthly, that flaunting beacon of Catholicism, rising, so it seemed, by some occult power, to that lofty eminence; rising suddenly, precipitously, eerily, dominating the low cringing plain for miles around.

That first glimpse of the white pile of the Sacré Coeur had come to signify for me more than the vision of a rather garish white marble cathedral perched at the top of hundreds of weary steps above the distinguished height of Mont Martre which it crowned, it was the first thing that caught the eye of the returning traveller, the first authentic assurance that one was actually in Paris again; though on this particular morning, at that extremely early hour, it was difficult to tell whether one saw the distant penks and turrets, or whether one wanted to so much that much longing created them.

Slowly, with great creakings, and backings and sudden lurches (the engine is not interested in the potential slumberers of those in the Waggons-Lits) we were arriving. So that wasn't the fairytower of some forgotten ancient castle that we'd seen, but the Sacré Coeur after all, and we were actually back in Paris. It was so early that the Gar de Nort was practically deserted. One missed the strident voices and frantic gesticulations of a customary entry into Paris; even the shrill clamor gestured us away with a weary motion of the hand. Apparently one could smuggle at this time of day if one wanted to, for all the interest displayed by the uniformed gentlemanly idly rummaging through a valise, and with the air of a languorous John Hancock writing mysterious symbols in very foreign langage.

One had succeeded in robbing a corpulent taxi driver from his pleasant plumpers over the wheel of his tiny Citroen; with an occasional curse, and the exchange of a muttered imprecation the porter and the taxi driver had finally determined upon some unity of effort. We climbed into the car and spoke about the various crevices and jutttings of the taxi which had been designed as such receptacles, and we went dashing off, down dim cobble-stoned streets, honking our horn riotously, though there was as yet not another soul afoot.

The funny acrid-sweet smell of Paris began to seep through, a smell composed of sweet-pickles and smoke, and something else that is intangible and indefinable, but which assails the nostril with a glad welcoming sniff. The shops are all hermetically sealed, against the night air, no doubt, as much as against marauders. They have a strangely dead look, those great corrugated grey shutters that reined one of pictures of death-masks, so silent, so motionless, and lifeless. Dashing unexpectedly into the Rue de Rivoli, past the grim symbol of the Bastille we came at last upon some signs of human activity. For here were the market carts, laden with the produce of hundreds of outlying gardens, glowing piles of golden carrots, mountains of beets, and tender green lettuces and blushed cabbages, rattling over the uneven pavement, their vendors scuttling to secure the most advantageous positions for their gaudy wares.

And presently a cautious boulangerie will emerge from behind the deadening grey curtain and a tiny boy carrying a perfectly tremendous basket will appear, and in the basket will be long brown spears of bread for the breakfast of respectable burgers. Other figures begin to appear on the street, almost as if by magic. Paris is awake at last, and is settling down methodically, and with precision to the day's work.

The Avenue du Bois de Boulogne widens with a graceful curve into the Bois itself. The chestnut trees glimmer as greenly as moonlight as they do in the clear yellow-gold light of a summer's day. Only, where earlier the little girls in very short dresses that exposed several inches of leggy leg, sedately played at dolls, or ecstatically rolled their hoops under the watchful surveillance of a be-capped "bohme," at night Romance runs rampant. It lurked in the shadows under those chestnut trees where each tired shop girl sits, clasped in the ardent embrace of her retired soldier; it lurks in the still dimmer shadows where an audacious Pierrot might be kissing his Pierrette; and more remotely still, if one's vision were keen, one could detect the stately figure of some vanished duke or earl delicately advanced among the flagpoles of his castle.

There is the sparkle of a jewel in the moonlight, the sheen of silk and brocade as they pass with a flutter of wings down the long aisles of trees and disappear permanently, swallowed by the purple shadows that created them. And the brilliant bubbles of light suddenly pierce the shadows; there comes a distant sound of music, the strident blare of the new jazz orchestra, and suddenly, like a shrine castle in fairyland the Chateau de Madrid glows in the darkness. The twentieth century is floating by clad in rose-colored chiffon. There is the sound of champagne corks popping, and the dusty glories of the Louis fad in the brighter effulgence of today.

K. C. 1926.

I

There was a twisted street, leading a bit uncertainly from the "Boult' Mich" whither we had been directed. Houses hung rakishly over the street, apparently leaning against each other in a kind of drunken awkwardness, veering at odd angles now this way, now that. There was a busy sale of kitchen utensils, garments, trinkets, what-not being conducted amid hundreds of swarming, raucous-voiced, Parisiennes in the centre of the boulevard so that passage-way was practi-

We called a long bell-handle which woke the echoes in the cobble court-

yard and set the rusty bell to jangling and changing hideously. A char-lady appeared at length, puffing vigorously from the exercise of wearing her ring, and apparently striving by her very obvious Christian fortescence to make us more keenly aware of the extreme discomfort we had caused her by arriving at the particular moment. She suggested, oh, so subtly, that we had deranged her entire day by our unceremonious for arrival, and that she really didn't know how she could ever catch up with her work. As a matter of fact, of course, she had been doing nothing at all, but callers were unlooked-for events at numero dix-sept bis on that twisted street, and we were to appreciate our intrusion for what it was, she felt.

We could catch glimpses behind her bulky form of a large court, shabby and dilapidated almost beyond recognition, but which might once have sheltered no one knew what splendor. The great oak door was open just far enough for us to see the barren spots where the plaster had peeled, the bits of wood and piles of rubbish in the corner.

The guardian of all this continued to regard us severely. She didn't think "M'sieu, l'artiste" was home, but he lived up those stairs there to the right. We could go up and see for ourselves if we wanted to. As for her, she would return to her interrupted labors.

One saw at a glance why it was that madame left us to make our way unescorted. The stairs to which she had directed us couldn't have been more than two feet wide, and were so precipitous as to defy all but the most adventurous of alpinists whose hands, one gathered, Madame was not! They were dark, too, those stairs, and one seemed rather uncomfortably that there were rats who probably resented our intrusion no less hostilely than had Madame.

We pushed valiantly onward, however, and, arriving at the top perched
anxiously down a long dim corridor. We knocked at the only door whose hinges were oil intact. There was a scuffle, indicating that Madame’s prognostications were acted on more by plume than by accuracy, and the door was opened by a frail-looking girl.

“I wanted to buy a drawing.” I began, “Monseur — sent me here.”

“Oh, come in, mademoiselle. Come in. My husband will show you.” And she called “André” loudly, as if to make us think that there were hundreds of yards between them, when in reality “André,” as was apparent to the meanest intelligence, was only behind a rather rickety screen that divided the “studio” from the rest of the “apartment.” Her eagerness and her diffidence were pathetic. Customers were rare for André, one gathered, and she flattered anxiously between the screen and the door, uncertain whether we should have a change of heart before André could properly emerge. She drew up two insecure chairs, and started nervously to thumb over a portfolio or two.

André did finally put in an appearance, a youngish-looking man with a limp, and cadaverous eyes. He, too, was eager, nervous, as he started to show us his work, touching this one lovingly, and that one with slight disdain.

“You like that head of a boy, hell? He is a peasant boy where I lived before the war. One of the boys that press the wine, you know. But he is dear, that one. The size, you see. Mademoiselle.” One could tell that his anxiousness was simply freeing up his little wife. She stared at him brilliantly, tremendously.

“It is,” he said, with an expectant shudder, “one hundred francs.” And both of them hovered on the brink of untold anxiety to see how we would receive this awful information, with the look of people who see a door that is on the verge of slamming violently shut, and are steeling themselves to hear the inevitable bang.

“‘He’s rather charming, that black-haired, sulky boy,’” I said, drawing out a note of the Bank of France. “Will you wrap it for me?”

And I turned away a little embarrassed before the look of evident joy that enfused the faces of the lame artist and his wife.

“Oh, André, now you can go up the river for the summer sketching after all,” I heard her say in an exultant voice. Her ecstacy must have been infections, for I heard him laugh, a deep throaty unembarrassed laugh, which followed us down the dark unsavoury channel of the stairway. K. C., 1926.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES

There are some of us who are born to enter life like Beatrix, with a taper lighting our softness and shadowing our sharpness, who are born to descend great stair-cases to our Harry Houdinis below; and then again there are some of us to whom, like Cyrano de Bergerac, the graceful entrance is denied, but for whom the closing curtain falls in swift silence and dumb applause.

If we might have our choice there would be some who would be Beatrix and be very fair, who would flick their small gloves at bussed applause and, lifting their tapers high and their heads higher, would descend, defiantly beautiful. But in all our hearts is that deep, tragi-longing for a great exit, a longing that looks shamed after in the daylight and still persists.

When we are children we think to run away and be found dead, dead and unappreciated, and in a mournful and delighted whisper we say to ourselves, “Then they’ll be sorry.”

As we grow older we learn to think of less obvious ways; the other seems to us too childish. We begin to wrap our lives around this longing, cherishing and comforting it. This yearning is not the ordinary desire for fame, the desire to be known, the sculptor of an immortal Hermes, the builder of an arc de Triomphe or writer of flaming sonnets. It is an inner personal hunger for the sympathy of admiring appreciation. It can be warmed, not by the praise of our handiwork, but by the praise of the spirit that prompts such handiwork, and that prompts all our actions, and all our being through our entire life. It is by this thread that we hang on, some of us to be Beatrix and some of us to be Cyrano, according as we are born. We, through whom the thread is drawn.

We would live for the great entrance, the Beatrix whose glory comes swimming to meet her, as she, framed against the stairs, goes to meet it; but we would live to die for the great exit, the Cyrano, the unappreciated who dies in the height of a far greater glory, a secret glory that can not be known until he wills it, and can not be made less by his living to enjoy it.

The difficulty, the absurd foolishness of the whole thing, lies in the fact that we cannot choose. Our art lives in not bungling our role. Some of us who long to play Beatrix are unhappily wedded to an awkward gait and a mouth that speaks dully, a mouth that triteness betrays our unpractised desire for some role that would suit our souls but make the world laugh derisively, uncontrolably; the preposterousness of such a face wanting such a pair of eyes, or such a mouth such a song to sing! And the other one, the one who is due to the role of Beatrix, had she a vision of a greater glory, would the world laugh then? Fatuously and with benign smile do the people gaze up on this small unnatural product of theirs, their lady Beatrix in grace and bearing, who would have a soul-cruel music to escort her lovely, trippling way.

And if we were born unwieldy it would be better to play for the end and not the beginning; and though of course one occasionally slips past the end because someone very beautiful has come in; and though our silence is broken with tiny hand-clappings like dry, bright leaves, it can not be helped. There are so many to come and go.

We do not need to waste our words upon the other one. She very soon learns to love the adulation lavished upon her, and decides slyly within herself that she shall have both. She will live a glorious Beatrix and die a lovely Cyrano. She will make a very pretty frown and be very discontented with her lot, and she will despise her loneliness and be very lonely while she despises it.

When she dies, a beautiful woman, and a woman who counted such beauty as little, will have died and there will be a great church and a great solemn music.

ELEANOR MEAK. 1927.

ON A "SYNONYMA" PLAYED BY PAUL WHITMAN

Harsh bewilderment of sound
Drum of the city’s shriek
Yelling demons in a round
Traced the notes in scores oblique
Aided by the classic ghosts
Of Chopin, Schumann, Rimsks—Hosts
Of rare blue spirits mingling
With corp scarlet djamis that lurk
Blest, screeching in the mark
Of smoking chimneys, jingling
Of brahs bells, wire string
Tipped with jeers; each copper tongue
Green corroded
Vemon-loaded
Dancing bodiless as thistle
(Music of a factory whistle)
Crazy each directs his way
None to sway.

Plainless, aimless, rhythm mangled
Tortured, twisted rasper and anglered
Slow returning to the norm
Symmetrical familiar form.

With a pounding, pounding counter-rhythm
Beating—Swirling in a whirlwind rhythm
Sweeping elliptically, changing
To a smoother tone of notes
All in a circle ranging
Calm and free; like the twisted crystal cry from throats

Of melodious larks, or measured tone of scholar as he quotes
A line of Latin; Growing, quickening, heightening
To the swift and tearing lightning
Pace of thought, word, way
Today.

J. C. S., 1927.
TEMPLE AT CHANG-SHA

I was taken, once, outside the first walls of the city to visit an old temple, where worship had fallen into slow disuse because of a lack of funds combined with the sudden growth of a mission church in the neighborhood. My father and I knocked at the precincts, and a priest led us into a paved courtyard, from which other courtyards led into further corners, culminating in a roofed inclosure,—the temple proper. Within were halls, dimly lit by flickering candles. Rows of life-sized images faced each other along the sides, receiving the pious worship of a few joss sticks. From low bronze bowls before some of the gods, incense burned heavily, until the air was clogged by an over-sweet aroma. Unreality and strange fearfulness was the long-stemmed wine of the lurching grey-robed priest, and the swirling bats, beating dusty wings in the shadowy heights above.

In this part of the temple, however dusty, worship was still carried on; but beyond the halls was the ancient heart of the cult—a tumbled dungeon, with an altar in the centre. On it was enthroned a giant god carved of wood. Robes of silk, crimsoned with dragon embroideries, rotted around his chair. Grey dust piled high, kindly obliterating the ravages made by the passing years in his ancient face, the god-face that had once been majestic, darting yellow sparks from angry eyes, was pitiful in its faded impotence. Spiders ran between the blue-carven fingers whose dignity it would have been death to touch not so many years ago.

As I stared, the fluttering candles cast long shadows across the walls making the image look larger than before. This hall, cohabited by Braddock, was not so sinister as the others; yet it had a kind of somberness and its own special atmosphere in the long-stemmed wine that dizzied the senses. The scutched centuries whispered here. Here too, was the flat calm, the peace, not of inner quietude, but of time asleep. No wind from the street outside ever blew in this endeavour to stir the dust curtains; no sound ever reached its solitude.

I was suddenly swept with a sense of the eternal finiteness of man's quest for the infinite. This god, man-made, man-forgotten, was not a step in the approach toward ultimate reality, but a mere discarded image in a cycle of images, each more resplendent than the one before, as to robes and gifts—each more outwardly awe-inspiring than any of its fore-runners. And in a few hundred years each is consigned to armour rooms, dust-piled, when many an Odyssean bat wanders forever among the shadows.

The priest led us out to the gate, acknowledging a coin as a tribute to his capabilities as guide. The door opened, and instantly we were swallowed by the noise of the street—squeaking wheelbarrows, squealing pigs, and scolding women. The ugly mission bell tolled noisily for vespers in the cold, unpainted chapel. Would the abandoned god hear, I wondered, or hearing would he greatly care? Desolate eternity at least is very still.

Katharine Perrin Gage, 1926.

VAGARY

I have scattered triangles all my life. And now I must move richly on four wheels.

In turquoise garments; Down the clipped walk, with pebbles At my feet.

I can laugh slyly, like the lustre of silver In the dusk.

I am metallic thinly, striking the ear with dullness

Like the scratching of a pen.

"THE HUMORS OF LAMB AND STEVENSON" Judged from Their Letters

Surely a man is never more himself than when he is spontaneously humorous. When he makes up his mind to be serious, pulls a long face and speaks in long words, a tint of artificiality spreads quickly over him. Learned he may be, and intellectual by the hour, and we may listen and adore his words, but it is when he confides in us that he has a new joke that we know we have reached the real man. Lamb gives never so slightly of his personality as when he loosens the strings of his natural wit, and lets his humor play games with his tongue.

Likewise, he should reveal himself more clearly than anywhere else in his letters. Unless, agitating Petarch, he addresses his correspondence in a tame manner to his posterity, he has no definite notion of revealing himself to public gaze in these productions. He writes with no ambition for lusc or fame, but solely to make himself more intimate with the person with whom he corresponds. Combining our two observances, we come to the conclusion that the nicest spirit of a man can be most truly comprehended from the humor that is found in his letters.

There is plenty of humor in the letters of both Lamb and Stevenson to satisfy this eager and perhaps imper- tiinent pursuit after the essence of the wits. With many similarities, they are as widely different as the humors of two men must always be. The humor of Lamb spills all over the pages like cream from a child's milk jug, with an abundance of baunting words, careless interjections, cryptic observances and dry, cracking satire. Stevenson's is the clear, warm wine of Mirth in a long-stemmed glass, with careful phrasing, tilted just a little like a bird's wing, to show their under-side of gaiety.

Lamb has the self-assurance almost of abuffoon. He is always the more obvious humorist, the actor who smiles into the boxes and invites his laughter. Stevenson seems always gently satiric of himself. He never escapes from this introspective attitude of mind, and even when he waxes humorous, the searchlight of his wit is turned instantly into his own soul. One wandering thought suggests that this difference in the two men, namely, Stevenson's introspective tendency and Lamb's aptitude to refrain from a very minute perusal of his own self, might have been due to the fact that the thoughts and attentions of the latter were perforce centered upon his sister, whose fits of insanity were always to be watched and cared for, while the thoughts and attentions of the former were, likewise of necessity, concentrated upon his own person. It is, perhaps, unfair to say that Lamb is superficial in his observations, but certainly, in comparison with Stevenson, his humor is the more obvious, his sparkling lights the brighter, if Stevenson's are as constant, and his wit the more dashing, if Stevenson's is as true.

Lamb says in concluding a letter written to Miss Wordsworth in conjunction with his sister, "Mary has brought her part of this letter to an orthodox and loving conclusion, which is very well, for I have no room for panies and remembrances." It is this bluff and careless humor which Lamb has to such a degree that by comparison Stevenson seems not to have it at all.

But in one large respect, they were in accordance. Though their two wits might be as different as night and day, their application of humor to every moment of their lives, was as constant as the sun. It was their ability to treat anything with gentle humor that kept them from breathing stronomously in the vapid and arid atmosphere created by the most intense of the serious-minded intellectus.

Elisabeth Thaxton, 1928.

HOPAK

Leap, Varvara, Maria, Nastasya! Stamping your little red boots on the floor.

Lunge, Alosha, Sergei, and Vaska, Plant as birches, strong as the boar!

Golden your spinning, bright as the fire-bird,

Burnished, and turning, the belling bumblebee!

Swift, as the rising Don swirling in spring-tide,

Lashing the duck with your wide-swinging hair.

Wilders than steppe-winds that blow on the marshes,

Spreading and scattering furtures of snow:

Sweeter than Sadko who harped for the sea-tar,

Throb balalaikas, shimmering, low.

Leap, Varvara, Maria, Nastasya! Stamping your little red boots on the floor.

Lunge, Alosha, Sergei, and Vaska, Plant as birches, strong as the boar!
AN EXPERIMENT

Last year the editorial board of the Literary Supplement modestly compared itself to Beethoven, who found thirty-two ways to express a single theme. But perhaps a more just comparison would be with Tchaikovsky, who is reported—somewhat apropos—happily—to have presented his teacher with a hundred and seven variations on one subject. For, during the last two years, the college has been urged through editorialists, posters, “heretic” notices, and free-preizes to exhibit a tangible manifestation of interest in this publication of literary efforts. It is scarcely necessary to say how every one of these attempts to evolve interest—even the idea for destructive criticism—failed lamentably.

Yet it has seemed to many members of the faculty, and to the editors themselves, that it would be both a proof of cowardice and an act of perhaps too profound judgment to allow the Supplement to evaporate with the customary airliness of its prototypes. The decision has been made, therefore to add, as it were, a cola to the variations, which, if it fails, will absolve the board from guilt and put the reason for failure where it belongs: in the fact that the college has no need for a Supplement.

Through the kindness of the News Business Board, therefore—and here it may be well to explain that, while its editors form an altogether separate organization from the News, the Supplement receives its entire financial support from the News Board—we have been permitted the expansion evident in the present issue. Moreover, the Business Board, evincing its generosity further, has offered for this year exclusively, three prizes for literary work: $10 for the best short story, $10 for the best essay, and $5 for the best poem. These will be published in the third and final issue of the Supplement in April, when announcement of the winners will be made.

Material for the contest should be in the box under the News board by January, typewritten, signed and labelled as submitted for the contest. The board may publish, in the next issue any material submitted, not winning the prize.

The editorial board does not wish to hold out the altered form, and the offer of reward for services rendered as a sugar-plum to an unwilling public. Nevertheless, it wishes to give a stimulus, a moral justification, if you will, for extra-class writing which the lack of glory and reward in the Supplement has prevented up to this date.

THE PROGRAM THE THING

Some weeks ago the New Republic published a tirade, in which Mr. Virgil Thompson demolished in effigy the whole list of orchestral conductors from Mr. Mengelberg to Dr. Stokowski, leaving Mr. Danroth of New York and Mr. Stock of Chicago as the sole exponents of direction unincurred by interpretive dancing. Mr. Thompson’s article was unquestionably clever—especially when it happened to be true. But it could scarcely be called complete: for while it tackled with an admirable dash of vitriol the numbers on the symphony program, he left the contents of the program itself uncathed.

Now to those who prefer their culture in sugar-coated doses to be taken at comfortable intervals after the age of sixteen, symphony notes present probably one of the most pleasant forms of escape. Diligent perusal for a week or two will acquaint the reader with the fact that the viola is not the oboe may be mentioned with tolerable equanimity —the not always with response—in polite society. Further study may even enable him to recognize the end of a Mozart overture, or the fact that Erik Satie and Handel are not rivals, or progress beyond this point depends upon the school of program which he follows.

There are two principal schools of program notes: that of Boston, headed by Mr. Philip Hale, and that of Philadelphia, whose Mentor is Mr. Lawrence Gilman. The former is the business man’s special, crisp, academic and much on the order of a Fabson report. From it we glean, for instance, that Haydn’s Sixth Symphony is scored for, say, 25 kettle-drums, 14 bassoons, and 3 flutes, that it was performed 17 times in Vienna, on the 16th of September, 1788, and that on hearing it, the composer’s brother is reported to have turned to one of the Esterehazys, and sighed, “Ah, music is music!”—although the whole event is likely to be a fabrication on the part of Mr. Smith, Haydn’s regrettable biographer. To such cogent information, Mr. Hale usually appends an interesting list of the composer’s works, accurately copied from Grove’s Dictionary, together with their dates of performance.

But on the other hand, following—though less poisonously—in the tradition of H. T. P. on the Boston Transcript, tinged somewhat with hints of James Huneker in his lapses, takes a head-axe into the Soul of Music. No flower of rhetoric is too exotic to describe the graphic impression which each bar makes on his consciousness. Under his magic touch, every piece becomes a poem, every symphony a story. With him we see, rather than hear, Brahms walking in the city, pulling daisies and drinking beer—all in one short movement. The rarest adjectives are not too eloquent to explain how Strauss intended the traps to personify a death-rattle, or involved a sigh in the violins. Moreover, when Mr. Gilman quotes a letter, it is a definite hearing on the interpretation of the composition he is analyzing. Consider, for instance, how searching a connotation may be gathered from a missive of Schumann, written at the time of his Fourth Symphony, such as: “My dear Clara: I am very sad. Could you send me some books?”

Definitely, Mr. Gilman would say, Schumann’s first movement represents his plea for the books, the second Clara’s receipt of the letters, and the third the sending of the books.

Naturally, Mr. Gilman’s chief bugbear is the Seventh Symphony of Beethoven. Here he is torn, unable to decide whether his Allegretto more aptly represents a Bacchanaale, or procession of monks, or merely grey clouds drifting slowly across a November Sky. Occasionally, however, he will put into brackets such prosaic items as the years of the musician’s birth and death, or whether the work has been performed before. Probably the most intimate touch of all is the picture of Mr. Gilman himself, inserted in the upper left hand corner of his notes.

In a recent lecture on the growth of universality in musical appreciation, Mr. Percy Scholes intimated that the public was tending to become educated along musical lines. Certainly, with such means of enlightenment as the Symphony notes, his goal is not far from achievement.

NOTICE

The Supplement wishes to announce that it is holding for future use several contributions which could not be included for reasons of space in the present issue, and to remind contributors that it is always well to specify when they wish to have articles returned. If for any reason, such articles submitted are needed before a return date is indexed on the bulletin board, they can be obtained at 192 Shafter.

The Supplement wishes to extend thanks to the following publishers for book-notes and review copies received:
ART NOTES

The most important exhibit of the fall season is unquestionably the Sargent Memorial exhibit that is now being held at the Boston Fine Arts Museum. There are displayed some ninety representative oils and eighty or more sketches and water colors, not to mention the new murals and the bas-reliefs unveiled at the opening of the Exhibition on November third. It is an amazing tribute to Sargent's versatility that here within so narrow a space are ranged portraits, landscapes, oils and water-colors, charcoal drawings, mural decorations, and reliefs, all of excellent craftsmanship, and all touched by the genius that was peculiarly Sargent's own.

In addition to the already familiar medallions in the rotunda at the top of the main staircase, Sargent had completed the twelve murals just before his death, and after the viewing of the visitors entering the museum is greeted from all sides with a new burst of glorious color, principally transparent shades of blue and gold. The murals deal with mythological subjects, the one over the entrance being a representation of Apollo in His Chariot with the Hours, and the others successively The Winds, Persians, mounted on Pegaseus, slaying Medusa, Atlas bowed with the weight of the world in the garden of the Hesperides, Achilles being taught to shoot by Chiron, Orsates pursued by the Furies, Heracles being thrown from the chariot of the Sun, and the last, Heracles struggling with the Hydra. There is a lavishness of color about Sargent's treatment, and an almost plastic sense of line and motion that would make them notable if there were nothing else to commend them. Their execution is quite faultless, and their essential harmony and unity combine to make the entrance to the Museum luminous and lovely.

Passing from the foyer into the exhibition proper, one enters the great hall of the museum customarily hung in renaissance tapestry but now covered completely with the American portraits of Sargent. One sees here faces familiar to us in contemporary life, and many that reflect the vanished splendors of the late nineteenth century. There is something almost painfully revealing in this gazing at the bare souls of his sitters, as though these vain and flippant, proud and troubled, soft and serene persons who had been publicly deigned by the artist, and their little foibles and peculiarities immortalized in a gesture or a fleeting expression. One sees the Countess of Essex against a background of Tiziano's blue, gazing haughtily, and with a slight sipper, downward; Teddy Roosevelt in a characteristically brilliant attitude, looking bombastic and positive; and, just a few paces beyond, Mrs. Edward Davis and her son, sensitively appealing and gracious. Lowell sits there in his professorial robes, dignified, stern, and hardened with a sense of justice; while Mrs. Charles H. H. H. Knowles, gowned in dark red velvet crown with the slighty disclosed expression of a thoroughbred horse, a bit mystified by the rattle. There are others no less admirably painted: Joseph Choate, for instance, and M. Carey Thomas, ex-president of Bryn Mawr, and John D. Rockefeller, in a wistfully pathetic attitude that is quite entrancing, and the familiar daugh ters of Edward D. Bot: an interesting array of the cream of American society during the years when Sargent was most active, and a sure-drawing card for the hundreds of daily visitors, who demonstrate perhaps as clearly as any other quality the well-known cat-like desire to look at kings.

John Singer Sargent had a well-nigh uncanny power to read human beings and to translate what he read into oil for the world to see, and exclaim, "How very simple!" That it was not so simple need hardly be pointed out. In fact, one of the secrets of Sargent's mastery of his craft lay in the very seeming simplicity. One does not see the device framework of a great build, one does not hear the prompter when a great actor is on the stage, and yet the girders and the prompter are there; so with a great portrait, the basic structure is there but is covered up with the touches of the artist's craftsmanship.

In back of the main room are hung some very interesting charcoal drawings that will well repay study, and also several preliminary sketches for the murals, that are interesting in the development of Sargent's art, and are of course of vital importance to all serious students of Sargent's technique.

To the right of the staircase on a mezzanine there is another room in which are hung more portraits and several landscapes, while in the room adjoining are the water-colors which seem to be largely experimental, as though the artist were trying out certain techniques and light and shadow effects. The colors are predominantly blues and greens and browns and the favorite subject appears to be our sultry sunlight, a bit of Florence, architecture, a fountain, a scene in Venice, all done in a rough draughtsman-like fashion that is more surprising when one considers the fine brush work and infinite exactitude of the portraits.

There are many fine examples of the artist's work that are not on view at this exhibit, but all that has been included is noteworthy, and forms a fine tribute to the artist who probably did more to lift American art out of its infancy into a full-grown and generally acknowledged maturity, than any other, who by the genius of his personality performed miracles in uniting the two great English-speaking nations, and who performed so real a task in behalf of all art.

There are doubtless many in the undergraduate body who plan to journey to Europe at some not far-distant date. Doubtless furthermore, their literatures will include, after the proper number of Parisian dressmakers have been inspected, a certain number of the more famous at galleries of Europe, be it Amsterdam or Florence or Madrid. It seems rather a pity, therefore, that, when an energetic Bostonian with great care and a fine sense of aesthetics, accumulated during the long years of her life, a collection of art treasures as remarkable as the one at Fenway Court, that anyone who is interested in acquiring the most beautiful things that man has produced through the ages should fail to explore it. Mrs. Jack Gardner's house, which on her death was transformed into a Museum open four times weekly to the public, contains some of the rarest art treasures to be found in America. In it are examples of the finest painting the Renaissance produced—fragments of sculpture, of brocades and tapestries, examples that are as fine as any in the world, and which hold a fascination for art student and prospective tourist alike.

A visit to the newly opened Egyptian wing at the Fine Arts Museum is anathema to all those interested in jewelry. However, though not Egyptianists at heart, they have been thrilled by the recent explorations in the Valley of the Kings, and the marvels of antiquity there disclosed. The exhibit, while not as comprehensive as the collection at the Metropolitan Museum in New York is scholarly and very effectively displayed.

It is interesting to note that taste in exhibitions has swerved somewhat from the paths of orthodoxy and convention in Boston; namely that Bostonians have evinced an interest in jewelry sufficient to occupy the public notice for one week. The jewelry exhibit, as well as the jewelry of art was exhibited, and spectators who used to stand gaping with admiration before mysteries of prize pumpkins of incredible magnitude, stood enthralled while being instructed into the secrets of the correct jewels for sport, and for formal occasions, and displayed an active interest in the intricacies of jewelry design.
BOOK REVIEWS

TO A COLLECTOR
You asked me to come in sometime, and look
At a first edition of your favorite book, I came. And, when through a little
leather mounch
Of rarities, I'd searched, and finally
Found
The manuscript all marred with "price-
less" age;
My eager finger tripped on an uncut
page.

A CHALLENGE

The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson, South Seas Edition. Thirty-Two
Volumes. New York, Charles Scrib-
er's Sons. Lovers of companionable books will eagerly welcome this new edition of
Stevenson—the South Seas Edition, frankly from the press of Charles
Scribner's Sons. This edition makes accessible to us a considerable
body of hitherto unpublished material—five new papers, thirty-two new
pages from the Silverado diary, some eighty pages of new critical reviews, a
play, an autobiographical fragment, some two hundred pages of new poems,
half a dozen unfinished stories, and, best of all, more than a hundred new
letters. In addition there are more than a dozen introductions by Lloyd
Osbourne and Mrs. Stevenson vividly skitching Stevenson at different peri-
ods of his life and giving fascinating details as to the circumstances of
writing some of Stevenson's stories and essays. These books of this new
edition are genuinely companionable in their form, small enough to take
comfortably in a trolley car, or to buy as a gift to one or more of our happiest read-
ing hours.

SOPHIE C. HART
Possession by Louis Bromfield. New
York, Stokes & Co., 1925.

Some two years ago there appeared
upon the horizon of contemporary lit-
erature a young writer who was loudly
acclaimed as the rising star of Ameri-
can letters. Many highly flattering ap-
pellations were flung to the far winds
by the powers that be. The present
reviewer would hesitate to state that
the eulogistic comment wafted out from
the rarified atmosphere of the Al-
gonquin may have turned the young
writer's head; but something certain-
ly has happened to him between the
publishing of The Green Bay Tree, and
the publication early this fall of the
companion novel, Possession. For
there was that about Bromfield's
first book that very much mer-
ited its favorable stir it created; a
vigor and a drive that came from the
vivacity of Lily Shane's character, and
a very real glamour which was the
author's signal accomplishment in the
portrayal of the gradual decay and
dissipation of a once lovely town
into a droll, smoke-stained factory city,
belching out black smoke to ultimately
quench all the erstwhile beauty. But
in this second novel dealing with pret-
ty much the same material there is
lacking both convincing character
drawing, and all charm of atmosphere.
In a foreword the author says that to
the reader of his first book it must be
apparent that the character of El-
len Tolliver was exceeding slightly
treated, and therefore he had attempted in Possession to develop her in
far greater detail. The beautiful and
lovely Lily Shane's new beautiful
cousin is, then, the protagonist of this
drama of self-centered achievement.
It is simply the recounting of Ellen's
cyclical rise to power and world-re-
nown, through ruthless persistence and
e missive diligence. The fact that the
field of endeavor is music makes very little difference in Mr. Bromfield's develop-
ment of her character—she might better have been in-
terested in politics or "Big Business"
for all the music in her soul. I sup-
pose as the delineation of a type, the
frightened-gold-regardless-of-all-obstacles-type, Ellen has a certain fascination
for the reader. At all events there
was little else that could have dragged
this reader through the 409 some pages
which Mr. Bromfield has considered
adequate. Except for the character of
Grandpa Tolliver there is not one per-
son in the book who is in the least bit
unusual or the least bit adroitly
drawn; the New York Society life no
less than the Parisian demi-monde in
which Lily, and Maggie herself, reside
is out of focus and false. One rather
dreads the prospect so confidently fore-
told, of further novels from this writ-
er's pen unless he contrives to recap-
ture much of the glamour and force
of his earlier work.

CARAVAN. By John Galsworthy. New
York, Scribner's, 1925.

We have known Mr. Galsworthy as a dramatist and as a novelist for many
years, but we have seldom thought of
him as a writer of short tales until
now,—with the coming of Caravan.
This fat new volume contains fifty-six
tales, written over a period of twen-
ty-three years. Some are but the
shortests of sketches, others little nov-
els running on to eighty pages, but all are written with that biting vividness of phrase and insight into human problems that made the Forgyte Saga so memorable.

Of the longer stories, perhaps The Apple Tree is the most charming; a tale of young love in an English countryside, it breathes the scent of apple blossoms above its essential tragedy. The self-questioning of the young poet and his ardent reaction to his Megan, make excellent material for reading aloud. The other longer novellette, The Stoic, has been boldly put upon the stage as Old English, but this tale of the magnificent old probator who dies having his own way, is more satisfying on the printed page.

Among the shorter sketches are studies of strange characters like the old flute player who collected stray cats, and the old crossing sweeper who would not give up. These figures are described with an economy of phrase that makes them stand carved out in memory. No matter how short the little tale may be, there is some poignant moment revealed in it. Surely nothing could be more vivid than the simple telling of a boy’s disillusionment in A Long Ago Affair, or a more astonishing picture than the condemned dancer dancing for the nuns in Saltc Pro Nobis.

But after all one enjoys Galsworthy not only for his brilliant technique and living characters, but because he makes us think. The story the small group in this that does not raise some question about a human problem. The case is laid before us, but it is never solved. Galsworthy may be asking questions, but he is no moralist. First of all he is a story teller, and it is still afterwards that the reader sees the question—the story comes first. Perhaps that is why the book is so fascinating.

1925.

Anatole France Himself, Jean Jacques Brousson. Lippincott, 1925. Translated by John Pollock from Anatole France en Pantouflies.

For those who believe in the inevitable shaping of a man’s art by his life, these brilliantly random bages, the French Academician’s last days will strengthen the ban against such works as the Hummer’s Tale, and the God’s Athis. The tang of Gallicism permeates the careless artistry of Brousson’s memories, admitting no squawmishness, and frequently more than satiating. The incidents, selected with what one feels to be absolute fidelity, photograph rather than shadow not mellow ripeness but decadence. Here is no genial St. Nicholas, with a white beard, but a sardonic old man, lively beyond the limits of accepted taste, and rejoin-

ing in it. We witness him dragged out of bed by his domestic Chloe, sent through the ritual of a dress suit; puzzled by the choice of his omnipresent skull-cap; clapping to his bosom the friend he has just maligned with painful accuracy; selling the hateful of books sent by admirers; faddling his collection of Roman antiquities; and worried by the wit of “Madame.” Most interesting of all, we see the laborious process of his writing, and note the numbered rules by which he attains the perfection of his style, scissors his sentences to half their bulk, correcting even to an eighth draft. We are amused by his wariness of scholars, whom he will not give the chance of finding faulty information in his footnotes; we laugh with him at the audience which listens so respectfully to his studied spontaneity of his stories; we wonder at the bitterness with which he points epigrams against his enemies—a bitterness comparable to that of Martial and as devastating. The criticism to be made of the “Master” even in his most evident lapses is left to the reader. The writer is concerned only with the clarity of his exposition.

For this reason, perhaps, Anatole France en Pantouflies is the strongest of the six biographical books which have followed upon the great author’s death. Brousson shows himself an apt pupil and an admirable stylist. The brightness and vigor of his phrasing and the emphasis of his own impression are a tribute to his wellbeloved, if erring “Master.”

TWO POTENTIAL CONTESTANTS — FOR THE PULITZER PRIZE


These two novels have nothing in common but the general excellence, and the fact that already critical opinion has singled them out for the annual Pulitzer award for the piece of fiction most representative of the highest standards in American letters for 1925. The author of the first named of these books, Du Bose Heyward, is familiar to Wellesley as the writer of Carolina Chambers and other poems dealing largely with Charleston, and the mountain villages of the Alloghenes. In this book, his first novel, he has written about a negro beggar in Charleston. Simply regarded as a picture of the primitive fears, superstitions and habits, this book is unique, but it does more than that: it presents Porgy in a few suggestive strokes as one of the most wittily appealing characters in fiction. He is quite shameless in his methods of obtaining a livelihood, and utterly childlike in his faith that Beer would be loyal to him. The author has described certain scenes with a felicity and an accuracy of detail that leave the impression of absolute authenticity: the game of craps with which the book opens, the pulley court in which the centers in the book have their dwelling, the terrifying thunder storm which sweeps and crashes over the bay leaving destruction in its wake. It isn’t simply photography, for the author has so steeped himself in the negative psychology that everything he mentions is intangibly imbued with it, and that quality which most ardently compels itself about the book is the one upon which the reviewer finds it impossible to place a dissecting finger. Almost unknowingly one is struck with the greatness of the book, its utter simplicity, its poignancy and its charm, and one cannot truly state just what are the ingredients.

The Perennial Bachelor is the product of the Harper Story Competition that was held last spring, and it proved itself a powerful encouragement for many competition editors in future. It is the story of a family’s unremittent sacrifice for the benefit of Victor, the young brother, who in no way approximates their devotion, who is in fact quite unconscious of any self-denial on the part of his mother and sisters, and who is ironically enough the cause of their financial ruin and ultimate social ostracism. His very unawareness heightens the tragedy of their downfall from prosperous circumstances to shabby poverty, from social distinction to unimportant objects of charity and derision.

By far the best portions of the book come in the beginning where one sees the frivolous, pretty and utterly incompetent Mrs. Cameron, chattering about among the insignia, fops and other symbols of a more carefree and more cluttered time. It is all so pretty and so harmless, and the author seems to be enjoying herself in these surroundings so wholeheartedly that it seems almost a pity that she had to carry the story down to the present in order to demonstrate her point. Miss Parrish’s characterization is as farworn sought as any in modern fiction, her sense of dramatic values admirable, her narrative at all times plausible and consistent, and her style amusingly fresh and glib. It is often sheer cleverness that captures the reader’s fancy, as, for instance, in this episode:

“Lunch on Sundays was cold, to save the servants. There was Saturday’s cold roast beef, and bread and butter, and then a great tin pan of solidified sour milk, slippery and pale, called ‘bally-coleher’ and eaten enthusiastically with cream and sugar. The little girls didn’t like it, but Mama said, ‘Eat it up,’ so they ate it up. But Victor wouldn’t, so he had apple jelly. Mama said he was delicate and his appetite must be tempted.”