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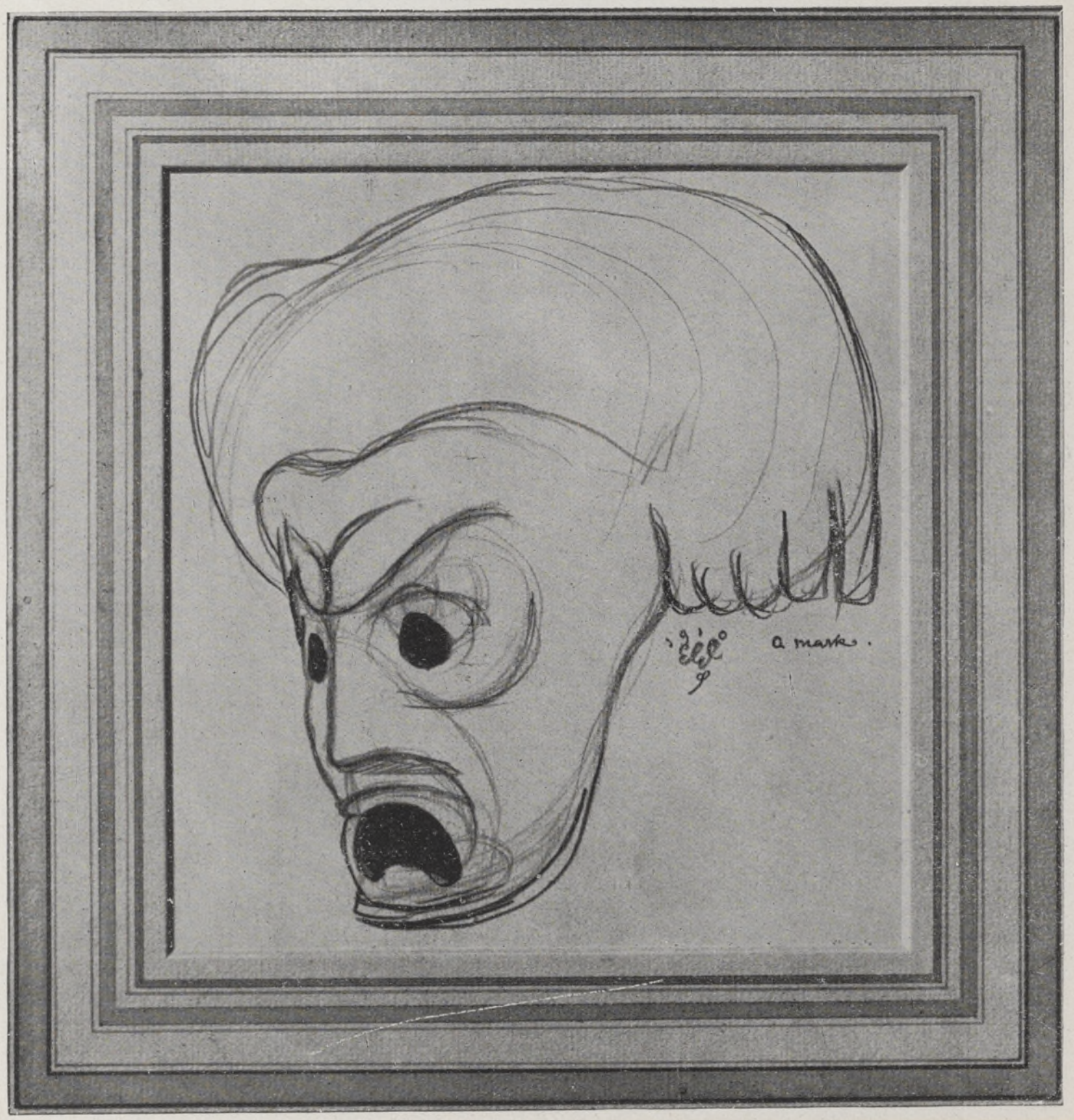
SNAKES, MONGOOSES, SNAKE-CHARMERS AND THE LIKE.

I have a friend who would give a price for those long fingers all of one
length —
those hideous bird's claws, for that rich looking snake and the mon-
goose — .
products of the country in which everything is hard work, the country
of the grass-getter,
the torch-bearer, the dog-servant, the message-bearer, the holy-man.
Engrossed in this distinguished worm nearly as wild and as fierce as
the day it was captured,
he gazes as if incapable of looking at anything with a view to analysis.
" The slight snake rippling quickly through the grass,
the leisurely tortoise with its pied back,
the chameleon passing from twig to stone, from stone to straw, "
lit his imagination at one time ; his admiration now converges upon this :
thick, not heavy, it stands up from its travelling-basket,
the essentially Greek, the plastic animal, all of a piece from nose to tail ;
one is compelled to look at it as at the shadows of the Alps
imprisoning in their folds like flies in amber, the rhythms of the
skating-rink.
This animal to which from the earliest times, importance has attached,
fine as its worshippers have said — for what was it invented ?
To show that when intelligence in its pure form
has embarked on a train of thought which is unproductive, it will come
back ?
We do not know ; the only positive thing about it is its shape, but why
protest ?
The passion for setting people right is in itself an afflictive disease.
Distaste which takes no credit to itself is best.

MARIANNE MOORE.



GORDON CRAIG. Tragic mask.

DEDICATED TO THE ENEMY.

With a prayer that they will be stronger
more malicious and anyhow funnier
than they have been in the past.

I.

Have I made a mistake. . . ? I mean am I playing the game. . . ?

To begin with, is it Hockey — Polo — Cricket — Politics, or is it Theatres ? Which of these Games have we come here to play ?

I must say that I was of the opinion that the Game was Theatres. And I am forced to add that I even took Theatres to be a game as good as the best, and to be played according to the best rules of the Tradition.

These rules, as we all know or can find out, date far back and are not the invention of any one city.

The conditions under which this game is played are sometimes poor — it rains or it shines — but if it is not always fair weather it is not always foul — and if it is really Theatres that we are playing I think everyone who cares about Sport will agree with me that it's just as easy to play the game fairly and squarely — even if since time immemorial it has been played by some nations, groups — even groups (*small groups*) in our nation — in anything but a fair and square manner.

It is a game — it is a sport — this playing at Theatres. I know you'll all admit so much . . . . The first point I am doubtful about is whether it's Theatres that our Stage folk are playing at to-day or something else — and then whether I and they are both playing the game straight.

If I am, they are not ; if they are, then I am not.

Who is umpire ? There seems to be but one, and that is the Public.

Yet the Public does not act as umpire at the decent game of cricket. One expert, skilled and watchful, careful and just, decides.

I suppose then that it is the Critics who act as umpire in our game.

Mr. Lamb, Mr. Hazlitt of old ; Mr. Shaw, Mr. Beerbohm but just lately, and now Mr. Walkley, Mr. Pitt Robbins, and presumably Mr. Archer forever.

Now I never knew anyone less fitted to be an umpire in the Theatre game than Mr. Archer.

A very remarkable man, a scholar, qualified for any post in the Government service, worthy, I am told, even to be ambassador, this extraordinary figure does not really know what is to be known about the Theatre. . . and is therefore utterly disqualified to give the lead to Dramatic Criticism.

To whom then can I put the query "How's that, umpire ?" when I see that our umpire has no notion of what's what ? And if, even in so humble a place as that of umpire we find the wrong man, then, at the crucial moment, when the field cries "How's that, umpire?" what harm may not happen to the old game ? . . . a chaotic state may result. . . trickery licensed.

Of Mr. Archer's opinions I will not speak. They are as good as another man's . . . in matters of state, in matters of Carnegie and other trusts I hear they are infallible. It is his facts, his dates, I am concerned with. What was, and when it was, is what Mr. Archer should know. . . and doesn't know.

When he wrote that old libel "The Fashionable Tragedian", he proved what a diplomat he might have become, but he ticketed himself once and forever as no critic. . . A critic must be impartial ; must not take sides. It's the thing, the game itself, he is to think of ; and to think of that — to discern, to judge, a critic must know. He may not be able to write plays (I hear Mr. Archer writes admirable plays) ; he may not be able to act, to design, or to direct ; but he must know how it's done. . . *what its difficulties*. . . and what is the history of the craft of playmaking, acting, mise-en-scène, décors, lighting, costume, and the history of the different developments which have taken place in our Theatrical Art in Italy, in France, in Germany, Spain, Russia, and eight or ten other parts of our globe. He must know this of modern developments not merely from hearsay. . . he must have seen and heard and recorded for himself.

But he must not dream that the facts recorded of the years 1866 to 1916 is all that he need to know : nor those facts culled from the usual text books, for the usual text books are trash. They repeat the same old fibs with the same young flourish. The same actors' names are mentioned over and over again. . . the same references made to the same celebrated actresses. . . and meantime some of the most interesting performers' names are utterly forgotten. . . and some of the greatest. Theatres such as Covent Garden, Drury Lane, the Opera House, Paris, and the Wagner Theatre in Bayreuth have volumes written on them . . . . all very proper this ; but the story of the Theatres of the world does not begin and end in that sort of thing.

We hear in Magazines and in Books of Inigo Jones, De Loutherbourgh, Clarkson Stanfield, Telbin, Planché, Hottenroth, Racinet, Craven ; and that's all very right and proper too ; but again, the story of the Scenic craft does not begin with Inigo Jones and end with Craven. It does not even end with Bakst, Craig, or Appia. It may even begin with them. The umpire must say.

And so as I am one in this Game of Theatres and the umpire 's presumably somewhere about, I, on behalf of my own particular friends. . . and I count some of the most brilliant and all of the most profound players as my friends. . . ask, is this the noble old game of Theatres that we are playing — and am I, and are they, playing it fairly and squarely ?

I would illustrate my point.

A great master of scenography and a young one are both friends of mine. We see none of the work of the first in a Theatre of Europe to-day because he has an objection to being pelted by ignorance with the eggs and oranges supplied by intrigue. . . Now then, umpire . . . what are you doing that you say nothing when you see foul play in our sport ?

The second brings his work to the Theatre and receives exaggerated praise for what is bad in it, and no understanding at all for what are sure signs of a possible development.

The work of these two men is ignorantly received ; . . . at the same time the work of four of their imitators is hailed as epoch-making marvels.

. . . How's *that*, umpire ? . . .

And how long is that to be, umpire ?

For if I am playing at Theatres, and if I and my friends are playing the game, I expect the rest of the field to be told it is to respect the rules of the game or clear out.

But who is to bring the rogues to order ?

No one can do this but the Critics.

And so I hope that our English Critics will not think that the old text books of past ages and hearsay about this age, is enough to qualify even an Ambassador to be Dramatic Critic. . . to be umpire in the Game of Theatres.

II.

This was written and in the Publishers' hands before I became aware of a very queer thing — a very queer thing indeed — as you shall hear.

Telling you about it demands a little patience from us both — you and myself — for to tell you I must talk a little of myself . . . a thing we generally avoid in our books.

Now for the queer thing.

It appears that I am held to be anti-English !

That is the whisper which a certain gang keeps up, and, when caught whispering, comes out with it honestly. . . " honest, honest Iago ". . . " so are they all, all honourable — Iagos. "

I am " decrying England " because I think and say that the state of its

Theatre to-day is preposterous. I who hate to see England displaying the worst theatrical art instead of the best — you who hate that too — I in agreement with you. Are we all anti-English then?

And here the spot is touched. For I understand from certain unprejudiced quarters... from those who ought to know... that in some respects I represent the best in theatrical art.

There we have it.

The whispering then is "political" ... Theatrical political — the ancient comic business, nothing but that — a malicious clique's cackle.

Were I a writer such as Beerbohm, a painter such as Pryde, or a musician, there would be really absolutely no need for me to take the slightest note of what the enemy does or says.

But unfortunately this enemy knows that by chatter and lies it can prevent me from getting my Theatre, and thus prevent me from doing my work. I'll fight that.

I'd prefer that the Press and others should do the fighting while I get on with my work; but as no one takes up the cudgels it's left to me to go hell for leather on my own.

Any old lie to cheat England out of the best so that the tenth best may have a chance...

I would like you to understand me that I myself think pretty well of myself as an artist of the theatre — so thinks every artist of himself if he be worth his salt, so don't apologize for me.

The old artists knew their worth — the new ones do so too. The artists in the Theatre of England are not many, because something nowadays enslaves the mind to such an extent that it has no place nor time to grow in them. Something cramps and withers it... and backbiting is rampant.

The mind of the great dramatist is radiant and free — great actors must have like minds: the eye of the great dramatist sees and does not shirk seeing truth — the great actors must see the same. Yet how can the mind, the eye, or the mind's eye see anything when the man is willing to accept personal comfort in exchange for freedom of mind?

All that we have here (in London especially), all comforts and luxuries like cosy houses — rooms — glorious food — perfect transport in tubes, in buses, in motors — perfect organization so far as externals are concerned — bric-à-brac galore to indulge our "collecting" instincts — our pre-war fads and fancies catered to with the utmost care — our tobacconists too good for words — the shops overflowing with creature-comforts of every kind... how can all this but act as a narcotic on us at an hour when what we want to do is dependent on

great sacrifices — (not a newspaper phrase, but a reality) — and when what we must do and would willingly do if we were free is strangled by self-indulgence. . .

We hear on all sides the catch-phrases about having nothing . . . no servants, no money, no this, no that ; whereas in England we have *everything*. Let us go to where those people dwell who really have nothing, and learn how preferable it is when great things have to be achieved. By " nothing " I mean of course — and understand me clearly — nothing for themselves but bare necessities . . . and *everything* for their work . . their great ideas . . their cause . . . their labours.

For while a man does not need all these coddling personal comforts. . · servants three or even two, silver, fine linen, and the hundred and one unnecessary creature *comforts*, he does need (we all need) the necessities, the luxuries of his labour ; . . . machines, tools, materials, and the means to labour like giants . *giant means.*

And then, after all those necessities for which millions should be set aside by the State, or given by those who have it if a State is too poor. . . and if we deserved well after our labours, I for one would not decry the little luxuries we might then have won a right to desire and surplus wages to pay for. But nowadays everyone has all these things before his work has begun, and all for being a patient ass — patient ass is, I think, William Blake's phrase for us.

It's of artists and craftsmen I speak, and chiefly of those artists and craftsmen in our trade — the Theatrical one.

A fine trade too — a good job — a great old game — but one which should be played fairly and squarely.

III.

To play a game would seem to us all awfully easy : . . . a game of draughts, — hockey, — football, — cricket, — any happy sport.

But, there are rules.

One of these is so simple that every sportsman observes it. It is the first natural and ancient rule of " Don't cheat. " For if you cheat you are not playing the game.

And this explains how it is that so few people are really playing the game.

The rule is *to win the game fairly or to lose it* ; and it is between these two tasks, that of playing fair or losing, that many of us come to stop playing games altogether.

The difficulties are nothing. — One sole thing stops the game ; . . . when those against whom one plays take out a licence to cheat. A large minority of those playing the Theatrical game are actually allowed to hold such a licence.

GORDON CRAIG. Mask for a sea captain.

That licence is called " commercialism ". Commercialism in the Arts is the licence sold by rogues to rogues, and which cheats the nation.

The English People are fond of Sport, games of Sport, because nothing gives them the grand feeling so much as to play fair and to see fair play.

To play the game well — to keep the rules — not to cheat, trip or sneak, is to play fair.

The Theatre is my game, and I shall play it fair.

That's why I will lend no ear to those people who from a natural, if exaggerated, anxiety lest I lose the game, come to me with agitated doubts and fears as to my powers, and more or less beg me to put tin-tacks on the course — dope the other fellows — and bribe the umpire's wife.

I had better tell you without any more ado that I do not intend to do as they kindly suggest.

It appears that every " Napoleon " does this, every great statesman, every great financier ; in short, every great public figure.

It appears so, for a few of my friends say so.

I believe they exaggerate.

I believe they are a little over-anxious, and I think, as I said, I will play fair right through.

Let us look at the friendly arguments.

1st. You need money to realize your ideas.

2nd. You need the whole Press of Europe.

3rd. You need to advertise on a stupendous scale.

" Cadam soap ", says one to me, " is the success of the age ; — it's a good soap — but it took great sums of money to advertise it — and advertisement is all. "

" How should I obtain this petty cash ? " say I, " tell me. "

And then I hear strange things as they unveil their innermost thoughts. . . I hear what it is that would entitle me to the licence to cheat.

From what they say it would appear that to begin with I *must* positively bribe the umpire's wife — not forgetting his sister, daughter, and nieces —

This bribery takes a hundred different fantastic shapes.

The Millionaire is to be bamboozled. Commence by lying to his best friend — she will manage to trip him up, it appears — for the sake of the art.

Hang around and lend a hand as he comes down the dark lane some foggy evening. . . and rob him. . . Hold him up, in short.

" Napoleon did it " — " they all do it " — besides, millionaires, mean and selfish, deserve it.

Extraordinary argument.

In other words they propose that I should hit below the belt — when the umpire is dallying with the eye of his best girl and can't see for love —

Glorious proposition —

" Is this done everywhere ? " I ask.

" Oh yes, everywhere. "

" And which land does it best, would you say ? "

" Oh, they all do it well — but the style is sometimes finer in one land than in another. "

" Is there a fine way of hitting below the belt ? "

" Yes — yes — lots of fine ways ; some of the fine ways are a bit common, but most are exceptionally fine. You can use blackmail[1] — or perjury is pretty good — and you can employ these two in countless ways. "

" Perhaps the finest, most gallant way is to employ all the liars you know and feed them with little titbits ; — you pay them, of course, some in one kind of coin, others in another. "

" Yes, yes, it's very expensive... that's why you need the money — the Press and Advertisement.

" Above all you must remember always to bear in mind that there is a higher and a lower nature in everyone and never fail to appeal to their lowest nature. "

" All this is so useful, " one murmurs back, — " tell me more : tell me how I should do this with the Theatre. "

" The Theatre ! " cries my well-wisher — " why, the Theatre offers you untold opportunities of this kind.

" Take the Ballet, for example... What a field ! "

" Yes, " I reply, forgetting what this meant for a moment ; " it is a field I love very much. "

" Love, — I wasn't talking of that. Prostitution is what I mean. There never was such a genuinely decent field for prostitution as that offered by the Ballet — if you know how to handle it... and make it respectable — "

And then the Curtain rose.

The spectacle revealed was certainly the most decent, the most respectable bit of cheating I have ever seen or heard of. But to the eye all was more than Victorian — to the ear it was positively Cromwellian.

Nothing at all risque like Maud Allen.

Nothing genuinely erotic like " Aphrodite. "

There on the stage was the umpire's wife — his sister — his daughters —

[1] Lest you should think I am jesting, my reader, I would remind you that we none of us make jokes about such subjects. It's the gaudy truth I have the pleasure of telling you. People really do talk to me like this.

his nieces — his best girls : all of them there. . . a cabal of propriety. . . and every Jack girl of them a respectable cheat.

The Ballet performance was entitled

"Swindling Man."
"Colossal programme."

I enjoyed the evening hugely and came out.

But not before I had looked round the house and listened to the audience chatting, and had seen and heard. . . wonders.

So then, — that's the little game, is it ? . . .

The Art of the Theatre.

Then I will play the game fair to the end, and mind all you boys do the same. For this other thing is not worth the halfpenny dip which illumines a rotten age — if what I am told be true.

***

And indeed it is a rotten age the minute you agree that it's so.

Yet now when I admit no such thing — behold, this rotten age with its swindle falls back and takes its place — at the servants' table. The masters are sitting elsewhere — Heaven knows ; — and we, the artists, sit in the Gallery with the Gods. . .

Who said — who says — 'tis a rotten affair, this life, this age ; did I ? — no, I objected solely to the custom of cheating at cards and art. I find the rest of it superb.

Because a greatly gifted singer cannot say one decent word for the whole show, what matter is that ? — if a great actress greatly endowed chooses to waste her spare moments picking holes in the universe and her fellow men, what matters that ? — If a great statesman be incapable in every other respect but statesmanship that is nothing for those of us who intend playing the game.

Because the great are so weak, is that any reason for us to shake our heads and get a fixed and silly idea therein ?

If the great must be small, let them — there is heaps of room at the servants' table — let them be great there.

Because these great servants like the Cinema for its popularity — like vulgarity — regret none of their own — raise a noise and the dust, what matter that to us who by chance prefer to be seated at the other table ? If we eat less at the upper table than these great ones, what of that either ? — "Come down here,"

they yell all through dinner; " come down 'ere and join the great and you'll 'ave all you want. " But we've a kind of fancy that we have all we want seated with the Gods in the gallery — we feel anyhow that we have paid for our seats.

The chief thing we want we have — that is singleness of purpose and the power of not altering one's mind. . . and the power to sacrifice some or all of our little personal ego for a productive egoism which believes that *the thing* is greater than the man. . . the work of art greater than the performer.

***

Did you ever change your mind ?. . . about something you believed in ?... Well, then, you know what it's like. . . and what the loss.

To change the mind is the greatest sorrow. I have often changed it. . . but not about the Theatre. Not on your life ! as they say in America.

In 1900 I asked for money to start a School for the Theatre in London.

" Do a production, " they replied, " and then you will be able to get all you want."

I did one. " Dido and Aeneas, " 1900, Hampstead Conservatoire, N. W. London.

I asked for support for a School.

" Do one more production, " they replied, " and you will be able to get all you want."

I did one more. " The Masque of Love, " 1901, Coronet Theatre, Notting Hill, S. W. London.

I asked for support for a School.

" Do just one more production to show people what you want and you will be able to get everything you want. "

I did one more. " Acis and Galatea, " 1902, Queen's Theatre, W. C. London.

I asked for support for a School.

" No, no, " they replied, " You must do one more production to show what you can do, and you will find everyone willing to support your school afterwards. "

I did one more — two more — three more.

" Sword and Song, " " The Vikings, " and " Much Ado about Nothing, " 1903, Shaftesbury Theatre, W. London ; Imperial Theatre, W. London.

I then asked again for support for a School.

You understand that I hold the same opinion to-day I then held, which is that without a school or workshops in which I, the workman, can make and perfect a machine (and by that I mean a small but well-organized army of workmen) all the productions must be tenth rate instead of first-rate. To make a

production first-rate endless experiment is necessary: endless because out of thirty experiments possibly only two may prove of any value.

In 1904 I produced other plays, or part plays, in Germany and elsewhere, . . . and later on I asked once again for a school. (Of course I asked England, England being my land and celebrated for fair play in all games).

I was told I ought to produce " one more play, and *then*, " . . . etc., etc.

So I found the best equipped theatre in Europe and did one more play, " Hamlet, " 1911, Moscow Art Theatre, Russia, N.

Not that I believed for one moment that this was the way to do a good piece of work; — in fact I was sure that if I played the game in the Moscow Art Theatre I should not produce the thing as I wanted.

Never mind; I would do it — and see if the others were pleased.

It seems they were. — I was not. — It has already run, I am told, over four hundred nights.

I then asked for my School. " No, you must produce *one* more play, " etc., etc., they said.

And there I struck [1] . . . And I pointed to the eight plays I had produced in 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, and 1911, and reminded them of their promises.

And no sooner had I struck than my School came.

It came in 1913; it went in 1914. . . for the war swept it away, and my supporter did not see the value of keeping the engine fires " banked. " So the fires went out.

It is a rare business, as you know, to relight the fires once they are allowed to go out.

And now I have begun to ask once more for my School. . . for my workshops.

The reply is curious and original: it is, " If you will produce *one* play we are quite sure that afterwards, " etc., etc.

That much repeated phrase, that very promising nothing, has proved worthless: and yet some friends dear to me have uttered it and still utter it.

I take long to decide that others are wrong and that I am right. I would far rather be wrong with the others than right and alone. Yet I fear I am right in this case.

If anything has proved right it is that what I asked for in 1900 and asked for in 1913, and still for ask in 1922, is right. . . and my friends wrong.

Now the reason why good friends join in this general cry of " Produce *one* more play, " etc., etc., is because they see that all games are to-day being played

[1] And there I still strike. I produce no more plays till I have my School.

by the aid of a bit of cheating. . . a bit or a good deal. The have joined in the swindle — it has agreed with them — and they are surprised it don't agree with me.

If they are correct, one must, as I said above, *cheat* the millionaire out of his millions, setting spies on to him at the psychological physiological moment when he is unsuspecting to lure out of his pocket his blank cheque.

I disagree with this.

One must (it would seem) cheat the actors by promises, fulsome praise, and every other dope used upon the obstinate and the ignorant. One must purchase the Press !. . . Purchase ? Hoity toity, *I* purchase what is already one of my truest friends ! One must, in short, cheat from first to last.

I don't think I will.

I didn't think I would. . . and I take this opportunity of showing how much worth lies in that guarantee that support will come " if you will produce just one more play. "

Fudge, ladies ! — fudge, gentlemen !

And I am most distinctly on strike again. . . a strike of one against two hundred thousand.

I would never urge another to strike with me because, again, *that* is not playing the game.

That is not understanding the game.

That is merely underestimating one's own powers.

That is conspiracy.

The Dramatic Art in England is excellent — only it's not dramatic — and there is no art to it.

This has come about because one of the principal rules of the game has been broken.

This rule is " never say the third-best is good at the expense of the first-best and at the expense of the public. "

The advertisement puts it like this :

" Ask for Promethian Grates. "

" Don't be put off with any just as good. "

(*To be continued*)

GORDON CRAIG.

THE DEATH OF ENGLAND.

Slowly, athwart the terrible fierce sunlight that marks a blasted summer, the body of England, rigid and stiffened in death, is borne to its last long rest.

Horse-chestnuts lift ten thousand waxen candles before it ; thrushes intone their office in plaintive cadences ; the faint grey-purple incense of lilac is wafted into the air ; bees cease their murmurings ; and the swallow, the blithe cross-bearer of the sky, is silent.

From a million starving faces, pale and stunned with excess of suffering, a lonely silent plaint of irremediable misery climbs softly, like the great wailing notes of an endless De Profundis, into the ashen-blue vault of the sky.

Slowly athwart the terrible days that crawl forward to where the sun is offered up on the altar of midsummer, the body of England, broken with weariness, is borne to the slow wailings of the chant which the winds weave about it, and the dropping of wax-white petals from innumerable hawthorn trees.

Eternal rest grant her, O Lord, and the peace of the night that passes all understanding.

IN THE GALLERY OF SKULLS.

Shelf above shelf, there stretches out before me whatever way I go, a long straight gallery lined with yellow skulls. Millions of insignificant, vacant, hollow-eyed and grinning-toothed brain-cases of men, containing under the domes of their foreheads, only vacuity and silence. Varying but little in size or in shape, from the Hottentot or the cave-man to the modern captain of industry, from the artist who organized his surging dreams on stone or in canvas, to the wise scientist pondering life in patience, or the idiot negro boy with empty eyes and slobbering lips, who suffered for a few years the horror of living darkness before vanishing back into eternity. Delicate skulls of infants, tooth-

less skulls of old men, shadowy fragile skulls of those dead before birth ; their flesh is long since grass, ferns, ashes, dust, their thoughts are in me or in millions of my kind. They have all gone under, consigning to the silence their dreams unspoken Assuming that it is equally useless to love or to hate; yet the solid material of their bodies perishes and vanishes with the past, their childish vain dream of eternity renews itself in me and in you every day, shaping the deathless adornment of that song in which we may all partake for a moment. A miracle — of bodiless electric being — that surrounded and enwalled as we are with staring death before and behind us, we smile, we leap, we dance, we fight, we exist, we drop tears of bitterness on failure, and grasp still desperately for the sharp bodiless laurel of success. What more miracle than this need we seek, O men, O brothers, to prove that we become one with the gods which we, in our horror of truth and of death, incessantly destroy and create ?

Some day this world too will become an empty, vacant skull ; and the sun, exulting in life, rushing off to warm other planets, will look deeply into the hollow sockets that once were seas ; will count the scars that once were mighty cities, will trace the furrows that once were roadways, canals, and rivers, and then will pass on silently down its own vast gallery of death to an unknown end.

THE SECRET OF MARS.

Some people say that the planet Mars is uninhabited. But this is not true, for I have been there and seen it.

Many centuries ago, the Martians fought their last great war ; many centuries ago they organized a life scientifically perfect.

But for all that, they were not content ; and their planet, like their hearts, began growing colder every year.

Then one day they suddenly decided to build a great tower to a forgotten God ; and because they were weary of their machines, they decided that no stone of it should be cut by anything else but hammer and chisel and human hands.

Centuries they must have laboured, for the building as it stands is immense in desolation. It is surrounded with a forest of columns for ten miles ; at the intersection of enormous aisles, poised above the glory of huge leaping arches, stands the lantern-tower unfinished, ten thousand feet high.

Upon the pavement below it lies the body of the last workman, his trowel uplifted, and his hand ready to place a stone. His form is still perfect, for it is frozen in death.

On the tower rests the treasure of the perpetual snow; you would not say that Mars is uninhabited, could you hear the groans that the settling stone makes at sunrise or when the evening drifts swiftly across the barren planet.

THE NEW WORLD.

Many centuries before the old world came to an end, it had been realised by the intelligent that the old planet was in a bad way; and that it was with her, to use an expression current in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, "merely a question of time." Suicides became immediately fashionable; and of all the forms of suicide, the "suicide à deux" was most popular. Many lovers, wishing to marry, but realising the futility of propagating their species, invested their savings in aeroplanes powerful enough to overcome the force of gravity and to launch them into the oblivion of space, from which they never returned.

Among these there were two equally noted for their wealth and their beauty. Their private affairs had been discussed in many papers; their pictures hung in many homes; their respective talents were the unfailing theme of millions of enterprising newsagents. Fame and fortune might have been theirs for the asking; yet they chose, with a perversity worthy of a better cause, to launch themselves forth into space for their honeymoon.

After the aeroplane had carried them at an enormous speed far beyond the confines of this planet, despite the automatic supply of oxygen they were breathing, this couple suddenly fainted. When they recovered themselves a few moments later, they were lying together amid the wreckage of their machine on a plain covered with green moss, in the midst of a gigantic virgin forest. On account of the rapidity of their transit, their clothes had been completely torn from their bodies. Otherwise they were uninjured, except for a shock to the brain which made them incapable of remembering whence they came, or of speaking the least word. They were awakened as out of a deep sleep, upon a new planet of which they had not the least knowledge.

The woman wakened the first and seeing the man asleep, went towards a near-by tree and began pulling leaves from it and fastening them together in the shape of garments for her body. The man, startled by the unexpected movement of a serpent in the branches, wakened too and went towards the woman, babbling with startled lips incomprehensible phrases in a new speech.

THE WAY OF DUST.

Dust, grey colourless dust, soft, fluffy, velvety, dust that sweeps over endless deserts, sweeps into the crevices of buildings, dust that emerges from beaten carpets, dust that rises from this paper, blurs my weary vision at last.

Man is the maker of dust; dust stirs beneath his feet; dust rises from the labour of his hands; dust increases in every fire he has made; dust takes all his works; the ink upon this page is only dust.

In the ash-heap is salvation, and in the dust of the grave is all attainment.

Far beyond the last of the planets, beyond Orion and the Milky Way, lie shapeless clouds of dust, relics of innumerable worlds on which others have also lived and suffered. In the heart of the divine darkness this dust of the universe stirs and dances, and rekindles in itself, through perpetual movement, the germ of universal life and the light of common day.

Embracing this dust, I embrace all things; summoning forth this dust, I summon also God; desiring only this dust, I desire forever immortality.

I am but an infinitesimal particle of casual dust, and it matters nothing to my destiny if I live here amongst men or beyond the most distant star.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER.

IF YOU HAD THREE HUSBANDS.

If you had three husbands.
If you had three husbands.
If you had three husbands, well not exactly that.

If you had three husbands would you be willing to take everything and be satisfied to live in Belmost in a large house with a view and plenty of flowers and neighbors, neighbors who were cousins and some friends who did not say anything.

This is what happened.
She expressed everything.
She is worthy of signing a will.
And mentioning what she wished.

She was brought up by her mother. She had meaning and she was careful in reading. She read marvelously. She was pleased. She was aged thirty-nine. She was flavored by reason of much memory and recollection.

This is everything.

I cannot believe it.
I cannot realise it.
I cannot see it.
It is what happened.
First there was a wonder.
Really wonder.
Wonder by means of what.
Wonder by means of measures
Measuring what.
Heights.
How high.
A little.
This was not all.

There were well if you like there were wonderful spots such as were seen by a queen. This came to be a system. Really it was just by a treasure. What was a treasure. Apart from that.

Surely.

Rather.

In their beginning what was a delight. Not signing papers or anything or indeed in having a mother and two sisters. Not nearly enough were mentioned by telegraphing. It was a choice.

I ramble when I mention it.

Did she leave me any money.

I remember something.

I am not clear about what it was

When did I settle that.

I settled it yersterday.

Early Life.

They were not miserably young they were older than another. She was gliding. It is by nearly weekly leaning that it comes to be exact. It never was in dispute.

They were gayly not gaily gorgeous. They were not gorgeous at all. They were obliging. If you think so. If you think so glow. If you believe in light boys. They were never another.

It came to be seen that any beam of three rooms was not showy. They were proud to sit at mother. Slowly walking makes walking quicker. They have toys and not that in deceiving. They do not deceive them. No one is willing. No one could be cool and mother and divided and necessary and climatical and of origin and beneath that mean and be sun. It was strange in her cheek. Not strange to them or that.

A young one.

Not by mountains.

Not by oysters.

Not by hearing.

Not by round ways.

Not by circumference again.

Not by leaving luncheon.

Not by birth.

It doesn't make any difference when ten are born. Ten is never a number. Neither is six. Neither is four.

I will not mention it again.

Early days of shading.

Make a mouse in green.

Make a single piece of sun and make a violet bloom. Early piece of swimming makes a sun on time and makes it shine and warm to-day and sun and sun and not to stay and not to stay or away. Not to stay satin. Out from the whole wide world he chose her. Out from the whole wide world and that is what is said.

Family.

What is famine. It is plenty of another. What is famine. It is eating. What is famine. It is carving. Why is carving a wonderful thing. Because supper is over. This can happen again. Sums are seen.

Please be polite for mother. Lives of them. Call it shall it clothe it. Boil it. Why not color it black and never red or green. This is stubborn. I don't say so.

No opposition.

If you had a little likeness and hoped for more terror. If you had a refusal and were slender. If you had cuff-buttons and jackets and really astonishing kinds of fever would you stop talking. Would you not consider it necessary to talk over affairs.

It was a chance that made them never miss tea. They did not miss it because it was there. They did not mean to be particular. They invited their friends. They were not aching. It was noiseless and beside that they were clever. Who was clever. The way they had of seeing mother.

Mother was prepared.

They were caressing.

They had sound sense.

They were questioned.

They had likeness. Likeness to what. Likeness to loving. Who had likeness to loving. They had likeness to loving. Why did they have a likeness to loving. They had a likeness to loving because it was easily seen that they were immeasurable.

They were fixed by that, they were fixed, not licensed, they were seen, not treasured, they were announced, not restless, they were reasoning, not progressing. I do not wish to imply that there is any remedy for any defect.

I cannot state that any one was disappointed. I cannot state that any one was ever disappointed by willingly heaping much confusion in particular places. No confusion is reasonable. Anybody can be nervous.

They were nervous again.

This is wishing.

Why is wishing related to a ridiculous pretence of changing opposition to analysis. The answer to this is that nearly any one can faint. I don't mean to say that they don't like tennis.

Please be capable of sounds and shoulders. Please be capable of careful words. Please be capable of meaning to measure further.

They married there.

They were heroes.

Nobody believed papers.

Everybody believed colors.

I cannot exercise obligation.

I cannot believe cheating.

I cannot sober mother.

I cannot shut my heart.

I cannot cherish vice.

I cannot deceive all.

I cannot be odious.

I cannot see between.

Between what and most.

I cannot answer either.

Do be left over suddenly.

This is not advice.

No one knows so well what widening means. It means that yards are yards and so many of them are perfect. By that I mean I know.

This is not so.

I am not telling the story I am repeating what I have been reading.

What effects tenderness.

Not to remember the name.

Say it.

The time comes when it is natural to realise that solid advantages connect themselves with pages of extreme expression. This is never nervously pale. It is finely and authentically swollen by the time there is any rapid shouting.

I do like the word shouting. I do not mean that it gives me any pleasure. On the contrary I see that individual annoyances are increased by it but nevertheless I am earnestly persuasive concerning it. Why soothe why soothe each other.

This is not at all what is being said.

It happened very simply that they were married. They were naturally married and really the place to see it was in the reflection every one had of not

frightening not the least bit frightening enthusiasm. They were so exact and by nearly every one it was encouraged soothed and lamented. I do not say that they were interested.

Any years are early years and all years are occasions for recalling that she promised me something.

This is the way to write an address.

When they were engaged she said we are happy. When they were married she said we are happy. They talked about everything they talked about individual feeling. This is not what was said. They did not talk about disinterested obligation. They did not talk about pleasantness and circumstances. I do not mean to say that there was conversation. I do not organise a revision. I declare that there was no need of criticism. That there was no criticism. That there was breathing. By that I mean that lights have lanterns and are not huddled together when there is a low ceiling. By that I mean that it was separate. The ceiling was separated from the floor. Everywhere.

I could say that devotion was more merited than walking together. What do you mean. I mean that we all saw it.

When not by a beginning is there meadows and music, you can't call it that exactly, when not by a beginning, there is no beginning, I used to say there was a beginning, there is no beginning, when there is no beginning in a volume and there are parts, who can think.

This pencil was bought in Austria.

(*To be continued*).

GERTRUDE STEIN.

RAOUL DUFY — Painting.

Courtesy Bernheim Jeune - Paris.

RAOUL DUFY. Painting.

Courtesy Bernheim Jeune - Paris.

LADY OF SORROWS.

They laugh at her in Collierton, but with a queer, puzzled, false note in their laughter. And they tell tales and jokes about her ; but there fall lulls and breaks in the gossip even among the swarthy Russian, Lithuanian, German, Italian miners, as if these man brutes were suddenly moved to cross themselves and pray : " Mary, keep us from knowing why Simikoff's so crazy after funerals ! "

Collierton sprawls over a group of low hills in Southern Illinois. There is a rawness of atmosphere there, a helter-skelter shooting this way and that of streets, a hap-hazard jumble of shacks and yearning bungalows, a general impression that here are the crude, jagged, unworked elements of life, not the mingled, smoothly flowing stream of life as most folks know it. Here and there a church spire, usually topped by a cross, lifts itself above the confusion. On Center Street three cream-colored stone buildings endeavor to provide dignity — the federal post office, the Masonic temple, the Miners' Institute. Tootling interurban cars establish hourly connection with the world outside. The passengers on these cars smile as they ride through the business section of Collierton. They find it amusing that a Garavelli and a Schwartz, for instance, have formed a partnership in the grocery business.

Except for the shawled women, gossiping and haggling over their marketing and the school children trooping back and forth at intervals, you can't see the real people of Collierton until along about four o'clock in the afternoon. At about that time, on three sides of the town, whistles, each of a readily distinguished note, begin to blow ; and shortly afterwards special cars, motor trucks, and a dinky train on a belt line railroad dump into the streets the menfolk — whole squads of rough, smudgy creatures in clumping, heavy boots, with carbide lamps in their caps, enormous tin dinner pails under their arms, and rude jests or brawling complaints forever on their lips. These are the ones who laugh at Simikoff and break off in the midst of their laughing.

Simikoff, being English of native speech, is not counted a foreigner in Collierton. In happier circumstances, left to follow her natural bent, she would have been one of those priceless, respectable, serene house servants, now well-nigh extinct. But she married Michael Simikoff when she was young and foolish and she came to Collierton with him. Now she abides all alone in a one-

story gray frame cottage, much out of plumb, as if the winds of many years had blown it all askew. She flits about the dreary little yard like some stray bird unsummoned by migrating kindred.

So long as she bides in the little house or flits about the yard, no one notices her in particular. It is when her spare drab figure, hooded with its dingy shawl, snoops along the street that all beholders catch their breath and ask of themselves, if no one else is handy, "Who can be dead now?" She holds the record for snatching such news from the winds. Should the whistles of any mine blow one blast in the middle of the morning or some such dread unusual time, which means that a mine has had to close and that probably a fatality will go on the books of that pit and that all the locals will take a holiday for the burying, Simikoff, without apparent means of communication, can tell in the half hour who has been killed, how, and what the allowance to his family will be, figured from the day when the victim entered the pits to the day they bring him up to the light which he cannot see.

Now, the jesters in Collierton would attribute all this to a very bad taste for lurid news which leads Simikoff to haunt the house of death before the undertaker can hang decent crepe on the door. But Simikoff herself, properly inspired, to keener ears would tell a deeper story. One morning she knocked at the back door of her neighbor's house to borrow a cup of vinegar. In this house lived the young time-keeper and secretary for the greatest of the mines and his sweet young wife, to whom had recently been born their first child, a son. It was the hour for the baby's bath. Simikoff, suddenly all in a flutter, asked and was given permission to assist at the ceremony. She seated herself deferentially on the edge of a reed rocker, planted her shabby shoes carefully on the linoleum square before the stove, fixed her washed-out blue eyes adoringly on the squirming babe, and delivered herself of the following scraps of information, pausing now and then, adrift among her memories, until started anew by an artful question.

"You started out right, ain't you, with a boy? I always like to see a boy come first. My first one were a boy. We called him Harry after my brother, him as were killed in an explosion at sea. I worrited some about that, feeling that it might be bad luck to call a boy after a body that had come to such an end. But I always thought so much of my brother afore he were killed — and we called the first boy Harry, after him.

"Then come a girl. Rachel we called her. She were a good girl. Then come Paul. He were my last. Michael were crippled in Novak's wagon mine Paul's first birthday. Others we had, in between, four of them; but they never lived. Times were harder those days. My Paul's in heaven now fifteen years."

Came the first drifting pause, Simikoff nodding her head up and down, up and down.

" Yes, " she said in response to a question, " I went to the Maruka funeral yesterday. I went to two funerals yesterday. Did you ever know of a worse storm here ? The rain a pouring down and the wind a cutting through a body ? But I went to the funerals, though I says to Fannie Maruka in the morning, I says, 'It 's awful weather for funerals ! It minds me of the day my Harry were put away ! ' Fannie Maruka being just a day older than my Harry would have been. Twenty years ago they buried my Harry. Weather just like yesterday, the rain a pouring down and the wind a cutting through a body. And him only a lad of sixteen, one day fine and strong, the next laying in his coffin !

" Yes'm, he were killed in Skrainka Brothers' Mine Number 2. I didn't want him to work in the pits. Seems like I got afeared of the pits after Michael were hurted. Michael were never good for anything from that day. Seemed to get foolish like. I'd look at him setting in his arm chair all twisted and doddering and the horrors would get me. I wanted my Harry to get a job in Schwartz's store, but he laughed at me.

" ' Mom, ' he says, ' I will work in the mines. I'll get twice as much money and play days now and then. '

" ' Play days, ' I says, ' are all counted off on pay days. And you're too young to go down underground. '

" ' Pop, ' he says, ' worked in the pits when he were twelve years old. I'm fifteen. '

" ' And you see what he got for it, ' I says pointing to Michael in his chair. ' And all I got for it is so much added to his disability allowance for his working that length of time. Do not go into the pits, Harry. '

" But one day he come home, saying he had a job at Skrainka's Mine Number 2. And a year later I heared the whistles. You know the noise of Number 2's whistles — kinda hoarse like a steamboat. I says to Michael, I says, ' The pits have got Harry, too. ' And sure enough they brought him home. And Michael says to me, he says, ' The boys will give him a grand funeral. '

" And they did. But it were terrible weather, just like yesterday, when I says to Fannie Maruka, I says, ' It's an awful day for funerals. It minds me of the day they put my Harry away ; though, of course, the Maruka burying were nothing like my Harry's. You couldn't ask the pits to bury an old man in such grand way as they buried my first boy. "

Simikoff's eyes showed no tears. They still stared adoringly at the babe, who was on his stomach now, trying hard to get a good mouth hold on his mother's apron.

" Pert, ain't he ? " said Simikoff. " My Rachel were pert like that. She

come a year after Harry. She finished High School when she were only sixteen. It were partly for to keep her at school that Harry went into the pits. She got her a certificate to teach at the school at Caneyville, just outa the town, at seventeen.

" She had beaus, Rachel did. They used to fight over walking with her. She had blue eyes and soft yellow hair with curls like. She minded me of myself afore I got married to Michael. Her beaus were young men from the pits mostly, of course. But I says to her, I says, ' Have nought to do with the pits, Rachel. They got your father and they got your brother. They ought to be satisfied, but they never are, the hungry pits ! Have nought to do with the pits. '

" ' Mom, I won't, ' she says, like a good, smart girl. ' I hate'em too. '

" So she promised herself to a Danny Killoren, as drove an express truck from here to St. Louis and back again. In one way I did not want Rachel to marry. She were full young and the money she brought in from her teaching helped. But Danny Killoren were a fine man, he had a good business, and he had rented a flat in St. Louis for Rachel. He would be taking her away. I says to Michael, I says, ' The pits will never get Rachel, now. ' But Michael were getting foolisher and foolisher in the head, so he only sat and grinned at me. Mebbe he didn't rightly know what I said to him, but he gave me a chill, grinning so.

" It were in the fall of the year that Rachel promised herself to Danny Killoren. She would keep her school till Christmas and then wed with him. Then come a big strike in the pits, with the men grumbling and growling all over the town. I says to Rachel one morning, I says, ' Why don't you take the other road to your school ? It's longer, but you would not need to pass through the Russki settlement. '

" ' Mom ! ' she says, like a good, smart girl, ' I will after this. Just today I want to stop by and see how Sammy Sorkin is getting along. He broke his leg last week. '

" And the minute she stepped out of the door, I felt another terrible chill, like as if I had put my bare feet in the snow. And when I turned around, Michael were grinning to himself like he always did. ' Michael, ' I says, ' could the pits get Rachel, do you think ? ' But he only grinned.

" Rachel hadn't been gone ten minutes when I heared shooting. I says to Michael, I says, ' That's over Russki way. They have got Rachel. What for would they shoot my Rachel ? '

" Sure enough, it were Rachel. The men had been chasing strike-breakers. Half of the gang had drove a man down one street and the other half were waiting for him to turn the corner, to get him. My Rachel come first·

She had on a old cap of Harry's and a big coat and they shot her afore they could tell she were a woman.

" The miners brought her home. One of them were a beau of Rachel's. He says to me, he says, ' Mother Simikoff, I'd a sooner shot myself than Rachel. But we'll bury her. You don't need to worry about that. '

" Danny Killoren were by. He says then, ' No, I'll bury her. It is my right. '

" The miner says to me, he says, ' It's for you to say. You're her mother. Which shall it be ? '

" And I says to them, I says, ' The pits killed her. Leave the pits bury her. '

" And they did. She had a white plush coffin with silver handles and a blanket of flowers, though the snow lay thick on the ground. I've seen every girl's burying in town since, but none would compare with my Rachel's. "

The young mother, buttoning petticoat straps over her son's shoulders, looked uneasily at her visitor. She didn't know what she ought to say. She didn't really know in what spirit Simikoff made her revelations. The woman did not seem to ask for pity. She made her offerings as pure conversation — desolate though her tale was and pierced with tragedy as the hills about were pierced with shafts. A wind rose in the bare trees outside and moaned. The young mother shivered as she took up a dainty hand-embroidered slip.

" Katy Giannini were telling me about his christening robe, " said Simikoff suddenly. " She said you'd got it from a convent miles away from here. Did you ? My Paul had a christening robe sent to him from away. From England his come. I were born in England. I come to this country to take service. Then I married Michael. You never saw my Michael. No. It's just as well. Sometimes when I'd look at him myself, all doddering and foolish like the pits had left him, I couldn't believe he were the fine, big-muscled lad who carried me away with him to Collierton — where the pits would give him double of what he could earn above ground. He died the same year as my Paul and a blessing it were. If you'd trust the baby to me, you could get out his christening robe maybe. "

Simikoff's eyes brightened ever so little as the mother reluctantly — and ashamed of her reluctance — laid the babe in the older woman's lap. When she brought forth the exquisite tiny dress, Simikoff looked hungrily at its sheer, soft material, at the trimmings of delicate Valenciennes, at the almost invisible stitches of the embroidery ; but not one coarse, twisted finger did she lay on its beauty.

" Fine, very fine ," she said. " My Paul's had more lace and it were longer, like they made'em them days. "

The mother put the robe away and rather snatched her baby, who was fretting. A moment later she was shamed for that.

" The feel of them ! " said Simikoff. " The feel of them ! My Paul never lived with me after Rachel went. He were nine year old then. I says to Danny Killoren after the burying, ' If you're living in the city all the time now, mayhap you'll be lonely. In that case Paul could bide with you. ' Danny were always fond of the boy, him having eyes like Rachel's, though his hair were dark.

" He says to me, he says, ' Why, Mother Simikoff, could you do without him ? '

" I says to him, I says, ' Ay, I can and will. The pits have got the best of Michael and all of Harry and Rachel. They shall not get my Paul, too. Take him away, Danny. '

" And he did. The boy went to school and everything in the city. Every week or so in decent weather he'd come back on Danny's wagon — but not too often. I asked it. And then I could grin at Michael when he grinned at me, because my Paul were safe over the river.

" One day when he come over with Danny he asked to be let go up to Skrainka's fine house beyond the town with goods, which Danny were hauling. Somehow I did not feel easy, but I couldn't think why he shouldn't see a rich man's house and I let him. Old Mr. Skrainka were alive then and he took a fancy to my Paul. He'd send him things by Danny and ask why the boy were never along. So Paul would beg to go every time he come to town.

" One day — it were springtime — Paul went for the last time to see old Mr. Skrainka. Somehow I didn't want him to go at all that day, but he went. And, after he left I had that same kinda chill like I had over Rachel. I remember I run through the streets after Danny's wagon. He had not got his truck by then. But I couldn't catch him. And I come back all shaking and shivering and there were Michael grinning. I remember I shook a chair at him and scared him. He never grinned more.

" I were thinking what a time the two had been gone, when the whistle blew. Number Fourteen whistle — like a screech. And I never stopped for anything. I started right down the road, running, till I found Danny Killoren and his wagon. He were just starting back to old Mr. Skrainka's after the boy.

" I says to him, I says, ' No need for that. Drive to the mines. The pits have got my Paul anyhow. '

" And they had. Without me knowing it, Paul had teased old Mr. Skrainka to take him into a mine just to see. And the cable broke and the machinery for the hoist all went wrong just as they were almost out of the place ; and old Mr. Skrainka and my Paul fell all the way to the bottom of the shaft.

" Michael died the next day, which were a blessing. The doctor said he'd had a shock to his heart. Mayhap I scared him with the chair.

" And Danny Killoren says to me after the funerals, he says, ' Mother Simikoff, come away. I'll take care of you. '

" I says to him, I says, ' There 'll be no need. The pits will care for what's left of me and bury me when I'm through. ' Why shouldn't they ? They've robbed me of everything. They've buried all my own ones. They can bury me, too. And they can ! "

" Listen ! Ain't that the St. Ignace bell ! That will be Mrs. Janowitz dead. I were over to look at her last evening after the Maruka burying. I says to her daughter Rosie, I says, ' She 's about through. I hope you'll have better weather for the funeral. '

" I'll be going now. "

As Simikoff rose, the young mother said something about a new position her husband was taking in Chicago. They'd move as soon as the baby was old enough.

" I knew it, " said Simikoff. " When I first saw you, I says to Annie Mueller, I says, ' She ain't for Collierton. She has not the mark of the pits. Well, good-bye. "

The wind in the bare treetops was moaning loud as she opened the door. Down the gray, raw street she flitted on her way to the Janowitz house, Collierton's Lady of Sorrows.

SHIRLEY L. SEIFERT.

ARDENGO SOFFICI. Still Life.

CHATEAU DE SOUPIR: 1917

Jean tells me that the Senator
Came here to see his mistresses.
As master and proprietor,
The servants ushered him, Jean says,
Past bogus Flemish tapestries,
Velvets and mahoganies,
To where the odalisque was set,
The temporary queen — Odette.

An eighteenth century chateau,
Rebuilt to suit the modern taste,
Painted and gilt fortissimo —
The Germans, grown satirical,
Constructed a machine gun nest
Underneath the banquet hall.

The trenches run diagonally
Across the gardens and the lawns;
And jagged wire from tree to tree;
The lake is desolate of swans —
In tortured immobility,
The deities of stone and bronze
Await a new catastrophe.

Phantasmagorical at nights,
Yellow and white and amethyst,

Burn the star shells and Verey lights,
And the great rivers of the mist
Flood all the landscape, till we feel
Like drowned men, ghastly and unreal.

Then come the younger ghosts — Odette,
In skirt ballooning at the hips,
Tosses a hasty kiss and slips
Away to taunt the Senator,
Who, strong with marc and anisette,
Pursues her like a matador.

The fleeing feminine takes cover
Behind a Hellenistic Venus,
Coquettishly hiding from her lover;
While he, beard waggling in the wind,
Appears the overdressed Silenus.

The mist hangs lower gradually.
An enemy machine gun mocks
This ante-bellum delicacy,
And when the firing is at rest,
A bronze Priapus grieves, his chest
A perforated pepper box.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

SOMETHING TELLS.

There is something tells a tree
To wave a green sombrero,
Plumed with swallows,
And ride a pony-hill to the sun.

There is something tells a butterfly
To leave the nunnery of a cocoon,
And go gipsying in colored dresses
When April stirs a fiddle in a willow tree.

There is something tells the feet of goats
To rattle every hill-top like a drum,
And kick the silver flagons
From the shoulders of the grass.

DAVID ROSENTHAL.

THE JACK* OF DIAMONDS.

Assuredly, the real culprit in this affair is the fortune-teller, Kvatchka. In the morning she is nobody. Like everyone else she files papers for the committee of Moskwato[1], records the departures in a florid handwriting and argues with Comrade Gousine, the one who distributes the rations and who gives a pound of sausage to Kvatchka for the October holidays, without doubt of dog-meat.

I shall denounce all of them to the Soviets, I will say that Gousine has concealed in his trousers-pocket, three caramels and that he has given a ticket for the Kamerni Theatre to Maroussia, the Messenger (although it was not her turn), so that he could obtain a rendezvous with her in the corridor. I will tell everything. In a word, up to four o'clock Kvatchka is an honest citizen. No one could suspect her of anything, but towards evening, in her room, she begins her wayward life. That is to say, inspite of the formal prohibition of the Domkom[2], Kvatchka tells fortunes in exchange for food, and in doing this, she screams, she groans, she quakes. Even an important inspector has gone to her house bringing a sugar-loaf and Kvatchka has retailed rubbish of this character : " You are drunk with kerosene. Your tripe will take fire ; you will become thin and sticky like an American ; you will swell up in passing a decree and then you will meauw and altogether fade away. "

He did not like this ; he even threatened to exterminate every superstition in the world. But Kvatchka has no fear ; has she not disinterested friends everywhere ? (She tells fortunes from five to eight and afterwards offers other kinds of consolation). She used to tell the future in coffee grounds, but everybody knows that the coffee of the Soviets is nothing more than burned carrots, the grounds of which are so coarse and clumsy that one cannot count upon any revelations, not even trivial allusions. While the card deck, old, with the Joker left in, will tell everything ; for example, when the rations are to be distributed for the month of February at the Galeskom[3] and how Lidotchka ought to

* Valet.
[1] Heating Committee.
[2] Housing Committee.
[3] Iron Committee.

entice that fellow Piline to the Pope, because he is cunning and grumbles, " Religion is nothing more than opium and should be masticated without losing time in apportioning it. " It will indicate from whence the Messiah is to come, and not in a vague manner, but with precision; for he is the true Tzar who freezes in the forests behind the Ob, and feeds himself on wild black-berries.

Unfortunately, Douniacha went to Kvatchka last Thursday, Douniacha of the big lips, who is officially invalided from the working front, but still kneads the dough in the kitchen of Brinsoff, cleans the pots of the children of Brinsoff and irons the skirts of his wife. Work has become heavier. Formerly, she had the help of the cook Fiokla and the chambermaid, Mathilda. But now Douniacha is maid of all work. It is simple enough : in the old days, Brinsoff dabbled about with war supplies, and, honestly and without hurrying himself, increased his stock in the mines and sugar refineries (how nice it was !) and now stil dabbles, but prudently, within his committee. Besides he buys the paper money of the Romanoffs from the provident petty bourgeoisie, for they no longer concern themselves with accumulating wealth but devote all their efforts to the procuring of bread.

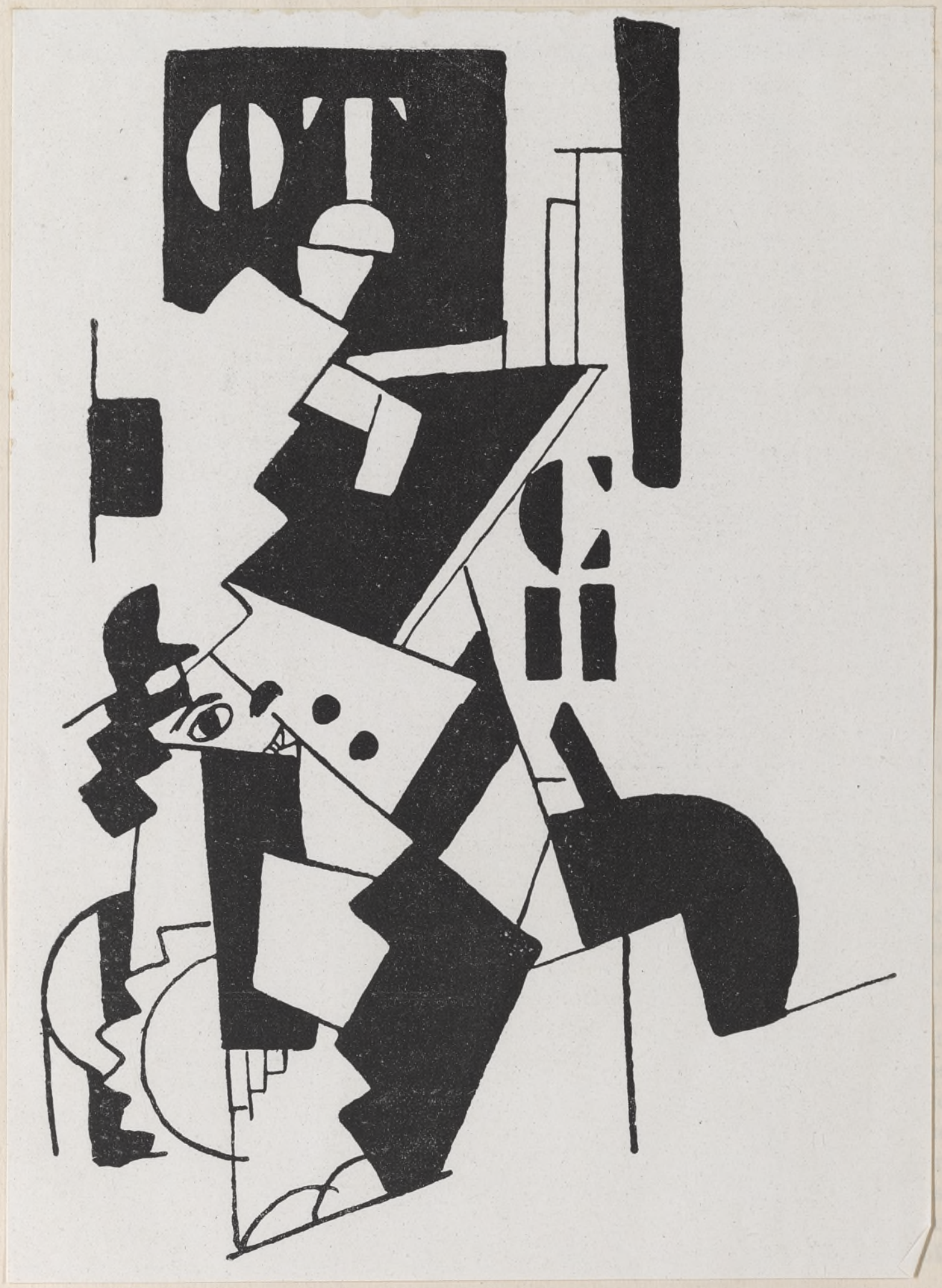
Yet, as one can see, Brinsoff does not live so badly, for Douniacha puts in the oven not only bread, but " brioches " — and what a lot of butter it takes to prepare them — real patties stuffed in six different ways and choice cabbages of all colours. Also it would not be unjust for Douniacha to complain, after all the patties are cooked and the skirts ironed, if enough wit were not left in her head for serious thinking. And why then is it necessary for this poor head, with its grey and sparse hair for which a half-spoon full of flax oil is necessary, why is it obliged to think so much, as if she were not just simple Douniacha, but a woman learned in religious writings ?

Her first thought is of her son, Vassia, Vassienka, Vassielok. Oh the dark little room under the stairs in the house of her old master, Siliverstoff, at Jakimonka, and the valet Grichka with his chevrons, and better still his chiselled teeth ! How could she, such a little girl, resist him ? There were marmalades and extraordinary vows. He had even promised to have her portrait taken. As she had no fear, Douniacha had not gone to find the woman Chaboloff, who arranges such affairs with a nail or so, and she had not sent her son to the orphan asylum, but had placed him at Tchelitsi near Serpoukoff and paid two roubles a month for his keep. Vassia was nine years old when Douniacha took him to the barber, Mr. Ferdinand, her compatriot, certainly not for Vassia to shave the customers, but to sweep up the hairs, and on Saturday, during the rush hour, to lather the cheeks of those waiting until the boss was free to scrape their chins. One does not know who bewitched him : most curious ideas began to trot about in his head. He did not lather the customers very long and three months af-

terwards, in the spring time, made off, without whispering a word to Mr. Ferdinand or to his mother. Douniacha howled so loudly that she lost her place four times. She went to the fair at Divitchi and to the pilgrimage of Saint Serge, but she didn't find him. She became calm, but not resigned. Where could he be ? Even if she met him she would no longer recognize him. He has a mark of identification but it is hidden, under his left breast, a red spot like the diamond on a playing card. Douniacha even asked Triphone, the janitor, " If you see in the bath someone who has under his breast a diamond, seize him, he is mine. " But why should Triphone bother to search, it was not his flesh and blood, this Vassia ? Is he alive, this Vassia ? Perhaps when she burns a candle for his health, she only tortures his soul in heaven ? Father Aphanassi has taught her that there was no need of worrying but that she should pray for his health and for the victory of the Christian army, because at his age, Vassia must be a soldier. And now perhaps the devil has stolen the innocent one. For look, the son of the grocer Perloff, a saint, a true worker, has he not become an important bolshevik ? With their cursed claws they rake in souls.

Now this is the second thought of Douniacha. It is not any easier. She thinks of the awful mess and of all the trials of the church of true believers. Even under the soul they have dug a trench, the plotters ! Douniacha has seen at Zatsepa, in front of the market, the picture of the chief tyrant with his pince-nez on a string ; he smiles in his little beard, and how many Russians has not this Herod exterminated ? Is it possible that the bread cards themselves carry the insigna of anti-Christ ? The infernal writing burns one's fingers, and still one has to carry it into the shops and on one's bosom near the heart in order that no one can steal this treasure. Father Aphanassi told not only this. The devils even dared to touch the relics of Saint Frol, but God did not permit it ; He veiled their eyes with an eclipse, and the monks and good Christians saw the indestructible flesh with a golden ear of corn sprouting from its entrails, while the red " grasshoppers " [1] saw only an appalling apparition with raging fire inside. Douniacha knows all ; how Saint Nicholas under the gates of the Kremlin rent the ignoble veil, and how the Dove of the Holy Ghost of the convent of Tchoudoff flew into a filthy barracks and upset with its little wings an idol of stone with moustaches before which all those inscribed must prostrate themselves when denying the Saviour. They wished also to inscribe Douniacha, but she lay down in the coal bin under the servant stairs, and remained there all the night without daring to sneeze, but praying inaudibly to the Father. A few days ago, a new misfortune. A bolshevik, a miscreant, who was walking under the stairs, casually requisitioned the drawing room of Brinsoff and immediately moved out all the furniture,

[1] Bolsheviks.



FERNAND LEGER. Charlie Chaplin.

FERNAND LEGER. Charlie Chaplin.

bringing in with him a half-pound of paper and the dirty mugs of Satan's whole army. He begged Douniacha in a very sweet voice to give him a little hammer, and immediately began to nail their faces to the wall, and as he could not stand the sight of the ikon, he told her to take it away, for in front of the pure faces of Saint Cosina and of Saint Demian the devil's seed suffocated. What woman could have had vile enough bowels to bring forth such a blonde toad? He looked at Douniacha with his yellow eyes, until her feet trembled, and tried in whispers to send her to perdition: " Friend, a little hot water? " Douniacha knew that he was a messenger from hell, the last tempter. She prepared herself for the supreme torture.

It was after all this that she went to question Kvatchka about her future And with her, she took her ration of a quarter of a pound of powdered sugar. Kvatchka evidently understood what was wrong at once: that is to say, she screamed at the cat, the actual likeness of the Blonde One even to his yellow eyes: " Get out of here, hussy, leave this holy place. Look at his fat paunch; he has stolen a cup of milk; he has lapped up a thousand roubles without sneezing." Afterward, spitting on her fingers, she made a fan of cards and without looking at them, picked up one and commenced to tap her foot, marking time; and, with the voice of a ventriloquist, breathed into the ear of Douniacha: " Your fate is the Jack of Diamonds; get ready for the final test. "

Everybody knows that the Jack of Diamonds is a peaceful card and foretells happy thoughts. Kvatchka is intelligent and cunning. It is not in vain that she has used her fingers at cards until they are callous. She does not look at the surface of the cards, but at their insides. Nothing is concealed from her. But she did not wish to give explanations to Douniacha, only scolding her when she left, because the sugar was yellow and damp. Douniacha wondered all the way home how to interpret the difficult card. Diamonds have a light colour, the colour of God, not like spades. Vassia has a diamond over his heart. May the Sainted Virgin guard him! And the valet looked like this scoundrel of a lodger. From whence must she expect her fate? From her little pigeon, or from this man with black claws?

Passing by Volkhonka, the eyes of Douniacha noticed a new defilement. From a wall, a naked man looked down, of violent blue, with red spots, as if crabs had seized him with their pincers in the depths of hell. From his navel, peered a third eye, huge and red. Probably a sinner, a head printer. Around the picture there was a crowd. Douniacha drew near. " What's happened here? " An old man with glasses (Douniacha knows him well; he used to own a little shop) read gravely: " Exhibition of the Jack of Diamond " [1], and kindly added:

[1] Exhibition of the Russian Cubist painters.

" He is their patron. " When Douniacha heard that, she did not fall to the ground ; she did not even cry out, but she prayed in her soul that her fate would arrive more quickly, and not make her languish in uncertainty, because she knew very well that what must come will come.

And in truth, the next morning, all began. The Blonde One called, as if it were not on purpose, and begged her to take his cards of the Domkom committee because he hadn't the time ; he had all kinds of appointments. " Comrade, sign for me at the office. " Douniacha understood what that would mean. " I sir, I mean, comrade ? I am not accustomed to this. " " What ?" " Just that ; I have kept my soul pure." " In that case, comrade, you will have to go to the Likbies."[1] " You can put your spikes under my finger-nails if it is your will, but you cannot force me to kneel down before the devil. I will not do it. " The Blonde One laughed uproariously ; he was very gay. He explained that it was not the devil's house ; but a school. Such was the edict of the Likbies. " Science is light ; that's all. " He also had been an illiterate ; had run away from his home, had begun to read books and it was by his own wit that he had arrived at all. " Here is the address of the school, not far away from the ramparts of the cows, in the old tea house of Iontarioff. " (The poor man is dead ; he did not live to see such an insult.) He gave her the address, threatening a little : " If you do not go yourself, a soldier, armed with a gun, will take you there. "

Douniacha went in haste to search for Brinsova. " Madam, my dear lady, save me from my bolshevik. " She told her everything. Brinsova herself was scared to death. " Don't call me madam, but comrade ; what do we know, everything is possible ; they can lock us up in a moment ; I cannot help you. Fool, I lost in a strong box a brooch of eighteen carats. What do you want ; it is not a prison to which they are taking you ; but to a school. There is nothing to do. Go. Learn, or don't learn. Stay quietly in your corner and think what you like."

Douniacha went there. You can't hide yourself from your destiny. She finds some old mossy women, sitting down ; one of whom has a tooth protruding, another a tuft of hair curling from her ear ; some peaceful old men, very musty, and above, on a platform, a sordid picture. Beside it, a hussy, with her hair cut. Impudent in a soldier jacket. And then a most disgusting thing occurs. The hussy waves her hand as if it were a sceptre and all the old people droned through their noses : " B-A-BA. " One must render homage to the idol. Douniacha seated, trembling, in her own flesh, is descended into hell. Then the wo-

[1] i. e., face of the devil, an abbreviation in the Bolshevik terminology for the Commission for the liquidation of illiterates.

man questioned her : " You are a new one ? Repeat : B-A-BA. " Douniacha jumped up and shrieked frightfully : " You can't make me take the oath. I will accept death, but I will not utter obscenities." Douniacha loved cleanliness to extreme. She considered it a mortal sin to leave footmarks in a room. Very kind to animals, nevertheless, she wished to drown the cat Mourza when he made a spot in the salon on the Persian carpet. But she could not stand this. She spat right in the middle of the school. " I deny your kingdom ; I know now who leads you. It is our lodger. You can torture me, but even into his rotten moustaches, I will spit three times." Crying which, she went out.

She did not go back home, for the Blonde One is there who doubtless knows everything, and will take the seal and mark her brow, and behold, her soul will be lost to eternity.

She had no weapons except her little scapulary and she did not know the words. Then she remembered her old friend, a very wise adviser, Ivan Kousmitch. Though he was far away, she ran there without a stop. Ivan Kousmitch was, in the old days, an embroiderer in gold. He made epaulettes and grew tender over his metal stars. " The wisdom of heaven, the beacon of the magi, I will cause by my intelligence to fall on those shoulders worthy of it. " And later, when the uprisings commenced, when the little stars of gold fell from the epaulettes of the generals, he shed a few tears but did not complain. He turned to the everlasting stars and concentrated on the Apocalypse. Nobody could expound it better than he ; the uncovered pit, the woman clothed with the sun and the horses of different sorts. In the morning he bought from the workers of the Guibartovski factories, stolen yeast and sold it again at the market ; in the evening he expounded the Apocalypse and gave advice. He was much amused at Douniacha's story. " Last Wednesday, I already had a foreboding. It is true that it was not a blonde, but a brunette like coal. It was your murderer. I know a great deal and I will reveal it to you. You, you are Judith, according to the divine words. You will destroy Holofernes, who wallows in debauchery and filth. You will save the empire of Russia. You will protect the Holy Church. Prepare yourself for a mission, I see a halo around your hair." Douniacha bent to the ground. " I am unworthy of that, Ivan Kousemitch. I drank a little milk on the Eve of the Assumption, and other wicked deeds hang heavy upon me. " But no, Ivan Kousemitch knows it is not in vain that he speaks these words ; on Douniacha has fallen the greatest honor, to conquer the enemies of the human race ; to suffer for the evil of the world. The lodger, the Blonde One, the Jack of Diamonds, is no other than the devil. It is not with her naked hands that she must go against him. Ivan Kousemitch owns different weapons, little crosses, scapularies, forbidden prayers, potent invocations. The devil is not so strong, he also has weaknesses, but one must know them. The easiest way

is to seize him when he is still very little, when his horns are only beginning to come out, sicknesses possess him, pimples and weaknesses of the flesh. Also if one seizes the devil, although fully grown, on the night of " Pantelemon-le-Guerisseur, " and if one whips him with a blessed branch, he will go under crying ; without losing time it is then necessary to pickle him in cucumber brine and hold him there until the decomposition is complete. But against the Jack of the moustaches, Ivan Kousemitch will give her a weapon, trustworthy and quick acting ; a little jar of Holy Water from the Sainte Montagne. Douniacha should approach him in the night, creeping towards the sleeper, uncover his nakedness and sprinkle him with holy water, murmuring at the same time, " In the Jordan, the bath of the world, for Satan and his disciples, mortal death. Amen. " The devil will tremble ; his little tail will fall off. From his entrails will burst forth growlings of a dog, and soon he will dry up, shrivelled like a hedge-hog.

Douniacha went home, stern but inspired, bearing the little jar. She believed in Ivan Kousemitch, only doubting one thing. She felt unworthy, stained by her sins ; she will lack the purity necessary to overcome the evil. A sinner, believing little, she will perish without attaining her object. At Brinsova's she asked absolution, humbly, kissed the hands of her mistress and then put on a clean shirt to present herself fittingly and prayed to the Virgin with fervor.

The Blonde One came home late. In ignorance of the plans of his opponents, he sat in several committees and figured out how many schools they would open in 1930, for the miners of the Government of Perme. All men would be conscious and efficient, like American machines, as if they were more than a heap of putrified bones and miserable flesh. " They have not the time to live, already they are tainted with age." Everything is regulated ; here the prison, there the spree ; one has not even time to hiccough between the acts. He counted : " Schools, 318 ; scholars, 16,000. Schools, 94 ; scholars, 7,000. Plus four supplementary schools. " Having finished his figuring, not excepting the Bachkirs and the Mordvas, he drank a glass of tea, made from leaves gathered by the post boy ; in place of sugar he sucked a little spoon which tasted of white metal and herring, and afterwards dragged himself home with a heavy portfolio containing diagrams, plans and notes weighing at least ten pounds.

With her eyes glued to the key-hole, Douniacha hardly breathed. She waited for the Blonde One to go to sleep. Before closing his eyes, it occurred to him to read a paper, and when he had finished, he said aloud : " Ha, ha, in Argentina, already a strike. The world conflagration begins. " He smiled, carefully took off his patched trousers, placed them on a chair and plunged beneath the covers. Soon Douniacha heard a light snoring like a child in his cradle. How innocent the devil can seem !

She made the sign of the cross, softly opened the door, without creaking,

drew down the sheet and began to sprinkle and to mumble. The Blonde One jumped and began to howl terribly, just as Ivan Kousemitch had foreseen. Without being able to open his eyes, he waved his hands and cried. Full of faith in her coming victory, Douniacha drew near him, but a final trial awaited her. A horrible sword was suspended over her poor heart : his shirt had opened and Douniacha saw the diamond birthmark which she had borne, the mark of her blood. " Vasska, son, Jack, valet, Antichrist " — and with an inhuman cry, she ran down the stairway of cold stones, through the empty court, down the street, God knows where, fleeing her curse, into the forest, into the snow, into the fire, down to the furnace of hell.

What flames devoured her entrails. And the other, the other with his chevrons, with the portrait and the marmalade. Was he also then a devil? She had absorbed the seed of the Devil, she had borne him within her, with her Christian blood ; she had nourished him for the destruction of mankind ; there is no more hope for her. The charitable Virgin herself averts her tearful eyes, conceals behind the clouds her little wounded hands, for she cannot hold them out to the Devil's mistress, to the nurse of Satan.

Far away, beyond the gates of the town, near the Tartar cemetery, she fell down on a pile of snow and began to swallow it, to quench the terrible fire, but the snow burned her mouth and tongues of fire, flaming worms writhed in her belly, mounted her throat, twisting her driedup breasts, and always she sank deeper and deeper into the snow. Only her feet, in brown shapeless boots, still stuck out, two withered stumps.

From the French version of
ELIE EHRENBOURG.

GIOVANNI PAPINI.

The time is always opportune for writing something about Papini; the more you endeavor to define and characterize him, the more he seems to evade you and create a new Papini who forces a revised judgment. But this changeableness is a permanent characteristic of the writer, and it soon occurs to one that Papini, at bottom, always remains the same. The contrary is the general belief; one speaks of his contradictions and of his alterations. One reproaches him for them. They are superficialities. Many legends are current about his personality.

It is a great temptation to wander into poetry and lyricism when under the sway of his vital spirit. We must be very careful to give due value to what the youths write about him, though what they write is always exaggerated, as it is difficult for them to remain serene on the subject of Papini. To do so, one must have felt him, have undergone him, as one does an illness. Also, it is necessary to guard against that which the old men write about him, for they are either bitterly opposed or completely subjugated by him. It is best to speak of him in simple words — to address, let us suppose, an American who knows nothing whatever about him.

This is what I should say to my American:

I.

In January, 1901, there appeared in Florence, unheralded by any barometer, a strange literary magazine, printed on hand-made paper, illustrated with original woodcuts, and written entirely by youths unknown up to that time. In the contents each month, an editorial, and critical notes appeared, signed "Gian Falco," pregnant with poetry and passion, irony and romanticism, color and sensitiveness, treating in the most independent spirit philosophic and moral problems of all kinds, far from any preoccupation with actuality, and often in direct and abrupt conflict with the current ideas then prevalent in Italy, such as "Positivism" and Christian and Tolstoyian Socialism.

This periodical soon became greatly renowned, perhaps more renowned than read, and was called " Leonardo ".

The founder and editor who gave it importance and character, revealing in its pages those strange attitudes and violent passions, this spirit of extravagance and insolence, was Giovanni Papini since known in Italy as a writer, read and admired by the young — the most hated and the most loved.

II.

In appearance, Papini reminds one of a certain kind of pear, ugly to look at, yet sweet to eat. At first sight, unpleasant ; his lineaments irregular, the mouth too large, the jaw too prominent, the teeth protruding. The nose is too flat and his complexion pasty, like the earth. His walk is that of a comical skeleton, distorted and disproportioned, for his body is too long.

But look at him closely : you will see that his appearance as a whole acquires another aspect when viewed in relation to his personality. You can only think of the sea when you meet his grey-green eyes, of the mountains when you regard his forehead, high and spacious, of the forests agitated by the wind of April, when his curly hair blows in free disorder. Here is a man different from the rest, you will say, for where another man would appear ugly, you feel that Papini is only strange and exceptional. He is a marked man, and this may mean good or evil, but betokens always a personal fatality. The large veins which cross his forehead and descend down to his nose, the extreme myopia which gives him a look of vagueness and ingenuity, of indefinite direction, as if he were far away and occupied with lofty thoughts ; the cheekbones protruding like those of a Mongolian, a little cruelly, reveal the irregular features of a man possessed by a soul far from the commonplace. Is he demon or angel ?

III.

When you hear him speak for the first time, you will probably have the impression that you are conferring with a demon. If he is an angel, he is the angel of darkness and of negation, of wounded pride and of corrosion. It is his custom to receive you rudely, with very embarassing questions, either half derisive or directly insolent. If a third person be present, by chance, in the role of audience, he will in all probability let fall from his lips a flow of paradoxes, assailing your dearest convictions, or shower you with sarcastic remarks where your defense is weakest : at your secret absurdities and predilections.

Once he was introduced to a certain man who had tried in vain to commit suicide a few months previously. As soon as he heard the name, Papini remembered the story and said : " Look, the only good thing he might have done in his life, he failed to accomplish "

Of this type of anecdote, one could relate dozens. The embarassing question, the insolent observation, the piquant retort, have been for a long time a specialty of Papini.

A university professor, who had often been snubbed by him, took the opportunity one day, at the memorial celebration of Carducci, to approach him. Said he, lachrymosely and with Jesuitical glances : " Let us make peace, dear Papini. " Quickly the other answered : " An armistice, an armistice only, Professor. "

The many witticisms, the epithets hurled by him at writers of his and other times, the scoffing and the irony which have filled his magazines and books, are not the corrosive acid of an intelligence consciously setting out to do harm to others, but the natural expression of a fresh mind which conceives with great rapidity and in lightning flashes, — with that scintillation which is possessed by romantics such as Schlegel, an accompanying characteristic of the true genius. If he has been able more often to see the ridiculous side and to point out the defects, rather than the good qualities of the people about him, shall we attribute it to the fact that these phases are the more obvious ? Or, is it an inclination of his spirit which has suffered overmuch, which has not been loved enough, which has become sour, desiring above all to appear locked, closed, diffident, deaf, willing rather to lose the possibility of finding a beautiful soul, than to let itself be defrauded by one having in reality, only its semblance? It seems to me evident that the latter is the case. His life as narrated by himself is not a happy one. And perhaps he has not disclosed the very depths of his bitterness.

Physically unfortunate, he lacked in his early years that understanding of a sensitive nature so essential for producing the unconscious happiness enjoyed by children. We dare say, he has had no boyhood — or if he has, he has lived it out of that period. Spring found him as a tree that has blossomed too soon and consequently suffered from frost. One feels that some cord in him has been broken, that the regret which quivers in his words is due to some early injustice.

Love and friendship have come to this soul too late, when it was irrevocably wounded. The scar remains always, and through a scar, sensitiveness is perhaps less able to penetrate than before. That coldness, that scepticism that one notes in Papini, grow from there — and from there grows his rudeness too. He passed the years of his youth immersed in mad study and black pessimism. It is rarely one recovers from an initial misanthropy such as that felt by him.

IV.

There are cries of tenderness, and a seeking for love growing from the same sentiment, in the first fantastic-romantic period of Papini's work. He is interested in philosophical and moral problems, but these assume a purely literary expression taking spontaenously the form of legends and myths. These remind one of the methods of Baudelaire and Poe, the moral essays of Maeterlinck and the travesties of Laforgue. The classic book of this period is the " Tragico Quotidiano " ; in the last editions, " Il Pilota Cieco " has been added. In this vein also is a third and inferior work, " Buffonate ", which represents the tired remnants of the inspiration of that type. These writings have a glitter of false antique gold, artificial, yet seductive. The device is nearly always original, the gesture a happy one, but there is a rudeness in the style, and at the same time a little of affectation when compared with his later writings, which are much more human and solid.

One notes here two probable reasons for his change (not overlooking the principal one — that of his constant development, his continual unveiling of himself and the perpetual effort of writers to fathom the depths of themselves) : on the one side, his life in the country and his marriage ; on the other, his careful study of the classics. Bulciano and the collection of " Scrittori Nostri " (Our Writers) ; — already this " Our " was the beginning of a new phase of Papini's — coming as it did at a time when he had only been speaking of international literature, Spanish and German ; Arabian and Chinese. It was for him a renewal of a life lived ; to find again, or find for the first time, human experiences, and to enlarge his vocabulary of people an authors, which up to that time was poor, abstract and often common.

Blessed be the poverty which compelled him to live in Bulciano, and the need which forced him to become an editor — and we need not look too closely at the punctuation of his text.

V.

The conclusion of this movement was a book of confessions, the masterpiece of Papini, " l'Uomo finito " (The Finished Man). One need no longer refer to Hamlet or the Devil, to invent characters, or feign extraordinary adventures when wishing to recount the torments of a life. One says, finally, — that torment, that life, the l'Uomo Finito, is Papini himself — his own story, his life,

C. Carrà - A. Soffici. Caricature of Papini.

his own intimate thoughts — from childhood to his final confessions. He has tried everything — and succeeded in nothing. He has sought always the impossible, the too great, the too high. As a child he dreamt of compiling the encyclopedia of encyclopedias ; so as man, he dreamt of becoming the revealer of a new religion. But everything has failed him : family affection, the understanding of the spirits who surrounded him, help of friends, the ecstasy of real love. Here he is, discontented, disheartened, broken. Another man, of mediocre mentality would be satisfied with his fame, with his success, with his " position " — but Papini aspired to a greater glory — that of a genius who spiritually overturns the world.

What he wished most to have written, was a " universal judgment, " and the entire book is a cry of dissatisfaction, a clamour toward the unattainable. It is his masterpiece because it is the most honest and sincere of his works. His other books are more often those of the Papini " who wishes to hide his secret. " His secret is his weakness. Papini is not a strong man, and as he knows his vulnerability, he isolates himself, entrenches himself behind a breast-plate. There he remains with the audacity of the timid — attacking, scoffing, engaging in polemics, denouncing. Not only does he say impertinences ; he writes and publishes them. In this manner he has won his fame as an " enfant terrrible " of literature. If there is a scandal to instigate, he thinks of it at once ; he is ready to speak of a rope in the house of the hanged ; to talk of anti-semitism at the home of a Jew ; and of divorce with a divorcee.

He has acquired this reputation a little through his natural temperament and a little through his desire of making it so — and of augmenting it. If there be an unmentionable word, he speaks it at once. And in certain of his shorter works, we find five or six of the worst substantives ever used by writers, from Dante to Carducci. There is in him a little of Bernard Shaw, but of a Shaw less contented with himself and his impertinences ; above all, Papini is more unsatisfied — and therefore changeable. And perhaps dissatisfied because of being obliged to be changeable.

VI.

This reproach of being changeable is the most common and perhaps the most true of the many reproaches flung at him. Nothing could be more evident. With the exception of a few strong antipathies, such as the one for Croce which has always remained, one might say that every two or three years, Papini changes his opinions. He has been positivist, idealist, pragmatist ; has believed in philosophy and then scoffed at it ; has combatted, then embraced and finally

abandoned futurism ; was passionately in favor of the war — then soon tired of it ; has been anti-Christian and now apparently has become Christian. In his writings, one can find mockeries of all opinions — and reasoning in favor of all faiths.

All this is quite true — but... And there is a " but". An analysis of the mutability of Papini's temperament brings important results. First of all, it is disinterested ; secondly, it denotes an extreme prosensitiveness to whatever the times demand, and finally, it reveals still another secret aspect of Papini's mind. His mutability is that of a lyric spirit ready to enthuse for that which is not yet realized, and incapable of undertaking afterwards the more arduous task of dominating the real obstacles. Papini's weakness is here also demonstrated. There is in him an intense desire for truth and faith, of living in contact with that reality which he missed when young ; of feeling himself convinced ; and all this is in direct opposition to what he so often appears to be, a cynic, a mocker, a sceptic. He is sceptical, but suffers from being so ; a cynic, but his cynicism hides a sorrow ; he is a mocker, but how he would love to be mocked providing he had a faith.

His revolt against the ideals he once loved is not the expression of the malcontent toward those faiths that have not held him enough, have not totally inflamed him. His movements toward ideas, groups, literary fashions, problems of the day, are quick at first — and reach their goal in one jump. It is his readiness to accept a new subject, a new ideal, that reveals the genial aspect in him. But the conquests of Papini, if they are quicker than those of others, are also less durable. He is as a child who sees far above him a little rose cloud, climbs the mountain quickly to touch it — and finds upon nearing it, that it has become grey. The realized reality does not satisfy him, and he becomes bitter, critical, ironical and aggressive. This has been the fate of the ideas and movements of which he has hoped the most : idealism, futurism, his war-enthusiasm.

VII.

As often happens, Papini is known more for his " ideas " — that is, those ideas he caught here and there and soon abandoned, than for having given to these ideas, life, character, importance, relations, logic (sometimes elementary), which they had not in themselves. He has been, and this is not the first example, more admired for his unworthy and passing actions than for his better and profound ; for his clamorous discordant manifestations rather than for his penetrating and silent ones. On the whole, his fame was chiefly won during the period of futurism and " Lacerba ".

However, he has derived the greatest benefit from one characteristic of his mentality, notable especially in his articles : an extraordinary capacity for grasping in all problems the three or four chief points of importance and developing them with the greatest simplicity and often, ingenuity, using phrases of such an imaginative quality as to completely capture the reader. The power of rhetoric that some men possess over the masses is also in the hands of this man. His ingenuity has rendered it possible for him to approach the mentality of the humblest and to find readers among the lowest classes.

And in the meanwhile, so few have noted the great progress made by Papini in his writing. Generally, one asks for the " Papini " — without distinction or hierarchy ; one also judges him without discerning the deep from the superficial, or even his progress through and beyond his varied methods. His career, if one may so express oneself, is a succession of leaps, followed by long periods of lassitude and stagnation, during which the forces for a new jump seem to mature. Arrived at the summit again, he seems, after a little while, to lose his footing and fall back once more. At the very beginning of each of these periods, his productions are the best.

Meanwhile, he is making constant progress in his instrument : the language. This is mainly notable since his seclusion in Bulciano and his study of the classics. He has even temporarily adopted rhythm and rhymes to show how easy it was for the Tuscans to compose in a given traditional line. Of course, I do not believe that in this lies proof of his genius ; rather, he has measured with them the extreme elasticity of his natural talent.

Papini is primarily an artist — but one of a special character : he is an artist of " ideas ". His world of colours and forms (the external world) has presented itself to him a little late perhaps, and with a few exceptions, the rest of his work is that of talent, literary science, and we might say, is more academic than lyrical. His is a moral lyricism, the lyricism of one who is always preoccupied with logical and ethical problems. Without enclosing them in their proper philosophical forms, he presents them, following the method of certain foreigners, in their sentimental and aesthetic aspects.

This may again recall to us Papini's mutability and dilettantism, but can easily be explained. For him, it is not the ideas which sustain his spirit. These are only considered lyrical occasions. This also explains his minute erudition, which has never satisfied the men of learning, but which has served to give to many of his writings an appearance multicolored and interesting ; comparable to the appearance of the drawing-room of a gentleman of good taste, in which are gathered together — masks of savages, impressionist paintings ; Etruscan vases and Greek robes ; tables of the 5th century and Chinese drawings. No student wishing to construct a history of art or of the human spirit would be content

with such a miscellany, but, at the same time, the drawing room looks very well, and assuredly, at first sight, has the power to attract and distract one's attention.

VIII.

The personality of Papini is so rich that it can best be compared to a gorgeous branch in blossom, whose buds one can pick without injury to the appearance of the whole. We now find no more detractors of Papini ; but battalions of people more dangerous — his admirers. We call them dangerous, but they are only temporarily so, for no critic, favorable or unfavorable, can stifle the flow of a pœt's life. A poet who has natural inspiration and perseverance, though men swear his incapacity, forges ahead, always ahead.

Papini is the strongest and most original prose writer of our generation, in addition to being the representative of all the good and the bad that is ours, — the torments, the changeableness, the uncertainty, the aspirations. His torment has passed into others — awakening their spirits without being able to give them rest. He has been a man tormented who torments, an impregnator of doubts and questions which he leaves unanswered. The answers will be sought for by the young of his period and by those who follow.

Papini will remain as a type. In his extravagances and insolences, in his gestures whose sincerity we sometimes doubt, in his angers and disagreements, and in his more equivocal sympathies — he still radiates about him something sympathetic ; which explains why anger has been pacified and wounds have been healed, and why Papini is now considered to be above the melange and more or less accepted by the crowd.

His name will be known as the name of a good writer. It will be easy for the future generations to recognize in him one of the purest followers of Carducci, one of the rungs of that chain which tomorrow shall stretch between the writers of the past and the writers of the future. His periods of indignation and his revolutionary proposals will be forgotten by all. His place will be among the powerful literary figures ; among those from whom Italian culture has fed its brain. It will happen to him as it has to certain painters, called " exception " painters, whom to-day we admit in the perfect line of tradition.

His geniality, his inspired poetic sense in carrying on an argument, describing a scene or drawing a character (the latter rarely), will always be characteristic of him. Above all, he is a writer of movement. In his manner of opening a paragraph and of closing it, after elaborating his thought ; in his personal participation in the dramas of life or of social problems, there is always evident

that clear energy which one misses in the style of Pascoli and d'Annunzio, and which is the characteristic of our best Italian tradition. In this lies his power, his distinctive personality.

And in the depths of Papini's soul, there are still unexplored and unsatisfied regions of tenderness — his need of love — to which all have turned a deaf ear — and for which no one of us has done enough.

From the Italian of

GIUSEPPE PREZZOLINI.

CLOISONNÉ.

On the sands, on the windy beaches
You ran with me through bareness and salt glitter
And saw far out the flashing of coral barriers
And the wind-heaped ocean all peacocks and swans. . .

And you remember a bay of northern forest
Brimmed with mist of autumn mornings:
The nearest hemlock was the leaning wraith of a brig . . .
Others followed ghostlike along a trail of sun . . .
Masts of veiled ships drawing delicately shoreward
To drop anchor in a field of goldenrod . . .

You have not forgotten the wind of those mornings . . . .
You have not forgotten the streaming running throbbing foaming wind . . .
You have not forgotten the mist blown away like a thistle feather . . .

I say you have not forgotten
What you have never known!
I ran alone on the beaches,
Alone I watched the dark sails of the trees
Fill with wind:
How shall I give you these moments?
Yet I may shape them for your hands . . .
If you will take home the bowl I have just finished
Cool with enamel of hyacinth and sea-green jade
I can the sooner set about making you another
Out of ebony and honey-colored shells.

GRACE HAZARD CONKLING.

I.

"I won't tell you the
name of this one!"

Softly, softly,
Gently, gently,
Over the tree-tops to the sky,
Back again to the hills,
Footsteps lost, footsteps unseen,
Always vanishing . . .

Softly, softly,
Gently, gently,
Don't you make a noise now!
This wonder-creature comes
But once a year . . .
Comes on tiptoe
Looking under leaves . . .
Softly, softly,
Gently, gently . . .

(*Was it the wind?*)

II.

PIGEONS JUST AWAKE.

As the sun rose,
Everything was bathed in gold;
Trees were still and solemn,

Pigeons waded the dew.
Their feet were the color of new June strawberries.
I thought what it must be to fly,
To whirl up into the light,
To know the curved flight of pigeons
Above trees and lawns!
If I could fly
I should not have to leave my mother for long,
Nor my dark-eyed sister:
Only a flutterng, a lifting
Up round the elm tree and over,
A cool curving and sliding down the light
Into wet grass.

HILDA CONKLING.

CANDY CIGAR AND STATIONARY

There was a light shining within the lives of Lotte and Isidor Rabinowich

I.

She stood behind the counter of her store and watched her husband place on the opposite shelf tin toys . . . engines clowns sailboat pennybank . . . that had just come in. She had arranged the syrup bottles on the counter. She saw him. . . very little man. She knew behind his short sparse beard of black and grey his chin which she had never seen and which was round like a child's: she knew under the skullcap a bland forehead . . . lodged there sweetness and trust in her. An ineffectual man whom she had always mothered.

" Lotte, where do I put these ? "

" Why, over there. " — Yes all this : " . . . with the other games, " — all this. A child of a man, my Man, who has not gotten along. With a temper that flares. Not often. Shallow flame trying to burn away in a moment all the commanding . . . the real . . . that is me. All this, all this yes. But father of my child.

She smiled at him : her palms were upward over her hips, they glowed there strong and rough under the frail pity of her pockmarked face. — Such a child. Father of *him.*

He turned his eyes. . . he had felt her . . . upon her. They glistened under her exultation like waters suntouched.

" What is it ? " he smiled back, holding awkward a huge cardboard box.

" Come here. "

He leaned over the counter. She kissed his lips. . . too thin. He shivered a little, smiling.

" There now, " she sobered him. " Better take in the pennies, Isidor, from the newsstand. You know, some of the boys, when they pass by from school — " She pondered. . . — They're not *all* honest, no.

He obeyed her. " The first letter of the sign is off. " He poured her the pennies.

"I saw Schmalzer," she nodded.

He took his place at her side behind the counter. Boys and girls will be coming from school . . . candy, pencil, soda, icecream sandwich . . . the first warm day with the sun of Spring beating into the crevice of the Block. In a few minutes now, both of us are going to be busy.

They stood silent, thinking: of one height they were: waiting.

From the West came the Sun in shouting strokes, pried open the cold walls of the Block. The Block grew warm, it opened its tremulous walls to receive the Sun . . . Now a flood within its walls. Children pouring from school, bubble and pelt and foam of children within the Block. They sparkled, they leaped, they clustered. They were a tide under the open walls, flood of the Sun's long strokes within the walls of the Block . . .

. . . And the small brown shop, all shadow, the little woman and man standing within the shop, within the swelling walls of the passionate street, within the flood of the Sun . . .

Door burst open. Boys and girls with voices like shrill flowers, like golden pebbles pelting: boys and girls with wishes — little flags — on their heads and the wind of the Sun's strokes making them whip and snap.

Lotte and Isidor worked. Counted candies . . . six of them for a penny . . . two cent or three cent soda ?. . . here are your jacks . . . we haven't strawberry only vanilla and chocolate . . . what did you give me, five cents? . . . *you* scratched that ruler.

Lotte worked in a smile. — These are children. All they will not grow into men and women. The Lord chooses. Pity the mothers whose sons He has not chosen to grow into strong men. . . Her lips moved faster than fingers. Lotte worked with her eyes. She found him, big and dark, so strong! — outstanding so among children.

He is my son my Dream is bone of his body.
He is my hope my hope runs red in his veins.
He is my son and my Dream behold he is real!

. . . Far from the Sun, in the thick clot of store, came a radiance on the wings of children, and made in her eyes a countering gleam against the laughter of children.

— Children, children and *my* child. I know that I am chosen in *my* child. He is big and clumsy, he has no quick laughter like that boy: no ready words. He is slow . . . he is deep. There is a glory hidden in his eyes. He cannot blossom so soon like you. . . five cents of these? . . . whose mother has not been chosen. Let her be glad now! . . .

They loved the Rabinowich store. They paid their pennies and stayed. They romped and quarreled, they cluttered the cramped space before the counter. They made this shadowed spot of the long street wall burst with bright greenness.

Herbert among them, standing among and beyond them. — Strange boy, what would become of Herbert with a less wise mother? There is Cause, it was written that I should be his mother. Often he is naughty . . . " Share your licorice, son." . . . He changes, he shifts. He is deep.

O you who work beside me and who are weak,
Whose weakness I share and shall share always,
Behold we have brought forth strength!
Our path is darkness we must walk it;
Our bed is darkness there must we lie.
Shadow is the world.
Behold we have brought forth light!

. . . The small store big with the song of children. The brown floor spread and adance with children's feet. . . The voices of children rose above a silence, wondrously, like young trees of young Spring.

My flesh is yours whom I could never love,
Behold it has brought forth Love!

2.

The children are gone.

They were in the store, the three, together, alone.

" Now, Herbert son. . . why don't you go quick and do your homework? Then you'll have all the rest of the time to play. Come. "

" No homework, Mama. "

" Of course there's homework. You always have homework. Don't you want to — "

" No homework, I tell you. Give me another licorish stick. No homework. "

" Why — are you sure? That's funny. No homework? Why no homework, Herbert? "

" Give me a licorish stick, I tell you. No homework — no homework. "

" You gave all the other away — I saw you. Darling! Here. Don't black your whole face. "

A cloud cuts the Sun. A shadow is a dark shaft striking down upon the Block, the store. It cleaves the heart of Lotte as the cloud cleaves the Sun. Her heart is opened.

" What is this afternoon ? " say her lips.

Her man turned to her. " Friday. "

She smiles at his not-knowing. Yet what does she know who smiles at his not-knowing ?

She shuts her lips. . .

— There is in this afternoon a sun and a cloud. They have met like man and woman. There is in this afternoon a cleaving and a searing. There is in this afternoon a Life and it comes !

The dark shaft cleaves her heart into two lips. They speak. . .

— I am with my man who is an old man and whom I should not have wed. He is the father of my son : always I think of this that I may not think toosore how I have married the man whom I should not have wed.

My hair is black, I am not so old as my neighbors feel me. No color can break the grey web of my cheeks, I wear black clothes. For my man is old, it is good to wear black beside him. This is no true reason, I wear black clothes, feel old because of my man. But there is true reason why he is my man : this is the reason why I wear black clothes.

Black is the color of rejoicing unto them who are chosen of God. I have tasted God, all other foods are poison. I have seen the Lord, all other fires are black.

Beneath my black dress, mark-meshed skin : beneath grey skin is my body of White.

Within my flesh was a son, his taste is my flesh. I am a small woman given, after I was marked forever by disease, to him who would have me. I have been good to him, he has blessed me. It is by his seed that the Lord chose me.

Blessed be the long low years we have toiled bent.

Blessed be their desert : for they hold a Jewel.

It flames beyond Grey, it is a roar of glory above silence.

He plays on the floor in air soiled brown : he shines.

He is strange, he is generous and slow. He says nothing. Often his words tell nothing to my mind. He is not good in school. He was left back in school. Through him I am chosen of God.

God loves him above all us. Above bright children, gay children.

This son of my sad flesh is the son of Spirit. He is many strengths,

he is many souls. He is old not to know how to take care of wiping his nose, how to keep from dirtying his pants. Grace and Light he is. . .

What is this afternoon ? what is this Life that comes ?
The Shadow of the Lord — the Hand of the Lord
Makes Shadow of our lives.

The door opened. — Customer ? . . . Herbert knows her. His teacher !

" This . . . Mr. and Mrs. Rabinowich ? Good day. I am Miss Klaar. I am Herbert's teacher. "

A tall thin woman, gold hair waving away from a prim hat, bright girl cheeks, a resolute chin . . . came into the soiled brown store. She stood stiff and high, propped faintly against these two little lives who looked at her in passiveness, waiting her word. She picked the mother.

" May I speak to one of you ? " she said.

Herbert pawed her hand, pounded his head against her waist : her white hands were easeless to fend him off.

She placed his blackness aside. Lotte led her into a back room silent. There was no word — she is Herbert's teacher ! . . . There is in this afternoon a Life and it comes ! . . . The door closed, She, Herbert's teacher, held the sense of the little man and of the boy behind her, living, filling a world of their own, not her world : what did she know of these worlds whose sons like shoots of an alien earth sat under her desk, drank her words ?

This mother : — This is hard work.

Lotte brought her a chair, close where she stood. Lotte stood, in a bedroom. Miss Klaar felt a low specked ceiling, an iron bed so clean, scrubbed floor, a window grated pouring grey dim against a glow in the room that had no kinship with the harsh red paint of the bureau. It was about her, this world she invaded — she and grey dim through a grated window — upon authority that seemed profane to her. — I feel like a heathen. . . She plunged, not letting the glow of this meek strong creature in black impinge too deep on what she knew was her duty.

" Mrs. Rabinowich, I came to speak to you about your son. "

" Thank you, Miss Klaar. "

" Won't you sit down, too ? "

Lotte sat on the bed's edge — there was no other chair — with a stern grace

" How do you find your son, Mrs. Rabinowich ? "

" Why — I do not — I — what do you mean, Miss Klaar ? "

" He is a good-hearted boy. We all love him in his Class. But he does reprehensible things. I feel I must tell you. "

" He is not good at his lessons ? "

" Worse than that. He is unruly. He does not obey the simplest order . . . He has been dirty, Mrs. Rabinowich — "

There was silence.

" He does not seem quite to understand what — what one might expect a boy of twelve, with a good upbringing — " she stopped. " — I know, seeing you — that his upbringing must be good — "

" No, no. . . I am not — very — Miss Klaar — very intelligent. "

" You know he was left back, last year . . . I am fond of Herbert . . . But I feel, Mrs. Rabinowich . . . I should long ago have reported him to the Board . . . "

" Tell me. . . What have I done wrong ? ' '

" Nothing, I am sure, Mrs. Rabinowich. "

" Why report him ? What is there to tell ? Tell me . . . "

" . . . It is the rule, that when a child does not seem to fit in the regular graded Class, Mrs. Rabinowich. . . that the Authorities should examine him, in order to find out where he does fit. "

" Where does he fit ? . . Lower down ? "

" No, I don't think so . . . Not just a lower grade. "

Lotte feared : " I do not understand, Miss Klaar. "

" Of course ! Now all this will be managed by someone who does. I have made an appointment for you, Mrs. Rabinowich. " She took a card from her purse, she was smiling under her prim seriousness : " — It is over ! Here, you must report here, at five. This afternoon. Dr. Finney. I do not know Dr. Finney, but he I am sure will help you — will tell us more about — about what is the matter with Herbert. If anything . . . "

She was up. Lotte held the card in trembling fingers.

" Do not forget ; this afternoon at five. This afternoon. It is a Board of Education appointment. He expects Herbert . . . "

She walked through the shut world of the store with her shoulders thrusting. She moved as through a sea toward air — strained for the street. She threw up her eyes, took in once more the air of her own world. — This is hard work ! . . .

Lotte was there with a shawl over her head.

" Isidor, I must take Herbert . . . down by 59th Street. The teacher. . . "

She stopped. Isidor's eyes were high, shut away, above clasped small hands. He prayed. She waited, watching his shut eyes. His eyes were still, beyond swaying head, mumbling lips.

He came forth from the counter : " We go together. . . I close up. "

She made no reply.

They walked up the street with the low sun red in their eyes. The boy leaped ahead, lounged behind. He was glad. Adventure to be so walking through the streets with mother and father. Both! A blue car scraped to a standstill — for them!

The car lurched them on. A stress of fateful purpose in the lurch forth of the car that for them had scraped to a standstill: in the outlay of fifteen cents: in the fact that *Schul* would be missed.

The City rose in hard high words. Each building was a word, each street they swept by was an accent in the ruthless wording of fate, their fate, as they moved Southward into knowledge. The City was a sentence, harsh, staccato, in an alien tongue.

Lotte clasped Herbert's hand.

"Come now, darling. Quiet, yes?"

They rose on stone steps.

The hall was a cold silence to which their feet spoke fearfully. Bright plastered walls gashed long against the blood of Lotte moving toward Dr. Finney. She felt beyond the head of her child — he was a blotch — her man, beating with her, moving with her inevitably one, as though the silence of the world were a rein that bound them, drove them together.

They sat in bright varnished chairs in a room of gloom.

Herbert was a black blotch before Lotte full of the glow of her son. A big man stood — bright against Herbert and her little man clasping his hat: a stroke from top to nadir against the glow of her son. A round red face, yellow hair sparse, gold chain laid on a blanched vest . . . took Herbert away. The door shut. . .

They sat viced in the fixity of waiting. Their being there, still in the room, made them one with the room: they and the room moved onward to a real thing she could not yet see. Time was unreal, waiting was unreal. They moved over a sharp horizon.

Lotte sat in this room with her man: and her child beyond under the cold clear eyes of a strange Doctor. But she sat waiting no new being, she felt how all of the world was about her like her flesh: how it swung ahead into certainty. She could not pray. She could not feel the need of prayer. God was about her in the certainty of life. . . like her flesh. God was of her sitting there and moving there toward the words of knowledge she was soon to receive.

The words that she approached, the harsh syllables of the City she had moved across, her son and God were one in an immobile ecstacy she, moving forward, limned and partook of. . .

He stepped in to them alone — above wide vest, within wide face, eyes little and blue, cold and impatient.

Words came — his words — words from a Doctor who knows — Words for my heart of my son. Words born of God within cloud of her life. — Listen, these words, lay them hot and cold in my open heart which the Sun has opened.

" I suppose, " he looked down at a card, " Miss Klaar, I suppose, has prepared you for what there can be no doubt of... No doubt of, my dear people..."

He looked at them. — The world is one, these words of a world that is one... His eyes danced blue against the fixity of the room that was theirs. " There is no doubt, my friends, your son is not only backward, very backward, will never be anything else... You see how he is now. Do you ? His body will grow big... He is healthy alright. You feed him — too wisely. — Well, he will always act just about as he acts now. No use concealing that... Be just as childish and foolish — stupid — as he is today... There are things he can learn... Not what he is taught where he is now. We'll have him placed in another Class where he belongs — with others like him. Lots others like him, my good woman... where he can learn to use his hands. Some crude simple job. Never fear, there'll be work always... crude work of the hands... drawers of water, hewers of wood ? we need'em I guess... he will be able to do. No more. "

His eyes stopped dancing beyond the two dark figures, they fixed on the woman... " No more, " his lips pushed out again, to her. The blue eyes gleamed, struck her black calm, came back, tremoring, screaming, within him. His face paled. He turned.

He flung wide the door, joined their flesh to the two dark figures.

" Here ! " He gave the boy. " Good evening. "

He tried to break the daze he felt in his clear rooms. — Clear rooms, my rooms, clear... what's this ? " Remember ! here's his address... the new school. Prepare yourselves to seeing his body grow big... bigger than yours... America... and his mind stay childish. Goodnight. "

His hand sucked out, clasped the hand of Lotte who stood.

He held her hand. There were no words in the world. He felt behind the daze of his clear room a stream of strength moving resistless toward him from this woman, toward daze in himself.

3.

The Sun was gone behind the Westward city. It cast its radiance upon the sky, and the sky was a fused clearness over their heads as they walked. Gentle and warm sinking into night was the sky above city. Houses, dying in shadow fusing with sky, stood like words spoken.

" We will walk home, Isidor. "

" Ain't we goin' to take the car ? "

" No, son. There's no hurry. Taking the car costs money. "

Herbert leaped ahead, lounged behind their black bent calm, glad of this adventure of moving through the city, far from home, with mother and father. Both !

They walked slow, they walked still. . . within the glow of the day. A constant measure they were before and behind their son.

WALDO FRANK.

Perspiration.

The poor dear
looked dreadfully bored
(unless his monocle lied)
as he sat there
with his hat upon his head
striped blue collar round his neck
pearl gray jacket round his torso
yellow flannels round his legs
olive spats upon his feet :
so he sipped his thin liquer
or puffed spirals from his pipe
the while his naked eye
roamed ever so wistfully
across Lago di Como :
beautiful, yes,
a sheet of serenity,
the surrounding mountains
voluptuous indeed,
yes, but what use is a body
that's carved out of stone
and invitations
whose speech is so silent,
and life such as this
enough of a dullness
with nothing to do
its whole length and breadth
except to yawn and to yearn

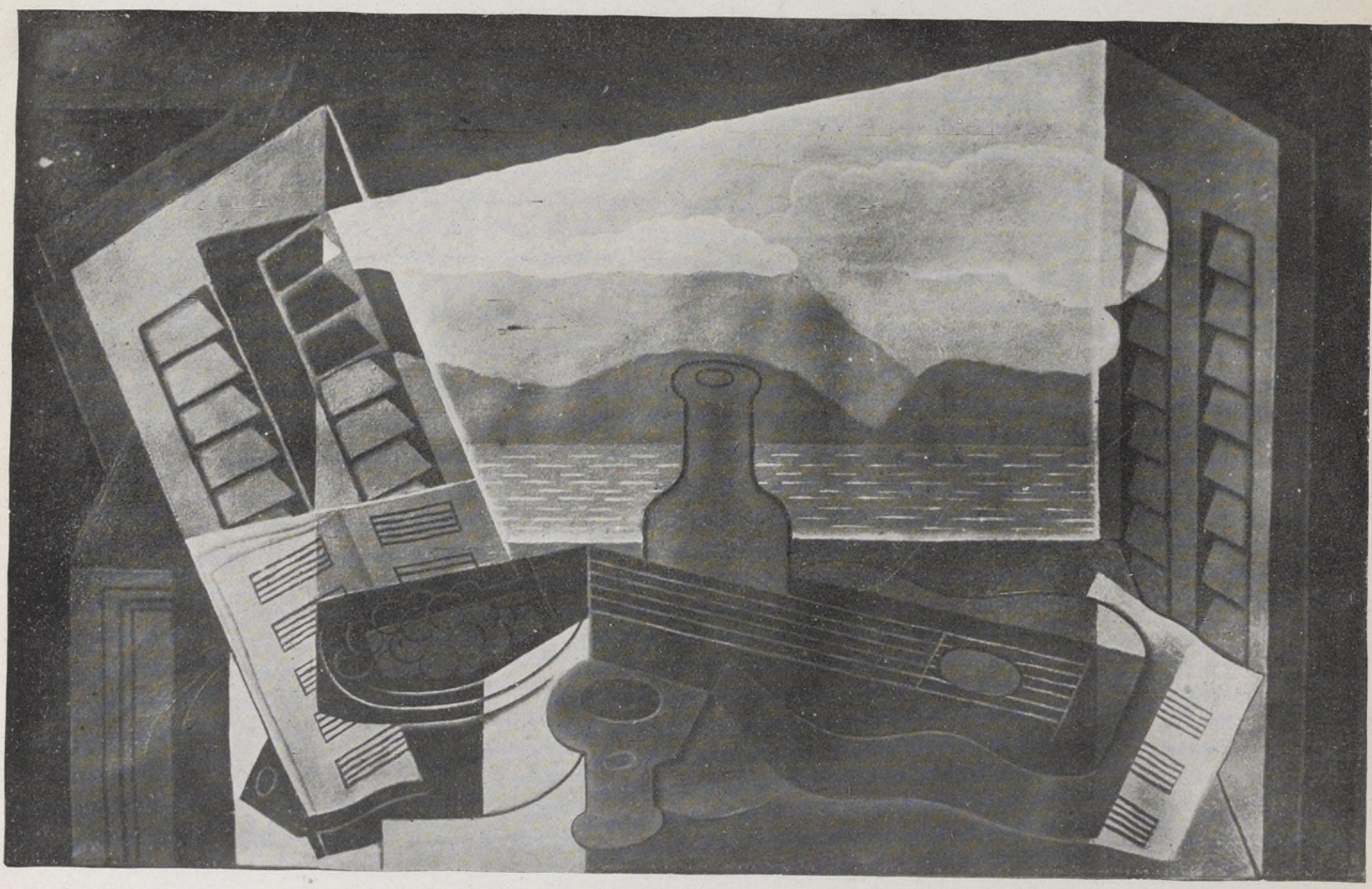
for London far away
where at least there are streets
and something going on
and a soul or two to chat with,
and the women who accost you
use a tongue that's civilized:
so what's a chap to do
when his energy is low
with his spats upon his feet
yellow flannels round his legs
pearl gray jacket round his torso
striped blue collar round his neck
and his head beneath his hat:
except perhaps tenderly
to remove the last article
and caress his troubled brow
with a languid
cambric kerchief?

Dawn.

The languourous thighs of the morning
  stretch themselves in sleep,
and one eye just peers
  over the edge of white comforters,
  vaguely to discover
  the paramour flown,
  without plea of leave-taking
  or hypocritical excuse,
  to the Orient,
  as the fellow's shadow betrays:

whither,
  with an irate mien
  and thighs sprouting wings
  she pursues him :
for,
  once you've had them,
  they're no longer backward,
the women who forget they were ladies.

ALFRED KREYMBORG.



JUAN GRIS. Painting.

Courtesy Galerie Simon — Paris .

PROFOUND TODAY.

I no longer know whether I regard the starry heavens with my eyes or if I look at a drop of water thru a microscope. Since the beginning of his species the horse moves, pliable and geometric. Already the machines overtake him, go beyond him. The locomotives prance, and the steamboats neigh upon the water. Never has a typewriter made a mistake in etymological orthography, while the savant stammers, chews his words, breaks his teeth on ancient consonants. When I think, all my senses are kindled, and I wish to violate all beings. And when I release my instinct of destruction I find the triangle of a metaphysical solution. Inexhaustible coal pits! Cosmogonies live again in the trademarks. Extravagant signs over the city, multi-colored, with the ribbon of the trams climbing the avenue, howling monkeys holding each other by the tail and the incendiary orchids of architecture which collapse from above and kill them. In the air the virgin cry of the trolleys. The medium is as well trained as the stallion of an Indian chief. It obeys the slightest beck. Pressure of a finger. A jet of steam sets the piston going. Copper wire makes a frog's leg somersault. Everything is becoming sensitized. Is within reach of the eyes. Nearly touches one. Where is Man? The gesture of the infusoria is more tragic than the story of a woman's heart. The life of the plants more stirring than a police drama. The movement of the muscles of the back in action is a ballet; this square of goods should be set to music and that jar of preserves is a poem of ingenuousness. Everything changes, proportions, angles, aspects. Everything recedes, approaches, cumulates, miscarries, laughs, becomes accentuated and exaggerated. Produce, from five parts of the globe, is united on the same plate, in the same dress. One feeds on the sweat of gold, at each meal, at each kiss. Everything is artificial. The eyes, the hand. The great fur of figures on which I keep the bank. The sexual frenzy of the factories. The wheel which turns. The wing which flies. The voice which travels far, on a wire. Your ear in a trumpet. Your sense of direction. Your rhythm. You melt the world in the mold of your skull. Your brain is hollow. Unsuspected depth in which you cull the mighty flower of explosives. Like a religion, a mysterious pill hastens your digestion. You lose yourself in the labyrinth of the stores where you give up your entity to become everyone. You

smoke with Mr. Bock the Havana at twenty-five cents, which is on the poster. You are part of that great anonymous body which is a café. I no longer recognize myself in the mirror. Alcohol has clouded my features. He marries the department store like the first comer. We are all the hour which strikes. You hurl yourself at the menagerie of the railroad stations to tame the beast of your impatience. They depart. They disperse. Fireworks in all directions. The capitals of Europe are in the trajectory of their inertia. A terrific whistle plows up the continent. The countries across the sea lie in the net. Here is Egypt on a camel. Go to Engadine for your winter sports. Read the Golf Hotels in the palm trees. Think of 400 windows in sunlight. One unfolds the horizons of the timetables and one dreams himself on Southern Iles. Romanticism. The flags of the landscape float over the doors while from the garland of the train fall flowers which take root and name, forgotten villages. The removals kneeling in the accordeon of the sky across the telescoped voices. The most blasé go the farthest. Immovable. Entire days. Like Socrates. With an activity in its head. The Eiffel Tower comes and goes, from the summit. The sun, a cloud, a trifle suffices to lengthen, to shorten it. The steel bridges are all mysterious and sensitive. Watches set themselves. From all sides the transatlantics advance toward their connections. Then the semaphore makes a sign. A blue eye opens. A red one shuts. All is soon but colour, interpenetration. Disc. Rhythm. Dance. Orange and violet eat each other. Checkerboard of the port. In each hut is piled up that which you have won in inventing the game, Doctor Palamede. Steam shovels open their buckets of thunder. Pellmell. The Orient. The Occident. The South. The North. Everything struts on the wharfs while the lion of the sky strangles the cows of the twilight. There are cargoes of fruits on the earth and on the roofs. Casks of fire. Of cinnamon. European women are like submarine flowers before the violent labour of the longshoremen and the dark red apotheosis of the machines. One receives a trolley car on the chest. An automobile on the back. A trap door opens under foot. One has a tunnel in his eyes. One rises to the fifteenth floor drawn by the hair. All this while smoking a pipe with hands at the faucets — hot water — cold water — one dreams of the wife of the captain whose knee one will nudge under the table a little later. Golden teeth, her smiles and her accent are charming. And then one lets himself slide to dinner. Tongues are stuffed. We must make many grimaces in order to understand each other. Must gesticulate and laugh very loudly. Madame wipes her mouth with the corner of her napkin. Zephyr Beef ; Eureka Coffee. Pimodan or Pamodan. In my rocking chair, I am like a negro fetich, angular, under the heraldic electricity. The orchestra plays Louise. I amuse myself by piercing thru and thru with a pin this fat body which floats at the level

of my eyes. Diver, in the smoke of my cigar, alone, I listen to the dying of the sentimental music which causes my helmet to reverberate. My soles of lead hold me up and I advance slow, grotesque, pinched at the joints and bend with difficulty over the swamp-life of woman. Your eye, sea horse, vibrates; marks a comma and passes by. Between two waters, the sex, bushy, complicated, unusual. The cuttle fish squirts me with his cloud of ink in which I disappear like an aviator. I hear the motor of the waters, the forging of the leaches. A thousand suction pores function, secreting Iodine. The skin becomes gelatinous, transparent, irridescent like the flesh of an anemone. The centers of sensitiveness become polarized. Independence of all the functions. The eye strains to touch ; the back eats ; the finger sees. Clusters of grassy arms undulate. Sponge of the depths, the brain breathes gently. The thighs remember and make the movements of fins. The storm tears out your tonsils. A cry passes thru you like the shadow of an iceberg. It congeals and disjoins. Your being reassembles with difficulty. Hunger draws together the scattered limbs and groups them around the vacuum which is now the belly. The body assumes the uniform of its weight. The spirit, scattered everywhere, concentrates in the cockade of the consciousness. I am man. You are woman. Goodbye. Each regains his room. There are shoes before the door, not to confuse them. Mine are yellow. The boy waits for his tip. I give him the eçu of my coat-of-arms. I have forgotten to sleep. My glottis moves. This attempt at suicide is regicide. I am impaled on my sensibility. The dogs of night come to lick the black blood which trickles down my legs. They make light from it. The silence is such that one hears the spring of the universe coiling itself. A sudden click, everything is larger by a notch. It is today. Beautiful horse foaming. Sicknesses rise to the skies like stars on the horizon. And here is Betelgueuse who is mistress of the seventh house. Believe me, all is clear, ordered, simple and natural. The mineral breathes, the vegetable eats, the animal feels. Man is crystallized. Prodigious today. Plummet. Yard arm. Door. Face. Whirlwind. You live. Eccentric. In the integral solitude. In the anonymous communion. With all that which is root and summit and which palpitates, unites, enthuses. Phenomena of this congenital halucination which is life in all its manifestations and the continuous activity of consciousness. The motor turns in spirals. The rhythm speaks. Chemistry. You are. Profound today.

From the French of
BLAISE CENDRARS.

PROTEUS.

(*Continued*)

SCENE II.

THE REPAST OF THE SEALS.

MUSIC.

The platform turns revealing another part of the isle. PROTEUS *is discovered, quite naked, in a bathtub with convex bottom in which he teeters back and forth. The tap is replaced by a stopper. He is very fat and hairy. A rather meagre white beard, pointed ears. Shiny bald head with a few scattered hairs. Over his eyes automobile goggles. Beside him are six tobacco plants in pots.*

In front of him is an osier-basket, filled with fish, which he is throwing to his seals. Fish and seals may be replaced by the imagination of the spectators, or by music.

PROTEUS.

Cot, cot, cot, cot, cot! Here, my sheep! Here, my little chickens! Cot, cot, cot!

(*The round heads of seals appear here and there in the sea*).

Are we all here? One, two, three, four, six, eight, eleven, twelve. Thirteen! The tale is complete!

To which goes the codfish, to which the conger, to which the red surmullet, to which the halibut steak? Cot, cot, cot! To which this lovely shad.

(*Tumult, battle, flocking, foam, leaps of the seals which throw themselves from the summits of the crags into water of snow and turquoise. Braying, trumpeting, thumpings of tails, and fins. All this is expressed by the music*).

Here, Moustache! heave yourself up on your tusks! we are young no longer, my Jumbo. Here take this devil-fish. It won't frighten *you*!

And you, Otarys, my little one come to seize this splendid dab. To look about a little, walk on your upper fins diminutive like pantaloons.

(*Otarys takes the fish from his fingers*).

Who gets the fry ?

(*With both hands he sowslittle fishes. Flocking of seals*).

Here's yours, Rhesus ! Here's yours, Gorgo ! and you, the littlest one, what is the matter that you should bray there like an ass. Catch, my little barrel !

(*New distribution of fish. Flocking of seals*).

Iou, the basket is empty.

And now for serious things, to work ! to work !

What is the quotient, Moustache, of five ten hundred thousandths divided by 123 ?

You do not know ? Work it out, and give me the answer later.

And you, Tambour, you are going to add for me 3.977 and 7.896.

And you, Gorgo, if you please, extract the cube root of 27.

Go, you have something wherewith to amuse yourselves.

(*He blows into a conch*).

Willowithe ! Willowithe !

(*Enter* WILLOWITHE).

(MENELAUS *is seen stealthily approaching, gliding behind the rocks, still holding* HELEN *by the hand. Then fastens her with a cord to a rock behind which he hides himself*).

WILLOWITHE.

What does Monseigneur desire ?

PROTEUS.

Oh, what politeness today. This the language of the courts !

Go and get me my basin to wash my hands.

My Chinese basin, the rose-colored one, the one with the *mao-pings* !

And see that the water is very hot.

(*She goes out and returns bringing half a basin which she puts under his chin*).

PROTEUS, *blowing and spluttering in the basin.*

Bou ! Bou ! Bou !

(*Music*).

The annoying thing is this that I can only have odd dishes. One here, another there, never a service complete.

(*He dries himself*).

WILLOWITHE.

A capable housekeeper, now, would be more useful to you than a poor Satyress.

She would re-embroider all this with your monogram.

PROTEUS, *scrutinizing himself in a dented mirror that she holds for him.*

Yes indeed! Yes indeed! Yes indeed!

WILLOWITHE.

You have promised to let me go, some day, if I am good.

PROTEUS.

Yes indeed. — Remove the brick.

(*She takes out the brick that warms the bath. He teeters with evident satisfaction*).

WILLOWITHE.

I and the rest of the two-footed animals, my companions.

PROTEUS, *winking.*

And what about Menelaus.

WILLOWITHE.

What Menelaus?

(PROTEUS *winks and indicates, with a little movement, the rock behind which* MENELAUS *is hidden*).

WILLOWITHE.

I don't know what you mean.

PROTEUS, *in guarded tones.*

He is lying in wait for us behind that rock.

WILLOWITHE, *throwing herself at his feet.*

You know everything, master. One cannot hide anything from you.

PROTEUS.

Take care not to break my basin! It has ac rack that troubles me greatly.

WILLOWITHE.

Yes, I will tell you all.

(MENELAUS *sticks out his head, she motions to him to hide himself*).

But first . . .

(*She draws a comb from her girdle and combs his beard*).

Let me pass the comb through your whiskers a while, for you are a sight to see, with that beard all tangled and full of sand.

Ah, old wrecker of ships.

Say, is there no device that will keep you safe at home when the sea is filled with madness.

And dances with nodding plumes in the Thracian wind, its lanterns all alight.

(Ah, it is a pleasant change after the stifling breezes from Libyan sands and one fills one's lungs with air).

I take it that it must needs be you that the poor devils who go to the bottom

Last see on the crest of a wave, old bather!

Dancing mid wrecks and corpses as insubmersible as a bottle!

PROTEUS.

Trim my hair a trifle.

WILLOWITHE.

But there's no hair to trim! Scarce five or six impalpable filaments. It is embroidery scissors that I need.

PROTEUS.

No matter! This sound of snipping about my head procures me pleasant illusions.

Such, in the month of June the peddlar who falls asleep to the sound of swishing scythes in the lushy meadows.

WILLOWITHE, *waving the shears about his head.*

I love you much, little Proteus of my heart.

PROTEUS.

Same here.

WILLOWITHE, *same business.*

You do not believe me, this causes me much pain.

PROTEUS.

I believe you, Willowithe.

WILLOWITHE.

Ah, you are so good, so simple, so delicate.

PROTEUS.

Perfectly true.

WILLOWITHE.

So quaint, so original! That fish-tale, what an idea!

PROTEUS.

Isn't it?

WILLOWITHE.

So rich!

PROTEUS.

Yes indeed.

WILLOWITHE.

You love the fine arts so much! That collection of yours, there isn't another like it in all the Aegean Sea.

PROTEUS.

It is this, is it not, on which Menelaus counts to repair his little boat?

WILLOWTHE.

Do you want to keep him here? He'd put everything in confusion in this small well-ordered isle.

Even now he wished to ravage you plantation.

Since he has taken Troy you wouldn't recognize him. He's a savage, a true devourer.

PROTEUS.

Ah, sly boots! Is it not true it was you that instructed him?

Never adventurer is shipwrecked on these shores

But that you teach him the way to get round old Proteus.

In vain I transform myself to lion, dragon, water, fire and fruit-tree.

Not one of them by any chance lets go his hold in fright and I have to give him whatever he demands,

And I must confess that I find it most fatiguing.

Not to mention the loss of respectability for a man getting on in years.

WILLOWITHE.

Then let me go in peace.

PROTEUS.

Bah, you see these malicious shifts have'nt done you a bit of good.

None of them yet has been true to the vow he made. Hee! Hee! Hee!

They do not catch me so, I am far too old a fish.

WILLOWITHE.

And do you know who it is that Menelaus brought with him, holding her by the hand?

PROTEUS.

Who?

WILLOWITHE.

You know everything, Monseigneur, and I can teach you nothing.

PROTEUS.

Come, you know well I am just a wretched god of the sixth rank, and hence my copy of Destiny comes to me last, having passed through many hands.

Nothing but little pictures grotesquely defaced on the ribbon!

And in the most interesting places, look you, are people of whom, there

remains no more than a hand, or a boot, or perhaps it's the head that's gone, and suddenly there's a gap that's fathoms long. See your portrait there if you can !

Then be trustful and take a servant-maid who answers to the name of Willowithe and who has horns on her head.

WILLOWITHE.

You are proud of it !

PROTEUS.

Hé ! Hé ! I don't deny it. Folks would go far to see one of those Nymphs of whom one talks so much !

WILLOWITHE.

And of your herd of Satyrs as well, is it not so ? Tisn't everyone that has such a galaxy.

PROTEUS.

It's for their own good that I keep them. I mean to teach them morals and sanitation.

Then, too, it amuses me to watch them hopping from rock to rock. It is picturesque. It gives the place a more animated air. What a pity, now that I haven't got a fountain !

Ah, I'm quite a character, I am, there's nobody else quite like me.

WILLOWITHE.

Then you shall not know who is here with Menelaus.

PROTEUS.

Then he can dispense with my teak-wood and my good Phenician cordage.

What a nincompoop ! He calls himself a sailor, he wishes to sail the seas and he couldn't cross the Eurotas in a wash-tub if it should chance to rain !

WILLOWITHE, *softly*.

Helen.

PROTEUS.

Helen is with him ?

(WILLOWITHE *nods her head*).

You have seen her ?

WILLOWITHE.

I have seen her.

PROTEUS.

As beautiful as they say ?

WILLOWITHE.

As beautiful. This savage drags her along by the hand.

PROTEUS, *dreamily*.

Ten years have passed since, on the stern of the ship that carried her towards Troy, I saw her floating veil the hue of gold.

WILLOWITHE.

She is still the same Helen.

PROTEUS.

And this great fire from which they haled her forth has not bloused her, nor marred her beauty?

WILLOWITHE.

She is still the same Helen.

PROTEUS.

Ah, I should like to see her.

WILLOWITHE.

Do you wish to possess her?

PROTEUS.

I say tht I'd like to look at her.

WILLOWITHE.

But it's in your power, my lord, to make her yours, and to look at her during all the days of your life.

PROTEUS.

Ah, do not persuade to violent acts. I'm too old. My isle is small,

But never an old sea-captain owned a cabin that was more precisely ordered and arranged.

Let the great gods do what they will since all the earth is theirs.

I have no wish that this rent-free hovel go hurtling through the air.

WILLOWITHE.

Helen is very beautiful!

PROTEUS.

And did she speak to you?

WILLOWITHE.

She is so puffed up with pride since these things have happened to her

That the only words she will speak are "I am Helen."

PROTEUS.

As tranquil as a statue, and living into the bargain! Exactly what I should like!

None of those scenes to be dreaded with her to which you treat me so often, my little spitfire!

WILLOWITHE.

I have dropped a hint to Menelaus of that idiotic tale

That they tell in all the isles from Marseilles to Gallipoli

That there are two Helens and that the one of Troy was not the true one.

PROTEUS.

It is not an idiotic tale, I invented it myself. I never have found a humbug more amusing.

It is worth its weight in sea-salt.

WILLOWITHE.

I said to our Menelaus
That this Helen whom he has haled from Troy by the hand
Was false and that the true one was in our custody.

PROTEUS.

Bravo! Excellent! 'Faith, you become a true daughter of the sea.

WILLOWITHE.

But it only rests with you to transform this lie to truth.

PROTEUS.

How?

WILLOWITHE.

It is in your power to retain the true, the only Helen.

PROTEUS.

I do not understand.

WILLOWITHE.

I have not told everything to this brutal lout. I have merely informed him that you can deck yourself, with apples of leather between his arms. But he doesn't know that if you look at him without your spectacles, you can make him believe whatever you choose.

PROTEUS.

It is true.

WILLOWITHE.

Let him take your spectacles. Make him see that I am Helen.

PROTEUS.

Make him see that you are Helen?
Hou! Hou!

WILLOWITHE.

He will take me away with him.

PROTEUS.

Ho! Ho!

WILLOWITHE.

And he will leave you the veritable Helen.

PROTEUS.

Hé! Hé!

WILLOWITHE.

And I will take away all the Satyrs, my brothers, with me!

PROTEUS.

The deuce! You go too fast!

WILLOWITHE.

Let me only have her likeness.

You will see if I'm not more Helen than Helen herself.

PROTEUS.

But he must have already promised you something, eh?

WILLOWITHE.

A sailor's promises! Ha! He swears too easily.

Do you think a sailor troubles himself to take a useless mouth

Through gratitude? Medea and Ariadne, I know their histories!

The water supply is small, and that's the whole thing in a nutshell.

— And he doesn't like my horns.

PROTEUS.

Do you flatter yourself that he will take this troop of Satyrs on board his ship?

WILLOWITHE.

You will make him think them my maids, assembly chaste.

PROTEUS.

The Satyrs your chaste maids, Hou! Hou! And why not my seals, pray tell?

WILLOWITHE.

Say it is beyond your power.

PROTEUS.

Nothing's beyond my power! Not even an imbecile's credulity!

WILLOWITHE.

Be gracious to me, Emperor-of-the-Sea and King-of-all-the-Liars!

PROTEUS.

But I do not like in the least to lose my Satyrs. Never again could I form a like collection.

All the gods of the sea are envious of my cabinet!

There is only Phorcus, indeed, who has mustered up a few poor sailors, companions of Ulysses,

And all day long they promenade on his hyperborean sands.

With their spy-glasses under their arms and their little oil-skin hats.

It's not to be classed with such an assemblage as mine.

Everywhere they are known, true scions of the air!

WILLOWITHE.

Pah, a pack of old stinking sheep, ancient ataxic goats!

If you let them drink this mineral water another thirty days they'll be only fit for the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.

PROTEUS.

Ta! Ta! Ta!

WILLOWITHE.

But on the other hand, Helen, what a unique possession. What honor for your old age!

Such a prize is surely worth more than a flock of half-mangy merinos.

PROTEUS.

You weary me!

WILLOWITHE, *with enthusiasm.*

Helen, one would say, the true, the only Helen!

PROTEUS.

Be still! You weary me!

WILLOWITHE.

The true, the only Helen! She for whom gods dispute with men! She who's talked about everywhere!

She for whom two hundred thousand men have recently had their throats cut . . .

PROTEUS.

Two hundred thousand men, did you say?

WILLOWITHE.

It is official figure.

PROTEUS.

Two hundred thousand men!

You make my mouth water. Be still!

WILLOWITHE.

What a pearl for your collection!

I know that Jupiter wants her. There's a place for her in heaven between the stars of the Dioscurides.

PROTEUS.

He shall not have her!

WILLOWITHE, *brandishing the shears.*

No, he shall not have her. It's Proteus all the same, it's the little sixth-class god will prove himself the most cunning!

PROTEUS.

You make me laugh! Ah well, it shall be as you wish!

WILLOWITHE, *raising her hand.*

You have promised.

MENELAUS *comes out of his hiding-place and advances, crawling*).

PROTEUS.

I have promised.

All the same it will come hard to lose you, Willowithe.

WILLOWITHE.

It's hard on me, too, my poor old man.

(*She motions to* MENELAUS).

We understand each other, in spite of every thing. We were so used to each other, in spite of every thing We were so used to each other's little ways!

(MENELAUS *springs and seizes* PROTEUS *behind. The bath is upset. Tumult*).

On! Boldly! That's good! Like that, catch him below the elbows. Good! Hold firmly, hold firmly, I tell you! Do not let him go the old brigand! Look out for Number One. Do not forget! The lion is starting now.

(*The shadow of a lion outlines itself on the drop at the back*).

(*To be concluded*).

PAUL CLAUDEL.

(*Translated from the French by John Strong Newberry*).

TRINKETS.

The old silversmith always found a question in the face of his apprentice, a boy of sixteen with a load of curly hair and big, brown eyes. With his big eyes and wide open ears, like expectant baskets, the boy gathered every step and move of his master. The shop was his threshold to life and the silversmith his guide.

The silversmith was tall and thin, the shop long and narrow, full of saints and showcases. It was an adventure to pass from one end of the shop to the other. Something always dropped and broke. A coat always ripped, a knee was always bruised on such occasions. There seemed to be hundreds of shelves, all loaded with ancient clocks, cheap jewelry, resilvered saints and scratched icons. Everything covered with dust, placed too high or placed too low. The old man sighed often and he sighed loudest whenever he happened to look at the heavily loaded shelves. About once a week he would survey the sad and dusty merchandise and decide to dispose of it at a gypsy fair.

The apprentice had visions of himself as a salesman at one of these fairs, selling alarm clocks to gypsies in many-colored dresses and silver coins in their hair. He could hear their violins, their dancing and quarreling. He remembered one with a slit skirt walking like a queen through the market place. Besides, he would show the silversmith's wife that he needed no advice every few minutes. He could go to distant places and take care of goods, dispose of them and bring back a clear account. She did not seem to realize that he was almost sixteen years old and that he could cross the streets without being told to look out. He knew he would succeed, and prove to his father that he could do more than dream. These dreams were as impossible as the rest, he knew that, and he passed from them to reality with ease. His most impossible dreams were not as strange as the shop and his relation to the old silversmith.

Impossible dreams have a way of coming true, and one day, an early autumn day, rich as a mother and warm as a mother's bosom, the silversmith hired a salesman and ordered his apprentice to go along. He was to have an important task on this expedition, to keep track of expenses and to take care of the money. He received a leather bag and strap for that purpose. These he tied round his waist under his clothes.

On that morning the trees seemed less tall and the silversmith's wife less important. He made larger steps, and his heels met the ground firmly. A farm wagon drawn by two bony horses took them out of town. It seemed the slowest wagon on earth, and the boy who sat on top of the bundles, showcases and some lumber looked down on the people and horses like the Emperor of India on his elephant passing through his cities.

The green leaves of young acacia trees hovered over the entire length of the boulevard and distributed the spring sunshine in patches on the ground. Barefooted girls skipped lightly over the ground. The skipping feet played in accord with the shadows of the green acacia leaves moved by a breeze. Distant sounds were clear and pleasant, and the sparrows seemed important. The air was kind and full of good wishes. Warm waves of it caressed the boy's cheeks. He pitied the people below him and hoped that some day they too might attain their ultimate hopes.

There were five other men on the wagon, all going to the fair. They were together three days and three nights, but the boy did not know their faces at the end of the journey. Their chatter reached him mixed with the sound of hoofs and the squeaks of unoiled farm wagon wheels. His eyes and ears were with the gypsies. Perched on his high seat the noises underneath him were in the right place, beyond his notice. Like a bird, he was little concerned with the immediate solid things near him.

The road was crowded but soon empty. The road became long, the road became lonely, the road came to life and died away in the distance somewhere near the Danube. Little houses came close to the road to watch the heavy, loaded wagon pass. Little houses peeped from behind hills and sometimes whole rows would march across the road. At these places the road would sometimes wear a stone mask. As the sun sank behind the Carpathian mountains the road led to mysterious woods and fields, enormous fields covered with fresh cut stacks of corn. At great intervals small lights shone in the distance, and unfamiliar sounds startled him, his heart beating at great speed. Suddenly a sentry appeared with gun and bayonet marching from one end of a field to the other. This vision appeared between stacks of corn and made his eyes dilate with fear. He dared not breathe. He looked for the other men on the wagon, but they were all asleep, including the driver. The horses walked on slowly to the destination. The sentry yawned loudly. This tranquility soothed the boy's nerves, but he sat up staring through the darkness until the sentry was far behind and the sound of his healthy boots died away.

Soon they came to what seemed, at a distance, a lighted hole in the ground near the road. It was a low built shop, made of clay and straw. No door, no windows. Evidently open, day and night. Wine and dried meats were the

main merchandise. A few rough benches and tables, two oil lamps, completed the furniture. In one corner two heavy peasants slept with their shirts open, their bare chests close to the black earth. Their garments and skins were like the earth. The earth seemed to breathe through them, the earth was blossoming forth into animal life on this very spot near these benches. The soil assumed human shapes and activities, breathing, snoring and twitching. These two sons of the soil loved their mother.

The shopkeeper was clumsy all over, except his eyes. The horses stopped mechanically in front of this tavern, and the sleeping five jumped from the wagon almost before it stopped, wide awake and hungry. Cheese, sausage and wine, some stale bread, were spread over the table. Red peppers were the only vegetables served. No dishes, forks or spoons but sharp knives. The salesman offered wine to the boy more than once, but he refused. He disliked and distrusted the man. The silversmith had warned him against the salesman.

All slept for a few hours with heads on folded arms on the table. The boy kept watch. He could not sleep. The wagon outside the door held what seemed to him a fortune. It was all instrusted to him. He would have to account for every trinket in the cases, and he meant to return with a clean account.

Early in the morning they started again, over a flat, monotonous country. Exhausted from the night's watch, the boy slept hours at a time on top of the bundles. He ate little during that day, and kept his eyes on the horizon, a flat, unpromising line. The day passed, leaving a heavy weight on the boy's body. Late that evening they stopped in front of a convent and after long negotiation through a hole in the gate, they were admitted. The air was cooler inside its walls. Stone walls with pale faces and pale faces with stony expressions. The whole place was full of black shawls moving constantly and silently. Walking black shawls, candles, sighs, lanterns, bells, prayers and all kinds of queer sounds kept the night alive. The boy slept on the wagon, he would not depart from the showcases. The men slept in the stables. They left early.

The next day they reached the small town, on a wide and shallow river. Gypsies, horses and girls filled the main thoroughfare. Horses by the hundreds, by the thousands, by the millions, the boy had never seen so many horses in his life. The most dilapidated, hungry and bony horses imaginable. They all seemed unfinished attempts. Thin necks, short necks, hanging necks, holding up or down sorrowful looking heads. Big bellies, narrow chests. Limping, sneezing creatures, some of them covered with sores and blind. The best looking things present were the whips, carefully braided and tipped. These were to turn those half dead, worn-out animals into prancing steeds or into steady hardworking draft horses. Most of the owners were barefooted, but their horses

had new shoes on. There seemed to be no money anywhere, but a lot of noise. Everybody had something to sell, and no one had money to buy. An enormous barrel filled with a light kind of brandy on a wagon pulled by two fine looking oxen stopped in the middle of the camp, a dozen gypsy musicians lined up on one side, and soon all attempts at trading stopped.

The boy ate and slept the whole week near the showcases. More than half the merchandise was sold. The bag round the boy's waist was bulging, and he bought secretly a long, sharp knife, formed like a dagger. He avoided thinking about the reason for this action. He felt secure with the blade in his pocket. The salesman was too friendly and the boy disliked him more than ever. In spite of this the older men managed to induce him to visit another fair. It was on their way home, not far from the home town. Here was a chance to get rid of the rest of the trinkets, and the boy, gripping his knife tightly, said yes.

The second fair was in full swing when they arrived, and things were moving fast. The salesman seemed to know everyone in this place. Here things seemed more orderly, and the people well-to-do. Some of the horses even yawned. The whole day passed pleasantly, but one of the gypsies looked east and predicted a storm. It came before sun set. The sky turned black; a few large drops driven by a strong wind announced a heavy rain. All packed things away and ran for shelter. The boy stuck to the heavy showcases until he got wet. The wind and rain turned into a hurricane. It ripped the roofs off the improvised stores. The few watchmen were the last to disappear and they dragged the boy with them to a nearby wineroom. The place was overcrowded with men and women. There were at least three hundred people in a place that would usually hold less than half that number. The smells were of great variety and intensity and everyone talked all the time. The boy was squeezed against the window, and kept his nose close to a crack in the windowpane. A tiny current of fresh air came in thru the crack and the boy sipped every bit of it. Outside on a huge black sheet the storm threw a zigzag of golden fire. All round the building there seemed to be a black sea. The noise in the wineroom dimmed the thunder, except when it was very near.

After a while everyone seemed drunk, and either asleep or quarreling. The lights went out and the boy was forced against the wall in an uncomfortable position. His head ached and the noises and odors were most unpleasant. He heard sighs that seemed like laughter and laughter that seemed like weeping. He heard snoring, subdued quarrels and the heavy movements of clumsy bodies. Someone lit a match, a knife flashed thru the air and a horrible shriek followed. The boy covered his eyes and ears with his fingers and waited in this position for a long time, until things calmed again and everyone seemed to be asleep. The black sky became grey and the boy was able to distinguish things

at some distance. A wagon passed, the horses knee-deep in water, and several men in the wagon looked anxiously about. One looked exactly like the salesman, but it was too dark to distinguish faces.

Soon the sun touched the tops of the few remaining trees and the roofs of the taller houses. A light breeze rippled the water that covered the whole ground occupied by the fair. Little was left standing. The boy waded thru the water looking for his showcases. He found two boards floating near the place. Someone had used an ax ; the lock was intact and held the two boards together. Other people too discovered that the storm had had considerable aid in wrecking the place. The silversmith's apprentice felt crushed. He looked for the salesman, but no one had seen him since the storm started.

It was a cool, clear, heartless morning, and he realized that he had failed in the first real test. It was senseless to continue living when you knew you could not face a serious situation. It was easy to live in the city, to work, to enjoy leisure and even to die ; it was too easy ; but to face the hurricane . . . He had failed. He had promised to bring back a clean account of all those superannuated trinkets, alarm clocks and brass bracelets. He looked at his long, dagger-like knife, sighed and decided first to return all the money to the old silversmith and afterwards . . . He looked at the knife again and carefully returned it to its leather sheath. He looked round for a while and started home on foot with the two boards under his arm. He walked all day gesticulating and sighing. From time to time his hand would feel the bag tied round his waist. His clothes were wet through and his coat was stiff and heavy. His shoes were full of water and he felt the sharp rocks in the road. There were many of them.

The day had passed when the boy came within a few miles of the city. He knew the road well and he had forgotten all about the fairs, the salesman and the silversmith. He walked like an automatic toy, changing the boards from right to left and feeling for his purse without knowing the reason for his actions. He heard only the gypsy musicians, the night sounds in the cornfields and the horrible shriek in the tavern. He felt those black shawls walking with lanterns behind him from the convent. The lame horses he had seen appeared one by one, and soon he heard the shriek again.

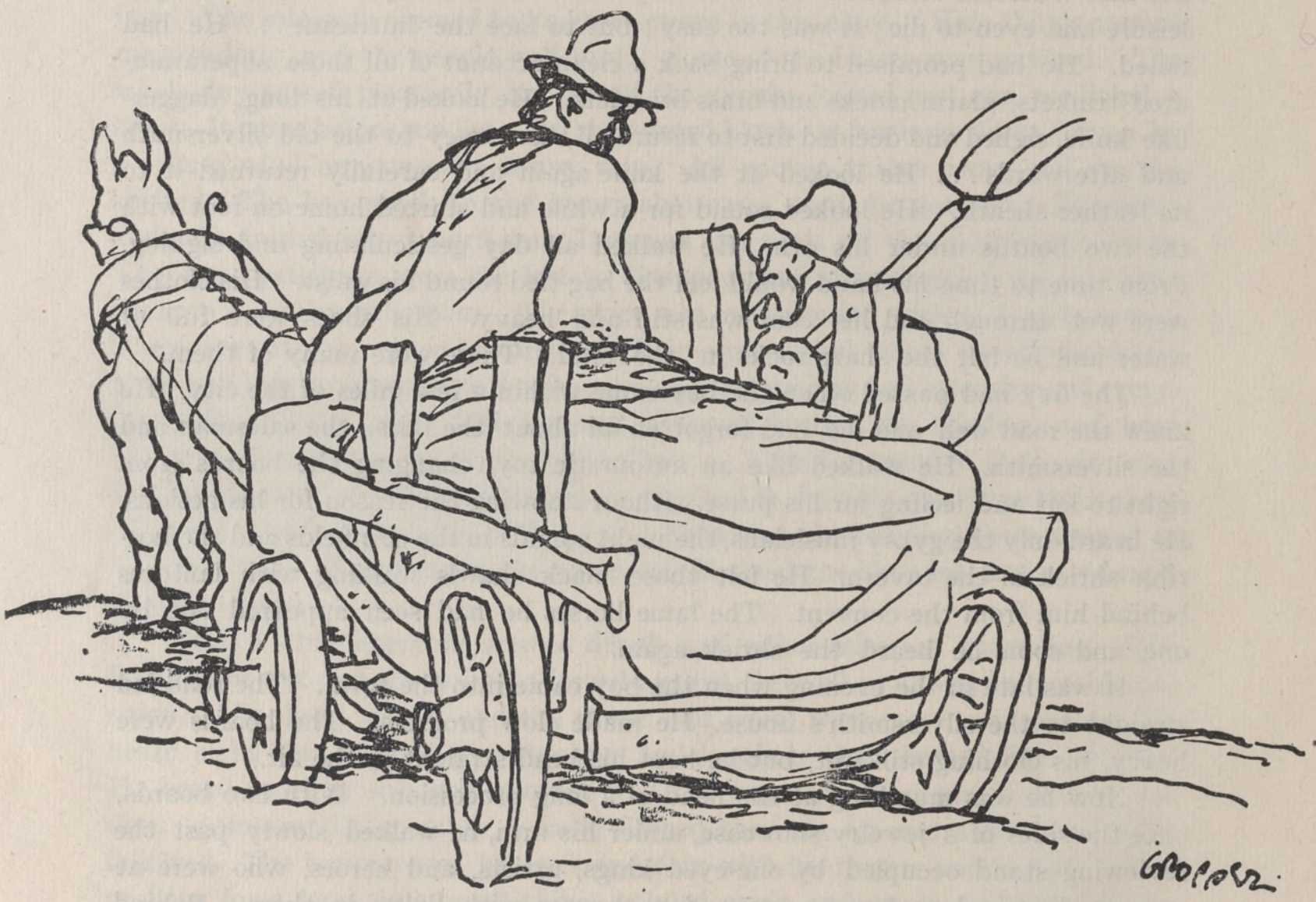
It was late in the evening when the boy came into the town. The road led straight to the silversmith's house. He made slow progress. The boards were heavy, his clothing still wet, but he kept his head straight in the air.

Now he was marching at the head of a long procession. With two boards, once the sides of a jewelry showcase, under his arm, he walked slowly past the reviewing stand occupied by one-eyed kings, artists, and heroes, who were at present disguised as lamp-posts and as houses with lights in them. Behind him at some distance followed stacks of corn, the sentry with his long bayonet,

the windowless and doorless tavern, the million three and four-cornered horses, the gypsy band, the storm, the lightning, while the shriek came regularly to the rythm of the musicians.

Leading this weird procession he reached the silversmith's door. The old man was still awake. He looked at the bent and trembling boy, who laid the two boards and the bag of money on the table. The silversmith shook his head, put on his hat and coat, picked up the limp body of the feverish boy in his arms and carried him home.

WILLIAM SAPHIER.



WILLIAM GROPPER. Drawing.

BROOMIDES.

This being our third issue, we are beginning to receive comments on our first.

One of the most distinguished of present-day American poets and critics writes us as follows. He expresses so many of our aims so clearly, and with so much less modesty than we would have done had we done it, that we cannot resist printing some of his comment, in lieu of an editorial :

" I want to congratulate - no, congratulate is not the word - you for the first number of Broom. You have not only produced an interesting, readable and up-to-date periodial, free from irritating assumptions of superiority, free from amateurish suggestions of half-baked culture, but you have done something even better — you have proved that the American spirit is broad enough to embrace not France only but Europe, not Europe only but the world. During this past year I have increasingly suffered from the manifest signs displayed in other quarters that American culture was trying to limit itself, that New York was trying to ape Oxford, for instance, or Paris. I am glad that you have set your faces against this tendency, being convinced that the only way America can save herself, and incidentally, save others, is not by becoming French or English, but by becoming universal ; not by limiting itself, but by extending its field to take in the whole planet. What Dostoievsky said was the mission of Russia, to make all men brothers, is now the mission of America. Indeed, did not Whitman say the same thing ? I am delighted you have decided to speak the universal language of art, instead of the jargon of certain coteries in Paris and in London, and I echo the sentiments of Miss Sanders' admirable article :

'What Europe looks forward to on the part of America is a broadening, not a narrowing ; an inclusiveness, not an exclusiveness ; a fertilizing, not a sterilizing of the aesthetic field, of art emotion, and cultural perception.'

I assure you that I shall do everything possible to make your great effort better known. In the spirit of Melville's motto, yours till the decks are dry, etc. "

. . . . . .

One of the most distinguished of present-day English poets and critics writes us to the contrary, and he expresses so many of our fears so clearly, and with more bravado than we would have done had we done it, that we cannot resist etc. :

" (1) Size : too large. Fits no book-case.
(2) Cover : overlaps at the side too much ; crinkles uglily.
(3) Cover design : amusing ; not good as permanent.
(4) Margins of text : excellent.
(5) Type : quite good.
(6) Art contents : most interesting.
(7) General matter : not interesting enough.
(8) ' Lake ' rotten.
(9) Editorial matter : between three stools.
(10) On the whole : No—yes—no—yes—yes ?—no ? "

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This opinion from one of the English contributors to the first issue :

" A week ago came your really superb Broom. It *is* superb. I congratulate you most heartily on it. Thank the Lord, you have no axe to grind. I am very proud to have been associated with the first number. It is a sensuous pleasue to be printed on such paper. I don't remember a Review which keeps the balance so even between the art and the letters. And there isn't a thing in Broom that the veriest adult couldn't understand. "

. . . . . .

But to prevent us from flying too high (as high in fact as the daily Zeppelin which passes over our heads en route to Naples — it is called " Esperia " — " Goddes of Hope "), an esteemed collaborator brought in a concise letter from an artist in Paris :

" First copy of Broom has arrived. It is terrible. You must shake them (Il faut que vous les secouez). "

We have descended — and the " Esperia " continues on her way to Naples.

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One of our well-wishers in Minnehaha, Minnesota, writes that she has not as yet received the first copy, ordered and promised long ago. She concludes, " I wait for it with ten horribly bitten finger nails. "

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The literary, painter and music folks have finally discovered our dug-out. So we have one of them per day in to tea : a newly established custom. Not to put anybody first, except alphabetically, here are the ones so far : Griffin Barry, Vernon Bartlett, Alfredo Casella, Blaise Cendrars, Douglas Goldring, Edgar A. Mowrer, Mlle. Rihani, Arthur Sachen, Ardengo Soffici, Ottomar Starke and the Ruthenian basso-profundo, Oblomov Uk. Among those who are to visit us soon (so rumour or correspondence hath it)are : Conrad Aiken, Malcolm Cowley, Marsden Hartley, Sinclair Lewis, Wyndham Lewis, John Rodker, Ralph Roeder and a Dalmatian wood-carver whose name has escaped us. We shall be opening a social register. To be reprinted in successive issues of Broom. This is one of the ways of getting into Broom.

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We have one pleasant item, at least, to impart to those of our friends who have been courageous enough to subscribe so far. Each volume of Broom will be composed of four successive issues. Only four? But consider the thickness — we had almost said, density — of the four : 386 pages, without index. Well, those of our subscribers who wish to bind their first four copies as a volume had better begin to let us know at once. We will be able to supply them with a binding of Varese paper and three-quarter leather for the purpose — a sample of which will appear in the next issue. The price per binding is three dollars. A complete index will go with the *copertino*. The price for the whole book, i. e., the four issues and binding complete, is six dollars.

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It is our plan to change the cover design of each issue. Inadvertently, this scheme was defeated in the case of our second issue. Broom ordered a new cover, and an artist accepted the proposal, and submitted a drawing which was Okd. Unhappily, he decided to finish his wood-block in Prague, and although he mailed it to us in plenty of time for us to use it, the wood-block is still missing.

While we are on this pertinent theme, we want to ask artists everywhere to submit to us sketches of cover designs which might prove feasible to lead the band-wagon of a particular month. The sketches should be in two colors. And if possible, send us two or more sketches to choose from. Broom has no objection against running the same artist more than once.

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Why was our second issue delayed in reaching America? Without delving into economics or politics, curious topics outside our present ken and purpose, let us try to explain. Just as that issue was on the eve of being realeased from our printers, Italy's King had a birthday, and 75,000 Fascisti (unless the report was exaggerated) decided to come to Rome from all points of the compass for a conference. Unfortunately, a slight fracas (the details of which have not been made clear to us) ensued at the terminal station, resulting in the death of two Communists. Early the next morning, the eternal city was visited by lightning: the entire body of labour struck instantaneously, with the ultimatum that not a single soul would return to the daily routine until the last of the Fascisti had departed. The city was paralyzed for days, and Broom along with it. After a return to normalcy, Broom Number Two was finally released, two weeks late for the long voyage home. We fervently hope that the faithful, meanwhile, have not consigned their brooms into ash bins, and now place their reliance on carpet-sweepers. Old fashioned implements have a hard time of it in this up-to-the-minute age. But as art always lags behind or leaps ahead of the moment, too much must not be expected of a mere broom.

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LAST WISHES.

Bury me not too deep,
But dig for me a shallow grave,
That I may hear men say: "The old plum tree by the wall
Has started blooming."

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER.

ERNESTO FRATONI, *Gerente responsabile.*

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SOME COMMENTS ON INITIAL ISSUE.

NEW YORK TIMES: 'There can be no doubt about the potentialities of Broom. The Editors should be qualified, equally by inclination andability, to steer Broom along the more or less perilous path that it proposes to tread. Its first number sharpens the appetite for more of the same kind.'

CARL SANDBURG: 'The Broom is clean as an airplane propellor and looks like a room swept and garnished — with a couple of dirty corners. Whimsical, strong, a breath. I kick myself because I am not an Abou Ben Adhem on its roll call and roster of the blessed. Sweep, Kid, sweep 'em clean.'

VAN WYCK BROOKS IN THE FREEMAN: 'They have maintained an almost uniformly high standard in the contributions. And a magazine that is able to obtain excellent work from writers whose work is not always excellent has greater power in reserve than one that depends only on the dependable. If there is anything in it that particularly pleases me, it is the note of catholicity and inclusiveness... This League Of Nations in Rome has already accomplished something creditable — which is more than can be said for the other League at Geneva.'

ROBERT FROST: 'You're the sweep, this is the Broom and I could wish that I had been one of the sweepings. It is nothing on the Broom not to have gathered me in.'

THE LITERARY REVIEW: 'The Review is thoroughly international, no less than thirteen different countries being represented in the first issue.'

SINCLAIR LEWIS: 'I am very glad to subscribe to Broom, and I enclose check. These are, I suppose, the practical words of praise which are the most comforting to editors. Broom seems to me, from its first number, not only to have the originality for which we had hoped but also a workmanlike solidity which promises that it will go on, grow, be significant. I return to my first words, I ENCLOSE CHECK, and I hope that a good many thousands will echo that particular phrase.'

AMERICAN subscriptions should be mailed to the
New York Office, THREE EAST NINTH STREET;
EUROPEAN subscriptions to the main office,
18, *TRINITÀ DEI MONTI, ROME* (6), *Italy.*

«WHAT OF IT, IF SOME OLD HUNKS OF A SEA-CAPTAIN ORDERS ME TO GET A BROOM AND SWEEP DOWN THE DECKS? WHAT DOES THAT INDIGNITY AMOUNT TO, WEIGHED, I MEAN, IN THE SCALES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT? DO YOU THINK THE ARCHANGEL GABRIEL THINKS ANYTHING THE LESS OF ME, BECAUSE I PROMPTLY AND RESPECTFULLY OBEY THAT OLD HUNKS IN THAT PARTICULAR INSTANCE? WHO AINT A SLAVE?»

MOBY DICK.