

EAST & WEST

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EAST & WEST

Volume I

New York, November, 1899

Number 1

The Unknown Country

By Jeannette Bliss Gillespy

*As one who, come at dawn upon a hill
Marking the confines of some unknown land,
Pauses and looks abroad to understand
What lies before him, if or good or ill,
Then draws the deep breath of the morning chill,
Tightens his staff again within his hand,
Straightens his shoulders, gives his soul command,
And takes his march again with better will,—
So I, upon the borders of the year,
Pause to behold the ways where I must go,
And breathe the deep, clear breath of early day,
Then down the slope of time, without a fear
Begin my march to meet the day's full glow,
Eager to lose no moment of the way.*

Comments

ONE day in December of 1898, about the middle of their senior year, two Columbia students who had grown retrospective over a lingering luncheon, came to the conclusion that they were both equally eager to continue their literary and editorial labors beyond the academic walls. They had common ideals, and held common views concerning the condition of magazine literature at the present day in America. So, before leaving the table, they reached the decision that immediately upon graduation, they would start a periodical which should be devoted to creative and critical literature along the line of their own views. With

this plan in mind, they asked the advice of certain persons whose opinion they respected, and, finding encouragement, they went speedily to work. The first result of their labors, this initial number of EAST AND WEST, now awaits the verdict of the public.

* * *

The considerations that determined the character of EAST AND WEST, and the intentions and aims of the editors, have already been set forth at length in a prospectus, which many of our readers have seen. For the benefit of those who have not been thus prepared, we shall take this opportunity to restate the more important points.

It is a generally recognized fact that in nearly all our periodicals, pure literature is receiving less and less space and attention, because of the journalistic and pictorial tendencies now so conspicuous. The magazines are filled largely with articles of a reportorial nature, with pictures, and with the work of scientific and political specialists. Verse occupies for the most part, in magazines that print poetry at all, the subordinate and unworthy place of stop-gap, and the fiction is recommended not infrequently by the name of the author rather than by any real merit it may possess. Although, of course, the modern magazine, with its wealth of illustrations and variety of articles, has a definite and important place of its own, we believe that there are also a place and a public for a magazine that shall be entirely literary, containing well-written stories, good verse, both serious and light, and essays of contemporaneous interest. It is hoped that EAST AND WEST will take this place among magazines.

While EAST AND WEST will seek to obtain the very best American literary material from every source, a special endeavor will be made to interest the younger writers in the present venture, and also to bring before the public the work of those who, as undergraduates, have done most to raise college literature to the grade of excellence it has attained of late years. It has been common in the past to point out the small percentage of college graduates among American men of letters. We feel convinced that this will be very different in the future, and that college men are taking a larger share in the nation's literature.

EAST AND WEST will absolutely avoid the faddish and decadent elements that have lately been so prevalent. While seeking to be as vivacious and as graceful as its brightest contemporaries, it will aim at being thoroughly sensible, honest, and in accord with the best standards and traditions of English literature. In criticism

it will try to be both progressive and conservative, eager to recognize good in the literature of the present, but careful not to be led astray by uncritical enthusiasm over mere cleverness and novelty.

* * *

It will thus be seen that we have certain hopes and certain beliefs, and that we deem these well worth the holding and the striving for. We believe that literature is worth while for its own sake, irrespective of its commercial value, and that, to be truly successful, men must write with this at heart. We hold it true, moreover, that honesty and sincerity of purpose are the keynotes to what is best in art as in life, and that whoever misuses the opportunities of literature, equally with him who misuses the opportunities of living, for ends lower than the highest, the satisfaction of his own moral and artistic consciousness, fails absolutely, in spite of present appearances and the skilful exercise of his talents. We hope that there are sufficient persons in sympathy with our aims, both in the writing and in the reading world, to ensure the continuance of a magazine conducted on these lines. It has been intimated to us that many of our ideals will be knocked into a cocked hat by the ruthless hand of experience. Possibly. But, if so, we shall pick up the cocked hat, and wear it as smartly as may be, until the end of the chapter. Some of our early hopes and beliefs may suffer beyond redemption, but we trust that the old fundamental faith in art and life will remain unbattered and unchanged.

* * *

In sending forth our magazine to make its first appearance before the public we are strongly conscious of a feeling of gratitude toward a large number of friends whose interest and kindness have been never-failing from the first. It is now our high and very pleasurable privilege to make grateful acknowledgment of the obligations under which they have

laid us. The constant friendly acts and invaluable advice of Professors George E. Woodberry, Brander Matthews, George R. Carpenter, and A. V. Williams Jackson have meant very much to us who have older and firmer bonds than need here be dwelt upon, to bind us to these gentlemen. The encouraging words of Mr. Edmund C. Stedman can neither be fittingly acknowledged in a few printed lines, nor adequately repaid by them. We shall always remember with pride that the hand which has done so much for literature in America, made fruitful suggestions in the margin of our first prospectus. For the helpful courtesy of Professor E. R. A. Seligman, of Dr. Albert Shaw, and of Professor Harry Thurston Peck we would also express our sense of deep indebtedness.

Besides these, there are those whose early faith in us and in our project has swelled our subscription list, thus helping to make the magazine financially possible; and again, those inhabitants of the great World of Letters, whose cordial reception, heartily expressed good-will, and above all, generously proffered manuscript, lead us to hope that EAST AND WEST will take that place as a medium for the circulation of the best literature, that we desire for it. The confidence and kind consideration of all these will be among our best incentives for achievement. In conclusion, we would mention for his good services, Mr. H. I. Kimball, to whose admirable taste and valuable experience the magazine owes much of whatever comeliness it may possess.

Revealed

By Lulah Ragsdale

*In that wide silence of the Resurrection Morn,
When, in my turn, I stand before the white
Suspensive legions, suddenly reborn,
Bewildered from the grave's insensate night—*

*And bare my earthly past before all eyes—
I fear not then my Maker's wrath to see,
I dread alone the shock of dazed surprise
And wonder that your face will turn on me.*

The Artist

By Gustav Kobbé

WHAT is art," he said, "but loyalty to an ideal—through disappointment, weariness, hunger, aye, even unto death!"

Poor fellow! Who knew better than I, who had endeavored to cheer him in his disappointment, how much he had suffered? All he craved was appreciation of his art-work. I appreciated it, but I seemed the only person who did. Even the coterie of younger artists who were progressive in their way—certainly no body of men could have progressed further in mutual admiration—were indifferent to his work. So was the public. He was sincerely grateful for my sympathetic interest, but it did not suffice him. He needed the stimulus which public recognition alone can give.

The hack work he did for a livelihood—water colors in perspective for architects, in which he, an ultra-impressionist in art, was obliged to pay strict attention to the most trivial minutæ—embittered his nature. The time thus spent in gaining his daily bread he regarded as miserably wasted—as time diverted from an ideal the adoration of which filled his soul and constituted his only creed. Art, and Art again; and Art yet a third time was his divine trinity.

Yet, between his hack work and his painting there was a broad field of opportunities that I had often urged him to utilize—illustrations, pictures for the dealers, and the like. But he would not listen to me. When it came to art pure and simple it must be of the highest. He was willing to slave over commercial work for a bare living, but art meant with him nothing less than hot pursuit of his ideal; and from this nothing could swerve him. "I dread," he would say, "acquir-

ing that fatal facility at turning out pretty work that has been the ruin of so many. The ease with which they are earning good money and securing the comforts of life has unfitted them for the trials an idealist—or call me 'fool' if you prefer—has to bear."

He had ample reason that night to feel the world's neglect most bitterly. All the time he could spare from his drudgery that winter he had devoted to a painting which he hoped would at last win recognition for him; a hope in which I had stimulated him, for I followed the progress of his work with unstinted admiration. It seemed as if he were dipping the brush into his heart instead of into the palette; there was no over-elaboration; every touch told; every stroke of the brush was a stroke of genius. The subject of the picture was most pathetic—a beggar looking half-piteously, half-malignantly after a richly dressed woman who had passed him by unheeded. My friend had painted at this picture with fierce energy, living down to the barest necessaries so as to gain as much time as possible for his art. The figures were masterpieces of characterization. The beggar still stood with outstretched hand as if through sheer force of habit. His look was a dramatic mingling of appeal and invective; for, as his eyes followed the woman who had ignored him, the flash of malign hatred was but half veiled by the lingering remnant of supplication. The latter was professional, the former real. The figure of the woman was also admirable. She was advancing, but, although in the foreground, she was purposely subordinated to the beggar. Her face was coldly beautiful, her contour perfect, her carriage erect. As if to emphasize her

heartlessness, she held a purse. But in spite of her rich attire and her proud bearing there was a subtle suggestion of meretriciousness about her.

I knew too well that when he was painting this picture he was painting his own life in allegory. He was the beggar. She, the meretricious woman who passed him by, was the world, the purchasable world, purchasable in his opinion by any one who cared to degrade himself to its level and cater to its tastes—who would stoop from art to mediocrity. Yet afterward, when he himself told me what I had already divined, I felt bound to argue that he had misrepresented himself. He was not a supplicant toward the world; he defied it. "As much," I said to him, "expect a passer-by to give alms to a man who stands erect and defiant as to you." But, when I seized this opportunity of advising him to meet the public halfway, hinting at false pride in his attitude, he flushed with anger and exclaimed: "The noblest quality man can boast is what the world calls 'false pride.'" He had adapted the old motto, *Noblesse oblige*, to *Genie oblige*.

His hopes had been greatly raised by the acceptance of this painting for one of the spring exhibitions. We had just come from "varnishing night" at the galleries. There we had seen artists busy with their brushes accentuating certain points in their canvases or toning down others according as the light in which they hung or the color schemes of the neighboring paintings affected theirs; art patrons strolling through the galleries with a self-satisfied air as if they had deluded themselves into belief that they could acquire by purchase the genius as well as the canvases of the artists whose pictures they bought; critics, some of whom were endeavoring to look as if they constituted the court of last resort in the art concerning which they had been delegated to write;—but we had not found the painting until after a long search.

When we entered the gallery in which our catalogue told us it hung, we allowed our eyes to wander slowly over the paintings "on the line." My friend's painting was not a large canvas and to be appreciated required a near-by view. This fact, coupled with what we supposed to be its merits, led us to look for it in a position worthy of these. But the position of honor was occupied by a rural scene with a cow painted in what may be called the "official" style, for it was the work of one of the officers of the society which was holding the exhibition. It was executed with photographic detail that defied all attempt to look at the canvas as a whole, the eye being constantly distracted by minutiae. Thus the hairs at the end of the cow's tail had been painted with an enthusiasm as touching as it was inartistic; and one could have counted every blade of grass in the foreground if one could have afforded the time. The only reason that could be assigned for placing the three canvases occupying the advantageous spaces above and alongside the picture just referred to, was the fact that they had been painted by members of the hanging committee; so at least we heard a young artist, who was standing behind us, say.

Finally, our eyes, as they wandered from canvas to canvas, fell upon the picture we were in search of—in the most remote corner of the gallery, "skied" where the light was poorest, a corner in which it seemed to us a painting by the greatest artist who ever lived would have been lost sight of.

My friend grasped my arm, gave it a spasmodic clutch and then turning, descended the stairs and walked into the street. I joined him, allowing him, however, to choose the way. We hurried along in silence, he taking no notice of my presence. The coolness of the night seemed grateful to him and so we walked on and on, up the avenue into which we had turned and down again until, when we were abreast the entrance of the Rain-

bow Inn, a favorite resort with us artists, I took his arm and led him in.

The Rainbow Inn was a cosey place. It was a tap-room and grill where you could call for ale, stout, barley-wine and stingo on draught; could have a brace of chops or a thick, juicy steak off the gridiron, and get trusted for them besides; so that the proprietor was regarded by the artists, who were the principal patrons of the place, as a guardian angel of Bohemia. Little tables and comfortable chairs were set about the grill, and the panelled walls were hung with canvases contributed by grateful artists. Somehow it seemed less objectionable to see one's pictures accumulating here than in one's studio.

It was here my friend exclaimed after his bitter experience of the evening: "What is art, but loyalty to an ideal—through disappointment, weariness, hunger, aye, even unto death!"

He had thrown himself back into his chair. His excitement had driven two crimson spots to his cheeks, and the fire of genius flashed in his eyes. But a moment later when he leaned forward again the spots faded away, the light in his eyes had grown dim, and he said dejectedly:

"And what is the artist's reward? To be ridiculed, or, what is worse, overlooked altogether. His only compensation is the consciousness that he has borne unflinchingly the sufferings which he has imposed upon himself by his loyalty to his ideal."

"Does the chance of winning fame count for nothing?" I asked.

"Fame! Chance!" he repeated after me. "That's the villainy of it. It's all chance. Think of the actor whose fame dates from the hit he made as the hind legs of a cow in a burlesque! What has become of the front legs of that cow? The hind legs got the chance to kick and prance; the front legs didn't. Tickle that many-headed ass, the public, and you're famous. Get down to the level of the public, and your fortune's made. What has the genius of art in common

with the cheap æstheticism of the day? Prettiness, superficial, and easily recognizable, has thrust real beauty into the background. The soubrette can draw crowded houses while the tragedienne plays to empty seats. Down, down, down to the public's level, and you are famous!"

"But isn't fame with posterity worth striving for?"

"When Cherubini was on his deathbed some one asked that same question, and the great composer replied: 'At a time like this poor jokes are out of place.' Posthumous fame is of value only to the discoverers: to those who discover that an artist, neglected during his life, was a genius. They have both the zest of the discovery and the æsthetic pleasure over beauty which would, but for them, remain undiscovered. They may add to their enjoyment by erecting a monument to one to whom, during his life, the public refused even a stone. But the artist does not see it; he does not hear their words of praise. He died in bitterness and despair; and there is nothing left of him but a few bones in a box. Some day I shall write a catechism for artists, and the first question and answer will be:

"Q. What must an artist do to become great? A. Die.' And I shall add as a supplementary beatitude: 'Blessed are they that expect nothing, for they shall not be disappointed.'"

I had no desire to enter into a religious argument with a man who in religious matters was as severe a realist as he was an idealist in art. Moreover, he needed sympathy, not doctrine. So I simply said:

"What remedy is there except to struggle on?"

"As a first remedy," he answered, "I would suggest never to have been born. I am a communist if only for the reason that we are born without being in the slightest degree responsible for our birth. Having, without any choice in the matter, been brought into the world, we are ex-

pected to bear up bravely under all the ills of life. If a man gives up the fight and kills himself, he is put down as insane. Yet, it seems to me, suicide is often striking evidence of a man's sanity. His birth having been a cruel wrong, he takes the simplest method of righting it—of resting from the battle of life in the sleep of death!"

Forgetting my resolve, I quoted:

"To die,—to sleep,—to sleep! perchance to dream! Aye, there's the rub."

After a moment's reflection he said, bitterly: "I may be mistaken in believing there is no future life, but I hope I am not. This life has already been almost more than I can bear."

He relapsed into a moody silence, and after a while rose to go. I was too accustomed to these attacks of melancholy to consider this more than a mere passing depression of spirits caused by his disappointment at having found the canvas, in which his hopes were centred, hung where its merits could not be recognized. It was after midnight when we reached the gray, gloomy, fortress-like building in which he had his studio—if the contracted space in which he lived could be dignified by that name. Part of the building, which faced a public park, was used for educational purposes; and to this portion there was a broad entrance. But the occupants of the studios entered through a low, narrow door, opening on the side street. Our footsteps on the flagstone floor of the dark hall re-echoed through the corridors; as if phantoms were hastily fleeing into the gloom before us. We went up several flights of stairs, and then walked along the upper hall to one of the turrets and ascended a winding stairway. His was the top room in this turret. Scant as was its furniture—an easel, a couch, a chair, a table, and a washstand—it seemed crowded. He had denied himself even those little comforts which often make a studio an oasis in the artist's barren life. On the table was the only book he owned, a volume of Poe's

poems. When he turned from his work it was to them, for, next to his art, he adored them. As we entered he took up the volume, and, throwing himself upon the couch, opened it at random and began reading aloud from "The Conqueror Worm." He read the last verse with tragic emphasis:

Out—out are the lights—out all!
 And, over each quivering form,
 The curtain, a funeral pall,
 Comes down with the rush of a storm,
 And the angels, all pallid and wan,
 Uprising, unveiling, affirm
 That the play is the tragedy "Man,"
 And its hero the Conqueror Worm.

When my friend had finished reading he let the book drop face down upon the floor. I had never seen him look so dejected as he lay there brooding over his misfortune. That poem summed up his ghastly philosophy of life and death, of weariness and disappointment—"The Tragedy Man,"—and at the end the "Conqueror Worm." There was no cheering him. He was in no mood to speak or listen; a mutual slight pressure of the hand was our only adieu.

It was late when I awoke the next morning. After breakfast at the Rainbow Inn, I took up the daily newspaper which employed the most trustworthy art critic in order to ascertain his first impression of the exhibition as seen on "varnishing night." I had read but a few lines when my friend's name greeted my eyes, and I found a notice of his painting which was more than appreciative. The critic evidently considered that he had come suddenly upon a new genius in art, and he wrote with the enthusiasm of a discoverer. Had the picture been hung on the line, and in the best possible light, I could not have asked for a more sympathetic criticism. It was a notice that would make a sensation.

I thought before taking the paper to the little studio where such deep melan-

choly had reigned the previous night, I would stop at the building where the exhibition was held, and observe if the picture could be seen more advantageously by day than at night. It was now noon, and the exhibition had been open three hours. As I entered the gallery I saw an admiring group before the canvas; and a little card in one corner announced that the picture had already found a purchaser. I inquired his name at the desk. He was one of the most intelligent and liberal art patrons. With his patronage my friend's career was assured. Mine was to be the joy of announcing to him his release from drudgery!

When, after bounding up the staircases, taking two steps at a time, even on the narrow stairway in the turret, I tried his door to find it locked, my disappointment was very great. Turning to the slate that hung at his door to write the happy message upon it, I saw for the first time that he had written in large letters, "Out." When I took up the pencil to

write my message, I noticed further that he had followed this word with others scattered here and there over the slate, and in varied and outré letters; and I was startled, as I put the words together, to read:

Out—out are the lights—out all!

Instinctively I knew something terrible had happened. Gathering all my strength I broke open the door. The heavy curtain at the window shut out the light. Only just enough came in from the hall to show me the dim outlines of a form upon the couch. I drew the curtain. The face, pale and motionless upon the pillow; the arm hanging limp from the couch; the empty phial upon the floor—told the story. There still lay open upon its face the book of poems as he had dropped it; and I seemed to hear his voice reading as he had read the night before:

. . . the play is the tragedy "Man,"
And its hero the Conqueror Worm.

To My Brother on His Twelfth Birthday

January 9, 1897

By Joel Elias Spingarn

Dearest, once more is winter here,
With dizzy flakes of snow, and frost,
To crown you with another year,
And warn you how the days are lost.
The biting air is fresh and sweet,
And from my room I see below
The ermine mantle o'er the street,
The window-ledges rimmed with snow,
And you once more at eager play,
Where, wet with rime, the snow-house stands—
Once more the snow-man of a day,
Once more the snowball in your hands;
And romps of many a by-gone year,
My share in all your grief and joy,

To My Brother

9

And prospects unfulfilled, endear
The sight of my beloved boy ;
Whilst ere I know, my idle brain
Is searching hidden memories,
Like sparrows gathering seed and grain
Snow-hidden under shivering trees ;
Till all that has been in the past
Casts shadows of the fate to be :
Delight, that cannot always last,
And hope, that cannot always see.
And what may yours and mine be ? No,
This is no time for such a dream ;
How swift life bears us you will know,
When you are eddying on the stream ;
And why should these things trouble you,
Who yet are safe from wind and wave ?
There is enough for you to do
In being sweet and true and brave ;
For now, though you can hardly know,
Your happy soul is being whirled
Through battles with yourself for foe,
Before the battle with the world ;
And you—I have no slightest fear
But you will conquer in the fight :
Such victories make the hero, dear,—
A nobler one than errant knight,
Or swaggering soldier. You will learn
That Siegfried, Roland, Agrican,
Or Lancélot, men laugh to scorn ;
The world cares only for a man.
But let these thoughts not burden you ;
Youth fights the victories of youth ;
Now sweeter, slighter joys will do,—
Some boyish, wildcap prank, in truth.
Oh, but your eye gleams gay and wild ;
I see the happy light, and say,
“Thank God that makes a child a child !”
And join you in the snow at play.

But now that you have grown so old—
For are you not twelve years to-day ?
Forgive me, dear, for being bold,
And saying what I used to say
When you were not yet four feet nine,
And knew not Latin, French, and all ;
But still the duty must be mine,
Though you have grown so old and tall ;

East & West

And these few flowers of love I bring,
To show you life with love impearled—
Yea, love, the only perfect thing,
In this our most imperfect world;
And if an older brother's right
To love and teach you year by year
Be challenged as the years take flight,
I still may say, "God bless you, dear!"
I still may take you by the hand,
And point to where the swallows fly,
And say: "Take comfort; understand;
For oh, the heavens are so high!"
And you will know that earth is wide,
And weary, it may be, but know
That men may on the whirlwind ride,
And soar beyond the sunset glow.
But ah, why should I shadow you
With secrets of the future year?
Forget them all, whate'er ensue;
Life's turmoil, cynic scoff and sneer,
Glib wisdom of the shop and street
Come but too soon. Be young and gay;
Be brave and joyous; taste the sweet
Youth only gathers by the way.
But when the voice of duty calls,
As it will call, obey the voice;
Go leave the dear old college walls,
Assume the office of your choice;
For in our great Republic here,
Where all are royal, know this thing:
Each man, whatever be his sphere,
To play his part, must be a king;
And you, sweet prince, now life is fair,
Should scale the morning heights of joy,
Should love the lovely, everywhere,
And prove yourself a royal boy.
And I, who love you more than word
Or kiss can tell you, send you this,
A birthday greeting, for the bird
That far off comes with summer's bliss,
And sings a song you cannot hear;
A birthday greeting, for the flower
That slumbers in the meadows, dear,
And cannot grace this happy hour;
A birthday greeting, for the star
That shall to-night burn in the blue,
And whisper, "Oh, how glad we are
That we can shine to-night on you!"

The Eclipse of Poetry

By Louise Betts Edwards

AT the beginning of the current year there came into the writer's hands a most significant little pamphlet. To say that it belonged to the best-written and best-read class of modern literature is another way of saying that it was an advertisement—the announcement by the publishers of a well-known magazine of its menu for the coming twelvemonth. No allurements of art or typography were neglected, no adjectives were spared, to make it an appetizing foretaste; if the reader did not know what distinguished artists and popular authors, what discourse on topics of current or perpetual interest, what serial fiction and short stories, what solid articles and essays, had been secured to minister to his intellectual pleasure, it was his own fault for laying down the catalogue half read. Nothing could have been fuller than the table of contents, and nothing more remarkable than the quantity and quality of the literary attractions set forth, save one fact: From beginning to end of the pamphlet, though it was searched for as diligently and almost as tearfully as Esau sought place for repentance, there was no mention of such a form of literary composition as poetry. No poet's name or portrait figured in the list of distinguished contributors; no poem was heralded among the "brilliant features," nor, to be exact, heralded at all.

The omission would seem less significant, and perhaps less melancholy, if the magazine in question did not publish poetry at all. But publish it it does, and, as the March Hare sorrowfully reminded the Hatter, "it was the *best* butter"; the cream of the present poetical output, churned into the best-approved shapes

and sizes, and stamped with such manufacturers' names as command most respect, being always on its table for those who care for it. But one of those startling straws that determine the wind's direction is the editor's or publisher's conviction that no one *did* care enough for it to make it worth talking about. He simply spread the feast and said, "Come, for all things are ready," serenely satisfied that no guest would make particular inquiry about what would once have been an important and highly relished course.

Even in the days when Taggart took those famous pinches of snuff and said, "Poetry, sir—poetry is a drug in the market!" matters had not come to quite so desperate a pass. Intelligent people might have begun to ask, What is to become of the poet? but they did not ask, as we must to-day, What *has* become of the poet? Who has killed Cock Robin?

There is material for a far longer article than this in the attempt to deny his death, and I leave it to the handful of strenuously optimistic people who, because they read poetry, like poetry, and—usually—write poetry, imagine they are the whole world. If not dead, he at least shows no signs of life—the little bright-breasted bird who, ever since the world was a little tiny boy, has contentedly fed on its charitable crumbs or on worms of his own scratching, and in return amused it with his light fantastic capers, roused sighing envy for those delicate wings that any careless boy could break in mid-air with a stone, cheered it out of its sulks, and comforted it out of its despair with his sweet, shrill promise of an ending winter and a coming spring. Glib testimonials are forthcoming from

everywhere, from those who saw him die, who caught his blood, who sewed his shroud—the curious Fly, the cold-blooded Fish, the insensate Beetle. We are told the twentieth-century atmosphere is deadly to poets, and should not believe it, did we not see it.

The most convincing and amazing proof of the change is to read the history, correspondence, records of all sorts, of any century since the Renaissance save our own, and note what a commotion there was over the Poet and the Poem! Christine of Pisan supported her family on doggerel which had not then, as now, the sole interest of being written in Old French. The Florentine children made round eyes at Dante, not primarily because he had been to Hell, not secondarily because he was a great poet, but simply because he was a poet. Cervantes made the pages of his masterpiece hideous with forgotten quotations from, and allusions to, "famous" poets of his day—a day when poetry was poetry, as to children cake is cake, whatever its shortcomings. The accomplished Mrs. Dunlop joyfully reported to Robert Burns, and patiently copied for him, any brief ditty or tedious tragedy, any inspired bumpkin of the neighborhood might produce, and he as joyfully received and as patiently read them. And, to come heart-breakingly close to our own times, there were contemporaries of James Russell and Maria White Lowell who sincerely believed the allowance of the divine afflatus evenly shared between husband and wife, because Mrs. Lowell had written a couple of quite sweet and touching poems on the death of children.

There are also straws showing how strongly the wind once blew the other way. The most complete proof of all, perhaps, is that we ourselves feel a secret conviction that all these ardently appreciative people were fools. They may have been—those whose tastes differ from ours usually are fools; for their taste was for poetry, and their eagerness for the

precious metal so keen that they would painstakingly assay the most unpromising nugget for the sake of the potential grain of gold-dust.

So, after all, who has killed Cock Robin? The hallowed custom is to blame the critics; everyone does that, even the poet, who being dead yet speaketh, in sepulchral tones denouncing his murderer, or issuing in his presence fresh blood-drops, on which the critic, a patient coroner, must sit afresh in judgment: " 'For one so much wounded,' observed Sancho Panza, 'this young man talks a great deal.' "

As (aggrieved authors to the contrary) the critics are human, it is possible that where so much blame is lying around loose some of it must be lawfully theirs, and I would not intentionally defraud them of one tittle of it. A foreign journal recently remarked that the naval history of Spain was a history of notable disasters; it might similarly be said that the critical history of the world is a history of notable blunders—from the manuscript of Fitzgerald's "Rubáiyát," lying dusty and despised in the office of *Fraser's Magazine*, to the solitary raptures of reviewers over the verses of the late Francis Saltus; from the poison-tipped arrows that transfixed poor Keats's faint heart to the genial predictions, anent "Poems of Two Brothers," of a poetical future for Frederick Tennyson. In truth and soberness no one, even in the days of Keats, ever died of what Burns curses as "the blasting depredations of a canker-toothed caterpillar Critic"; and in these peaceful times their sins lie not so much along the line of slaughtering the innocents as of tolerating the guilty. The most surprising thing to be noticed in the critic's column is his unstrained mercy toward mushroom bardlets; he passes gently over errors, he passionately extols any stray excellences, he hopes all things, believes all things, endures all things, in the name of poetry. Nothing could be more instructive, as showing the change which

has come over the attitude of the critic of poetry—and also over the accepted definition of poetry—than the comments of no less revered an authority than the London *Spectator* on Mr. Stephen Phillips's poem, "The Woman with the Dead Soul." I have selected this poem because it has attracted as much attention and won about as much praise as any recent composition in verse form. Citations are nearly always invidious as comparisons are odious. I will therefore quote in the entirety what the *Spectator* calls "a fine but intensely painful" poem, one which is worked out "in a lofty sense of imagination," and "helps to stir the nation's heart," and whose author has "made every phrase sound with the ring of true gold." The author less pretentiously labels it "An attempt to render imaginatively a modern tragedy. The horror of the tragedy lies in the combination of death within and neatness without, so often to be seen in our great cities."

THE WOMAN WITH THE DEAD SOUL.

Allured by the disastrous tavern-light,
 Unhappy things flew in out of the night;
 And ever the sad human swarm returned,
 Some crazy-suffering, and some half-burned,
 Amid the thwarted workmen, splashed with
 mire,
 And disillusioned women sipping fire,
 Slow-tasting bargainers amid the flare
 And lurid ruminators, I was 'ware
 Of that cold face from which I may not run—
 Which even now doth stab me in the sun.
 The face was of a woman that, alone,
 Sat sewing; a white liquor by her shone.
 Speckless, arranged, no single braid awry,
 Prepared and combed, she stitched incessantly.
 She turned her eyes on me; all blank they
 shone,
 Like windows opposite the peer of dawn.
 So cold her gaze that I bowed down my head,
 Trembling; it seemed to me that she was
 dead,
 And that those hands mechanically went—
 As if the life that to her limbs was lent,
 Subsiding in her, was not wholly spent.
 You who have wailed above the quiet clay
 That on the bed, unrecognizing, lay,
 Yet think how I stood mourning by the side
 Of her who sat, yet seemed as she had died—

Cold, yet so busy; though so nimble, dead;
 Whose fingers ever at the sewing sped.
 I spoke with her, and in slow terror guessed
 How she, so ready for perpetual rest—
 So smoothly combed, and for the ground pre-
 pared,
 Whose eyes already fixed beyond me stared—
 Could sidle unobserved, and softly glide
 Amid the crowd that wist not she had died.
 Gently she spoke; not once her cheek grew
 pale,
 And I translate the dreadful, placid tale.
 She with a soul was born; she felt it leap
 Within her; it could wonder, laugh, and weep,
 But, like persistent rain on ocean blear,
 The days descended on her spirit drear;
 Life, an eternal want, in sky dead-gray,
 Denying steadily, starved it away;
 London ignoring with deliberate stare,
 Slowly the delicate thing began to wear.
 She felt it ailing for she knew not what:
 Feebly she wept, but she could aid it not.
 Ah, not the stirring child within the womb
 Hath such an urgent need of light and room,
 And hungry grew her soul; she looked around,
 But nothing to allay that famine found.
 She felt it die a little every day,
 Flutter less wildly, and more feebly pray;
 Stiller it grew—at times she felt it pull,
 Imploring thinly something beautiful;
 And in the night was painfully awake,
 And struggled in the darkness till daybreak—
 For not at once, not without any strife,
 It died; at times it started back to life.
 Now at some angel evening after rain
 Buildd like early Paradise again;
 Or at some human face, or starry sky,
 The silent tremble of infinity,
 Or odour of strange fields at midnight sweet,
 Or soul of summer dawn in the dark street.
 Slowly she was aware her soul had died
 Within her body, for no more it cried,
 Vexed her no more; and now monotonous
 life
 More easy came—she was exempt from strife.
 Yet for a time more heavily and slow
 She walked, and indolently worked, as though
 About with her she could not help but bring
 Within her living body the dead thing.
 When I had heard her tell, without a tear,
 What now I have translated, in great fear
 Toward her I leaned, and "O, my sister!"
 cried—
 "My sister!"—but my hand she put aside,
 Lest I her decent dress might disarray;
 And so smiled on me that I might not stay.
 And I remembered that to one long dead
 I spoke. "No sound shall rouse her now," I
 said;

“Not Orpheus touching in the gloom his chord,
 Not even the special whisper that restored
 Pale Lazarus; yet still she seems to run,
 And hurries eager in the noonday sun;
 Industrious, careful, kempt, till she at last,
 Run down, inaccurate, aside is cast.”
 While thus I whispered, and in wonder wild
 Could not unloose my gaze from her, the child
 Plucked at her dress, and the dead woman rose;
 Up to the mirror silently she goes,
 Lightly a loosed tress touched at her ear;
 She gazed in her own eyes without fear;
 Deliberately then, with fingers light,
 She smoothed her dress and stole into the
 night.

The meaningless school of poets have so chastened us and reduced our demands to their lowest terms that at first glance one cannot say exactly what is the matter with this poem, which actually suggests an idea—an idea which, powerfully and sympathetically worked out, would justify the expression, “fine but intensely painful.” Moreover, the dismal school have almost bull-dozed us into believing that whatever is painful must be fine. But there are painfulnesses and painfulnesses. A battle-scene, wherein tremendous issues are decided by splendid sacrifice of noble lives, is painful. The spectacle of a dog with a tin-can tied to his tail is also painful. Mere unpleasantness does not make art. In this poem we have an idea—faint, vague, not too clearly defined even to the author’s mind—worked out weakly and gropingly, with frequent lettings-go of the string of thought; worked out coldly and unhumanly as to feeling, and badly and commonplacely as to style, with such roughnesses and infelicities of phrase and metre that to read it is, on the whole, like riding a bicycle over cobblestones.

Is it here that we find the indescribable but unmistakable charm and potency of “Lycidas” or “Il Penseroso,” of Fitzgerald’s “Omar,” of the “Sonnets from the Portuguese,” of “Kubla Khan,” of “The Blessed Damozel,” of the odes on the Grecian Urn or to the Skylark, of Shakespeare’s sonnets or Tennyson’s Idylls—in short, of any of the well-known

and loved poems for which the world is richer? There is simply no comparing it with them; and to any objections it may be counter-objected that there *is* comparison, one to another, among themselves—and that the widest gulf of difference between any two of them is bridged by the one common likeness—they delight the ear, they stir the soul, *they make poetry*. Since there are distinguished reviewers to apply the word “poem” to Mr. Phillips’s essay-sermon, it only proves afresh that criticism never killed poets; it is not sufficiently unanimous.

In short, criticism, unjustly accused of going, like kisses, by favor, goes and must go by taste instead, which is equally erratic. To press his own personal preferences—say for bread-and-milk—down palates which cry for caviare and curry; to deny himself the privilege of fallibility and set himself up for a little pope of literature, these are the painful duties of the critic, whose lot is no more a happy one than the policeman’s. Too long-suffering he may sometimes be; an oppressor of poets he never is. He is too busy to hate, too mild to scorn; besides, he does not really *know*—he cares no more for poetry than anyone else, and is sometimes honestly persuaded that for those who like that sort of thing it may be just what they like. In many cases he is, as Napoleon III. said with memorable inaptitude of Bismarck, “not a serious person.” The number of brilliant, sincere men with literary sensitiveness at their finger-tips, who make the reviewing of books their business in life, can be counted almost without passing the unit column. Of the rest, a few are mere hacks; the majority are men who are actually too literary to judge of anything; they are dyspeptics, their palates are worn out with too much tasting, their finger-tips deadened with too much touching. Their much learning has in fact completely lost them

The early foolish freshness of the dunce,
 Whose simple instinct guessed the heavens at
 once.

Regarding the critic as the middleman in the poetry market, and regarding him as disposed of, the blame then lies between the producer and the consumer. Is it the producer who has worn out people's patience with his failure to meet the occasion? The consumer—or rather non-consumer—says it is, and adds resentfully that if good poetry were only written it would be read fast enough—an argument which falls completely before one question: Is *any* poetry read? Who of the younger generation knows Byron? Who quotes Wordsworth? Who could pass an examination on any more of the work of Bryant, Whittier, Lowell, Longfellow, than appears in school readers?

Ask your friends whether they like poetry. The affirmative or negative character of the reply will depend upon the veracity of your friends; for, as many good folk go to church who are pagans at heart, so the lingering remnant of reverence for an outgrown superstition may elicit a conventional "Yes," whose sincerity may be quickly tested by asking them whose poetry they like, and what particular stanzas lie nearest their hearts? Poetry is parsed in schools (perhaps we learn to hate it there); it is declaimed by elocutionists, although the recent trend toward prose is noticeable; it is used by newspapers that do not pay for it, to break the monotony of the Sunday edition's serried columns, but it is not read as news is read, as novels are read, as the most forbiddingly solid books are read—in short, as it once was read. Once, a new poem by a poet, new or old, figured importantly in the news; once, the novelists sandwiched poetical tid-bits profusely in among passages; once, the philosophical work went down the public throat more smoothly if written in rhyme. That was during the snows of yester-year.

Twitted with this state of affairs, the reader answers—if he troubles to answer—that we have no great poets to-day. We might have them by the dozen, and he would never know it, for he will not look

to see. He skips poetry in the magazines, he leaves the gilt-edged gift-book to gather dust, he sells his father's fat Milton and his grandfather's folio Shelley to the second-hand dealer. We may not have any great poets; we have a number of minor ones whom decent appreciation might encourage to do great work, and it might be added that much smaller poets have been considered much greater in times when the very rabble loved and judged poetry better than our college presidents do. Edith M. Thomas has more of the poet in her little finger than Felicia Hemans had in her whole body, which is not disparaging Mrs. Hemans; Sidney Lanier is as superior to Bryant as a diamond to a rhinestone, which is not denying the latter his own place in literature; Christina Rossetti would have been almost deified in the times of Mrs. Norton and Mrs. Osgood and Mrs. Sigourney, and the rest of the pretty little poetesses who, by the irony of fate and literature-lessons, are at least known by their names in an age that ignores its own prophets. But Edmund Gosse was openly told he was ridiculous for suggesting Christina Rossetti—author of exquisite and almost unknown rhymes and lyrics that she is—as a candidate for Poet-laureate; Sidney Lanier died almost "unwept, unhonored and unsung," and is now the lonely cult of a discriminating few; while, if one last proof were wanting to show that this age heads its list of "Wanted" with "No Poets Need Apply," it could be found in the little-known and less-read work of Edith M. Thomas, where virility of grasp and polished beauty of expression, subtlety of thought and nobility of spirit, are all as many pearls cast before—us.

One thing a poet must have—appreciation. It is all nonsense that we hear about the poet having left his field for others of greater pecuniary profit. If poets wrote for profit alone—which they never did—they were never better paid than in this day of great magazines. It is not the publishers' fault that books of

verse do not sell, nor that a magazine is no more or less popular because of the grade of poetry that fills up its waste places. But, paid or unpaid, he must feel himself an apostle, not to deaf ears, not to a small circle of log-rolling brother *littérateurs*, but to the world. The poetic gift is purchased much as Don Quixote says eminence in learning is purchased, "by time, watching, hunger, nakedness, vertigo, indigestion, and many other inconveniences"; and such an outlay will not, cannot, should not be expended for no reward. More has been said than can be proved of the impossibility of crushing genius. We hear only of the cases where it rises superior to circumstance, not of those saddened singers "who die with all their music in them."

Of course, as with the critics, Master Poet himself is not wholly blameless. There is a certain style of composition for which all that is necessary is the nerve, and its followers are heard for their much speaking. They succeed just because people *are* so indifferent; like the famous statesman who opposed Charles Bradlaugh because "a member of Parliament should believe in some God or other," they have a vague acquiescent feeling that a century should have some poet or other. Rival poets, less successful but not necessarily more deserving, can only stand by and cast in their teeth the memorable utterance of Mrs. Stevenson to the pig of Vailima—"Gr-r-rr! nobody loves *you!*" and do not contest the laurel-wreath, because nobody would watch the tussle, and the wreath is only paper anyway.

So the sparrow who with bow and arrow killed Cock Robin, when run to earth, proves to be the amiable reader after all. He conducts a most sophisticated self-defence, pretending that the Spirit of the Age put him up to it. We are told we are too hurried for poetry; we are too old, too blasé; we have lost the child-heart. Says one of the poets a generation with long, dull ears forced into death and obscurity—Richard Realf:

There is no little child within me now,
To sing back to the thrushes, to leap up
When June winds kiss me, when an apple bough
Laughs into blossoms, or a buttercup
Plays with the sunshine, or a violet
Dances in the glad dew. Alas! Alas!
The meaning of the daisies in the grass
I have forgotten.

Yet how strange that we dotards, cynics, materialists, or whatever melancholy thing we call ourselves, have delighted to be held in leading-strings by Stevenson and Haggard, Kipling and Hope, Weyman and Doyle, who appeal to nothing if not to the imagination and sentiment of the young heart! It seems only literature written in rhyme and metre, with each line beginning with a capital, which is unpopular. One shudders to think what oblivion would have swallowed up those charming fables and sketches of Olive Schreiner's, which have attained so well-deserved a name and fame, had she not cunningly disguised their poetry in the typographical cloak of prose!

It is obvious that we can live without poetry. The scattered faithful who still worship at the fountain where Pegasus left his foot-print will so wince at such a statement as mistakenly to imagine their wincing alters matters. But it was a poet himself who reminded us that we can live without everything but cooks. We have seen that nations can live without religion; that is, they can in a manner support a kind of existence; they have lived without ideals, and not been violently unhappy; for that matter, they have lived without all the luxuries of life, among which poetry must relentlessly be counted. But it is equally obvious that these people were all savages and semi-savages, not a race reared on luxury, whose fathers lived in luxury before them, and whose sudden drop into destitution is a graver matter than the savage's stinted existence. Spiritual, mental, or material poverty sits comfortably only on those who never knew anything better.

Our race was reared on poetry. From the starry legends of the twilight ages to the great sunburst of Shakespeare's genius, from the great systems and satellites of succeeding centuries, even to the farthing rushlights of our own, the "light that never was" has always glimmered above our heads; and surely life has been the brighter, and we have been the better, for it. Mallock, with his usual acuteness, has reminded us that "the use of poetry is not to make us admire the poetry of poems, but discern the poetry of life." That light is there now, only our backs are bent with stooping away from it. Sancho Panza, the soul of honesty, confessed that when he was digging he forgot all about his Teresa. It is so with us; we have been digging, and have forgotten all about the lady of our soul. Or perhaps we have a sensitiveness over being teased about her. It may be that we have stooped too long; it may be that poetry is as unrepeatable an episode in human history as folklore, with which it holds so many affiliations. Yet if so, what mind with the power to consider but will regret it? and what heart wherein still lurks a half-shamed love for the unpopular goddess but ought to cherish the weakness instead of crushing it?

There is a significant incident related in the account by Andrew Lang, in his sketch of the young Pretender, of the battle of Falkirk: "What might have

been a victory was lost through *trop de zèle* on the part of the pipers. When the charge began, they threw their pipes to their boys and went in with their claymores. Consequently, the rallying music could not be sounded, and, in the darkness of a tempest, the scattered clans did not pursue their victory."

Whether the fault be with the overzealous pipers, or the unheeding combatants, shall not we too miss the rallying music if the last strain suddenly ceases? We need poetry, whether we want it or not, whether we can drag along somehow without it or not. For, had not its *raison d'être* been portrayed with more piercing truth, as well as grace and beauty, by a poet in a poem than in any struggling attempt to render it in prose, it would have no *raison d'être*:

Come, Poet, come!

A thousand laborers ply their task,
And what it tends to, scarcely ask,
And trembling thinkers on the brink
Shiver and know not what to think.
*To tell the purport of their pain,
And what our silly joys contain;
In lasting lineaments portray
The substance of the shadowy day;
Our real and inner deeds rehearse,
And make our meaning clear in verse—
Come, Poet, come!* for but in vain
We do the work or feel the pain,
And gather up the evening gain,
Unless, before the end, thou come
To take, ere they are lost, their sum!

Holbein

By Robert Jermain Cole

*Ah, well he bribed our last great enemy,
Who pictured all men levelled by his glance.
So flattered, the destroyer passed him by,
And Holbein lives forever in Death's Dance.*

An Epitaph

By Arthur Ketchum

Close-folded to the mountain's heart,
Let him sleep well, sleep long.
The voices of a thousand pines
Shall be his slumber song.

O'er him shall ferny greennesses
A dauntless verdure set,
To comfort him, till warm rains wake
April's first violet.

Here to the tired child of change,
Through days that shall not fail,
Shall come the summer's last Farewell,
The steadfast spring's All hail!

And he shall fear no evil thing,
When warrior winds awake;
I think their mighty hosts will pass
More gently for his sake.

So, girt by listening forests,
And hushed by breathless song,
Still dreaming down the pilgrim years,
He shall sleep well and long.

His was the wanderer's wilding heart,
That loved not bonds and bars—
Wildness to wildness! Rest! while burn
The watch-lights of the stars.

Youth's Heritage

By Anne F. Wilson

THE September sunlight was just touching the tops of the western hills. The world below was still damp and cold with early dawn. Two hours before, Aunt Delight Severance had parted her scanty curtains, with fingers trembling anxiously; and had looked out upon a still moon-lighted world. Reassured, she had sunk back to sleep fitfully until daybreak. Now she was dressing with eager haste. The world after a hundred years had grown a little distant to her; but to-day it drew nearer, with its thronging interests, its quizzical occasional glances at a past which had been for years her sole inheritance, but which, too, had latterly grown strangely dim.

To-day she was eagerly alert for the celebration of a holiday. Already dressed, she stepped into the low-ceiled kitchen, where her grand-niece, with her gray hair tightly plaited into curling pins, stood before the stove.

"Good-mornin', Ellen," she said, briskly. "It's a real pretty day, ain't it? I did think yest'day was a weather breeder, 'twas so pleasant; and I dono' how many times I woke up in the night and looked out to see if 'twas stormin'!"

"Well, I hope you got some sleep between whiles, Aunt Delight," her niece answered. "It's goin' to be a hard day; you ought to be rested up to be ready for it."

"Wal, I am, Ellen. I don't know, I'm sure, when I've felt so brisk. 'N I'm real hungry."

They breakfasted in hurried silence, Aunt Delight craftily feigning a hunger she did not feel. The others were too

busy to notice her guile. The luncheon was packed, the big gray horse was harnessed to the open wagon, Esther and Leroy were already seated. Aunt Delight was tying her bonnet-strings with unready fingers. Suddenly, the girlish features which had been hers years ago seemed to confront her from the narrow glass. There were the big dark eyes, the olive cheeks, the rings of black hair, and the crimson mouth, all framed by the quaint bonnet. Then the illusion faded, and the tiny, frightened face of an old, old woman looked out at her again. She turned from the glass, catching her breath sharply at the sight of her lost youth.

Leroy at the door was shouting: "Ma! Ma! I've got just about sick of waitin'. It's always the way. You get me up, an hour before there's any need, to get the horse ready, and then you ain't ready yourself."

"Well, my son, you ain't ever hurt yourself a-gettin' up early; and, I don't presume likely you have this mornin'," his mother answered in even tones from within. "Aunt Delight ain't ready yet, and we're both of us goin' to take all the time we want."

"Yes, I be ready," Aunt Delight answered, as she stepped carefully down over the door-sill. She stopped to twist up a little old-fashioned nosegay of "Southern-wood" and "ladies' delights." Then Leroy ran for a chair, and helped her carefully into the back seat beside Esther. Mrs. Swan hurried out with the big picnic basket and clambered unaided in beside Leroy, and the party was off.

It was one of those rare days when the

departing Summer pauses for a moment on her way to leave one gracious memory the more. The roadsides were gorgeous with late golden-rod and asters; here and there a swamp maple flamed forth with an early scarlet. The air was pungent with the smell of burning pine woods, the wind was at once a caress and a challenge. A violet haze veiled the hills, and hesitated above the waters of the lake. It was a day which pleaded for a tender, backward look, not wholly of regret and wistful yearning, not at all of amusement or contempt; but a glance, brave if regretful; hopeful if sad.

They climbed rolling hills where the cornstalks were browning under the yellow sunlight; where the White Mountains, half lost in the distant west, rose to meet them. They rattled down into damp hollows where the ferns were withered and brown. And, as they travelled, they came into the long procession tending westward; a procession of people, who, with covered baskets and holiday faces, were calling a halt in busy lives to speak together of the past. At last they dipped into the wooded hollow, where stood the little white school-house, with the pine before its door; they crawled up the sandy hill with the crest of a mountain rising in their faces.

As they reached the top, Aunt Delight caught her breath. The village lay below. It had always seemed the most beautiful spot in the world to her. Today the elm-shaded streets—there had been no elms, only poplars in the old days—the unruffled lake, the brooding mountain were as fair as ever. As they rumbled over the stone bridge, and down the shadowed street, Aunt Delight peopled the houses with the occupants of twenty, of forty, of sixty, years before. She was careless of perspective, but she gained the joy of the home-comer.

The open wagon drew up at the long, plain "Town-house." There Aunt Delight got down, with her own quaint precision, to meet a world of congratulations

and warm surprise. From this side and from that voices exclaimed:

"Well, if here ain't Aunt Delight Severance!"

"Why, Aunt Delight, I didn't expect you'd git out such a long ways to the Centennial."

The speakers were the grandsons and granddaughters, great-grandsons and great-granddaughters of her girlhood friends and neighbors. Some of them were elderly men and women now, and most of them were strangers to her; but Aunt Delight greeted them with impersonal cordiality. She moved into the hall in the midst of a company alert to do her honor, eager to listen to her interpretation of the noble, though simple and unrecorded past that had been hers. The relics ranged along the walls, curiosities to them, were full of another interest to her. As she answered their questions, her little spare figure in the thin black silk and fringed shawl straightened; her face, under the old-fashioned bonnet, was tinged with a wintry pink; her eyes glowed with a soft, sunken fire.

"I never seen one of them," an elderly woman commented, touching a rotary-topped stove, gingerly. "What was they made to turn like that for, Aunt Delight?"

"Wal, you see they couldn't more'n two holes git over the fire to once," explained the old lady eagerly. "An' if you was a-bakin' of pies two of 'em wouldn't git baked at all. So they'd turn 'em this way, every now and then," giving the top a little spin, "and they'd all git done. Mother hed one of 'em that she brought when she come from Harvard, Massachusetts. I never knew what become of it, though."

"I never could see how they got all their work done," some one commented. "It's all we can do now, with all the modern improvements we have."

"Wal, we cal'lated to work all the time," said Aunt Delight, reminiscently. The notes of the church bell, sounding

through the still air, broke in upon her speech. The little company about her began to disperse.

"Of course you're goin' up to the church to hear the speakin', Aunt Delight?" said one of her best-remembered friends. "Why don't you come right along with us?"

"I don't presume I'd better, Alice. I told Ellen I'd wait for her here. She went with Leroy to find a place for the horse; and then she was goin' to do some errands to Farrar's store."

The two women, who were lingering beside her, just glanced at each other. "Farrar's store" had dispensed rum and molasses, salt fish and calico, to the Waterbridge of sixty years before.

"No, I guess I'll set down here and wait for Ellen. This looks like a real comfortable seat, don't it?"

"Well, we'll see you at the church then. The speaker is goin' to be real good. Did you know he was old Captain Proctor's grandson?"

Aunt Delight sank into the straight-backed chair with a sigh, realizing for the first time that she was tired. She closed her eyes to shut out the confusion. The past was loud in its appeal to her. The soft dream-world in which she had been living for years, a world shut into the trivial round of every day, had vanished. The merciful veil, like the violet September haze, shutting off the circling mountains, had lifted all at once to the eastward. She saw the hills where her life rose; and the sight brought with it an exquisite pain and sense of loss. She had drunk from the flowered cups, and had smiled across their rims into eyes now veiled for years. This very rusty pillion, perhaps, had carried her along wood-screened bridle-paths. Fingers, soft and rosy, scarred and work-worn, rigid, free from work at last, had wrought at the yellow samplers, had striven clumsily over the dingy copy-books, fingers that had clasped hers in fellowship. The tragedy of the inanimate outlasting the

animate, moved her half-unconsciously; the loneliness of herself, sole survivor of her day beside these mute, pathetic memorials, wrung her heart numbed with much living. She rested her head against the back of the chair, and tried to control the quivering of her lip. Suddenly a high voice, light and careless as a bird-note, pierced through her reverie.

"What deliciously funny old men, Guy! Just look at their collars and ties—what did they call them—stocks? cravats? Aren't they too absurd for anything! When did they live, anyway? Oh yes, ages ago! 'Deacon Eliakim Howe, 1775-1829'; 'Captain Hiram Proctor, 1780-1837.' It's hard to realize they ever lived, isn't it?"

The words cut clear and keen through Aunt Delight's musing. At their echo came the boyish face of Deacon Eliakim Howe when he had taught the winter school, and she had been his big girl pupil. He was not Deacon then, and had a fondness for lingering near the back seat on the girls' side in leisure moments. And Deacon Howe had been dead for years—fifty perhaps, and they had called him "the old Deacon" before he died. The light tone hurt her. She felt as if some dear and sacred thing were being spoken lightly of. The gentle heart grew hot. She wanted to tell the speaker how much those deliciously funny old men had borne and done; how they had grown old in their prime, smoothing the path for generations to come. She wanted to say something that should make those smiling lips grow grave, that light voice quiver. Instead she closed her lips closely. The past was hers; a legacy of nobility, of resolve, of high endeavor that no age could take away, that no time could tarnish.

The light voice went on:

"Oh, but Guy, look! What a handsome man! And what a fine portrait! Can you see who it is? Oh, yes! 'Dr. Richard Warren, who Died at his Post in

the Small-pox Epidemic of 1804.' You seldom see so handsome a man." And the speaker turned carelessly away.

But Aunt Delight had risen and confronted the picture, trembling. The dark, compelling eyes met hers with the strength, the tenderness of life. The hair, waving loosely back, the firm lips, the resolute chin; she had known them all. She had known them, but she had almost forgotten, in the flood of eighty years. The wrinkled, yellowed silhouette had not reminded her of the rich brown of the hair, the red of the cheek. But she remembered it all now. Where had the picture come from? She had not known of its existence, she who, most of all, should have had its comfort through the obliterating years.

Beneath the picture hung saddle-bags and a worn gauntlet. Aunt Delight stretched out a pitiful knotted finger, and smoothed the glove tenderly. She trembled from head to foot with the inward rush of old memories. For fifty, for eighty years, she had been true to a memory. She had never forgotten; but time had mercifully numbed her grief, and drifted the snows of eighty winters over that far-away autumn, when life had been all joy and then all sorrow. The eyes looked almost as keen, almost as tender, as if the years of parting had never been. The old familiar trappings held all the pathos that recent bereavement gives. She rested her cheek against the rusty gauntlet with a little half-sob.

Suddenly, her niece's brisk voice startled her.

"Why, Aunt Delight, where have you been! I've been lookin' everywheres for you. Ain't you all tired out? I'm afraid it's goin' to be too much for you, seein' so many people and all. But there, you stood your birthday party so well, I don't know as this will hurt you. Do you think you feel well enough to go up to the church and hear the speakin'? Because, if you don't, I just see Mis' Phillips, and she asked me to have you come into her

house, and lay down if you got tired out. What do you think about it?"

"I guess I ain't partic'ly tired, Ellen," Miss Severance answered, quietly. "I've ben restin' here. Seein' of so many people kind o' dazed me."

"And no wonder!" answered Ellen, heartily. "I hain't looked at the exhibition hardly a mite, and I feel real muddled up myself. Well! Well! Aunt Delight; what's that behind you there? 'Standin' Stool which belonged to Deacon Amos Carter.' Well, I suppose standin' stools was in use when you was young, Aunt Delight? but I declare I never see one before."

Aunt Delight hardly glanced at the movable wooden pen where the babies of her day had tended themselves. It was blackened with time and with the print of tiny moist fingers, and the wooden rail was etched by sharp teeth. But Aunt Delight did not notice these things. Instead she saw Deacon Amos Carter's big kitchen, dusky save for the flaring fire; light, warm, and sweet with homely odors. She and Dr. Warren were lingering at the door, loath to leave the fire-lit warmth for the October dusk without. She could almost hear Deacon Carter's jovial laugh, as he said:

"I've just been tellin' Martha that seein' as we wa'n't goin' to need the old standin' stool no more, and the children was fitted out, we'd better give it to Delight and Doctor for a weddin' present. You'll find it lots of help takin' care of the little doctors, Delight."

She could almost feel the hot blood in her cheeks. And that was eighty years ago. She only answered her niece:

"Yes, Ellen, they used 'em considerable."

"Now, Aunt," Ellen went on, briskly, "We've got to be goin' up to the church. That is if you think you'd ought to go. I'd rather you'd stop into Mis' Phillips. She said she'd leave the key under the thermometer, so't we could go right in any time. I'm afraid you're gittin' too

tired. Your voice sounded real trembly."

"No, Ellen, I'd rather go," said Aunt Delight, stoutly. "I presume likely there'll be a good many things said that I wouldn't miss for quite a sum of money. I can rest up when I git home."

An usher met them at the doorway, and escorted them to reserved seats far up in front. Aunt Delight, however, did not notice the little attentions which earlier in the day would have pleased her. She did not heed the curious and friendly glances which were fastened upon her from all sides. Her eyes saw only narrow bridle-paths, thick woodlands, low-ceiled kitchens, with their bygone plishings, and men and women now among the shadows.

Meanwhile the orator of the day was speaking, describing a past of which he knew no more, gray-haired man as he was, than the veriest child. Aunt Delight was unheeding, living in her world of memory. Suddenly some words caught her attention. She listened with strained eagerness for a name which she longed, yet dreaded to hear. The speaker was saying:

"I hardly need speak of those who have gone forth from us to make the name of Waterbridge a known one, a beneficent one. We point to certain honorable, certain well-known men with pride, and say, 'They belong to us.' The known are in truth a goodly company; but the unknown are not less so. They have stayed among their native rocky hills, laboring with the simple, yet comprehensive, ambition of rearing their families comfortably, and in the fear of God; in the hope that at last Earth, their nourice-mother, would take them back to herself not without honor. Their names are forgotten even among us, but their work lives on: in the wilderness they have reclaimed, in the roads they have built, in the schools they have founded, in the churches they have dedicated to their fathers' God, in the quiet dignity and no-

bility of the old town which welcomes us to-day.

"One of these obscure names I must call back to you. This does not appear in the list of the world's heroes; but it should never be forgotten here. He laid his rich gifts of knowledge and skill at our feet without grudging and without gain. He stood by us in our hour of dread and danger, and left us only at the last imperative call.

"It is of Dr. Richard Warren that I speak. You have all seen his picture in the Hall to-day. This portrait I discovered in Massachusetts in possession of that branch of the family, and I brought it with me in order that you may form a picture of him in your minds. Do you know the story of his brief life? He gained his medical education against almost overwhelming odds, working by day on the farm, at the forge, studying by night. When larger opportunities opened before him he made a brilliant name for himself in English hospitals. He came back, and dedicated his life to us.

"In less than two years his offering was called for. He went in and out of houses where the dread scourge raged. He nursed the sick, he solaced the dying, he buried the dead. He faced prejudice and even violence with his wonderful new cure. He spent himself, he poured out his whole glad, strong life for our fathers, and through them for us. And at last, when the plague was almost spent, he died, alone, untended. With hushed breath, with hearts thrilled with the nobility, the possibility of manhood, we speak his name."

Once again Aunt Delight lived in the dark days of the pestilence, days when duty to her invalid mother and her lover's command alone kept her from his side. The nightly breathless run to the top of the hill; the heart-breaking suspense until she saw the signal light, that told her all was well with him; the last night, when, instead of the gleam in the cottage window, she had seen a flaring torch-light

in the hollow, and a slender figure, not his, digging a shallow grave: all came back to her as she listened. The ferns had smelled rank and dead in her nostrils; one low band of pale yellow had lingered in the west; the north wind had beaten and buffeted her. She had turned blindly—she could not remember what had happened next. She had wandered far, it seemed, wrenched by the wind, dry-eyed and still; had wandered on into years without mark or mile-stone, years that had dragged along until the wound had ceased to ache—and even that had been long ago.

Aunt Delight was silent and absorbed through the neighborly picnicing, through the toasts that followed. She was overwhelmed in the flood of memories that had come surging back. Even the bustle of starting failed to rouse her. The weather had changed. The sky was overcast, a cold wind filled with dampness blew strong from the south. The wayside flowers, and the solitary flaming maples had lost their morning glow. The ride dragged endlessly. The disillusionment that follows a holiday, the vague regret that the first autumn days bring, a sense of the irrevocableness of the past, touched them all. Even Leroy, the healthful, prosaic little animal, was silent with an unanalyzed discontent. He roused once to say, with a quizzical glance at his sister:

“Say, Ess, did that picture of Dr. Warren remind you of anybody?”

Esther flushed up to her pretty blonde hair.

“I ain’t sayin’ that Frank Ames looks as well as that,” the boy went on. “For he don’t. But there’s a sort of a likeness. But say! that Dr. Warren must have been a corker if what the man said of him was true.”

“Sh! Leroy,” his mother said, softly. “Aunt Delight’s tired. Don’t bother her talkin’.”

Aunt Delight was tired, body and soul. She had reached out through the isolation

of years for the past and had grasped its pain, had taken it full of its past force into her heart. She had found herself standing unaccompanied in the waste of the years. The future held nothing for her, the present was empty, the past was—where? A fear as of a child alone in the darkness laid cold hands on her heart—a fear of the days to come. She had wakened from the peaceful, numb calm that had been hers for years, a calm full of trivial pleasures, free from griefs and cares—into the full stress of living again, into a loneliness such as her hundred years had never known. She was tired, body and soul.

It was dark when she woke from her dreamless sleep in the little chamber, leading out of the farm-house kitchen. She tried to remember where she was, what she had been doing; but she met only a blank wall of forgetfulness. She rose mechanically, and crossed the dusky kitchen to the lighted sitting-room beyond. To her dazzled eyes, the room was empty save for a young man who sat by the table with his head bent over a book. He looked up as she entered. His forceful dark eyes met hers. The mists of memory cleared and revealed what she had been groping for. The firm chin, the dark hair waving back from the high forehead, were just as ever. She stepped forward eagerly in spite of the strange languor that hindered her.

“Where have you ben, Richard?” she asked, breathlessly. “It’s ben sech a long time sence I’ve seen you. Oh, yes; I remember, it was the sickness; and I must have ben sick too.”

Frank Ames rose from his chair, his handsome face troubled.

“Good-evening, Aunt Delight,” he faltered. “Did you have a good time today?”

Mrs. Stone hastened to her Aunt’s side and clasped her hand. Aunt Delight stood erect, with her lips trembling. She cast an appealing look into her niece’s motherly face.

"What's the matter, mother?" she said. "It's ben so long sence Richard's ben here, and now he don't seem glad to see me. Hev I ben sick, mother? It seemed to me that I was old, and everybody I knew was dead, and I was so lonesome. It's hard to realize when you're young, that anybody can be old like that, ain't it? But I can't understand why Richard don't seem glad to see me."

Frank Ames glanced at Esther, who was crying softly. Then he stooped and touched Aunt Delight's wrinkled cheek with his lips.

"I can't say how glad I am to see you, Delight," he murmured. Then he and Esther stole out hand in hand into the dusk.

The wind, pungent with the scent of burnt-out fires, blew strong through the open door. The room was silent save for the insistent night sounds. Aunt Delight leaned heavily against her niece's arm with a happy sigh.

"I'm so glad it was only a dream, mother," she said. "I was so lonesome, but now it's all right."

And Aunt Delight spoke truth.

The World-Play

By Richard Burton

"And all the men and women merely players"

The entrance-price you willy-nilly pay,
Sit with your kind, take pleasure, if you may,
Or puzzle at the meaning of the play.

COMEDY

The humors of the Time, the painted show
Of character, the Attic salt of wit;
Now, laughter lilt its high, now, tender woe
For a pale moment o'er the stage must flit,
To make the main plot merrier; maids and men
Teach life is sweet and love may come again.

MELODRAMA

See how the Swashbucklers swagger,
Hark to the villain's dark cry!
Much is a-doing and many are ruing!
Innocents, destined to die,
Haply, with thrust of a dagger.
Evil frustrate and virtue tried and true,
Romance, adventure, sleight, and derring-do,
The earth's wide passions served up hot for you!

FARCE

See the buffoon's fat cheeks ballooning out!
Thwack! the lath sword descends, guffaws are rife,

Midst gallery gods, with many a boorish shout
 Of approbation. Yet, 'tis part of life,
 And honest, too—the grammarless crude heart
 Of one's own kinsmen, and this stir-about
 Is wholesome, though it lack the soul of art.

TRAGEDY

Slow evolution to a fateful close;
 Deepest of dramas, knocking at our soul;
 Glints of the gay, but gloom that spreads and grows
 Towards some sardonic end, the gruesome goal
 Of all the light, the motion, and the glee
 Pranked out high-heartedly;
 Behind man's quest and woman's sacrifice,
 Bravery and risk and lure of ardent eyes,
 Quieting the stir,
 Mingling mold-odors with love's sweetest myrrh,
 Forever looms and glooms the sepulchre!

EPILOGUE

Great Watcher of the whole, the motley shift
 Of play and counterplay, sole Critic, who
 Must understand, because Creator too;
 Prompter and Playwright both: the curtains lift
 And fall, while joy and sorrow interweave;
 We know full well what time to smile or grieve,
 No more: the ultimate meaning's shut from view.
 The world-play, act by act, moves on and we
 Are shaken by its moods—mirth, anguish, mystery!

The New York Theatre: A Foreword

By George C. D. Odell

HOW many New Yorkers would tolerate the suggestion that their theatre is provincial? Yet what other idea can be gathered from reading the announcements for the coming season at our leading playhouses? Only one or two serious efforts of American writers are promised; in all other cases it is clearly assumed that the legend "Latest London Success" will be the surest highroad to New York favor. We might as well be

Manchester, or Birmingham, or Liverpool, for any evidence we offer of a declaration of dramatic independence. Seemingly, we still go to the theatre to learn what England and (occasionally) other nations think of life. What American manager reads an American play?

In such circumstances the theatre can never be a vital force. If a large part of this foreign product could justly be held as a model for aspiring playwrights, if only it were humanly true, all might

yet be well and an American drama might even now be building in the secret places. Our writers for the stage could never be utterly discouraged if they saw heights to be scaled by patient endeavor. But the best, the most intellectual, in the foreign drama is exactly what we never get; Ibsen and the younger Germans are practically unknown to our boards. Our imported drama is largely silly farce or sentimental or "smart" comedy; some of the greatest successes of recent years have ranked in literary quality with the novels of the late Mrs. Southworth. Our ambitious young writers, seeing this output—"The Cuckoo," "Zaza," "Lord and Lady Algy," "His Excellency the Governor"—soon discover that emulation is not a matter of cloud-scaling, but of plunging into depths of vulgar inanity. Men of parts take their energies elsewhere; the residuum largely writes noisy farces for music-hall favorites. The art of Congreve and Sheridan has degenerated into an affair of the scissors and the paste-pot.

The blame comes largely upon the public. When a people looks to its drama purely for diversion, no self-respecting artist can use the drama as a means of expression; the novel, the magazine, and the newspaper, even, thus become the enemies of the stage. Abroad, especially on the continent of Europe, the theatre of a country means, at its best, a national theatre, a vehicle for the exploiting of national character, national customs, national ideals. Much that is unworthy creeps in; but this is the conception of the functions of a theatre prevalent in Germany, France, Italy, and the Scandinavian countries; and it is in these countries that really serious plays are written to-day. Empty cachinnation is not the be-all and the end-all of the drama there; Mr. Conried's theatre in Irving Place, so opposed in spirit to the dramatic habitudes of Broadway, is typical of what I mean. But this conception of the drama has not yet begun

to take root in the American mind; we do not look to the stage for inspiration or for suggestion. We speak of the theatrical business, as if the matter ended with commerce, and, being a commercial nation of large ideas, we surrender all our theatres and all our actors into the hands of a theatrical trust who are, by the very irony of fate, just the people least able to arouse us to a realization of our sodden condition.

Before this consummation, devoutly to be deplored, there was a moment of hope for a national and therefore a living theatre. For a brief spell it seemed as if the American dramatist—that plant of sickly and retarded growth—were to spring into full flower. Mr. Bronson Howard had written, in "Young Mrs. Winthrop" and "The Henrietta," plays that seemed actually to reflect our own social conditions; Mr. Thomas had produced "Alabama" and "In Mizzoura"; Mr. Gillette's war plays had depicted for a younger generation the sorrows of a bygone time; Belasco and De Mille were the best liked of Lyceum playwrights. Other men were coming forward. It was seen that our national characteristics afforded a rich field for humor or for pathos. But with the forming of the "syndicate" all this was changed; the market, so many theatres and companies, must be supplied quickly with ready-made wares. The cable invited to London and Paris and Berlin; the American dramatist went back to his native obscurity. There was not time to consider him. To-day the aspirant practically knocks in vain at the doors of our theatre; for him there is no room at the top. This is worse than the "Frohmanizing" of all our young actors, by so much as the creator is more important than the interpreter; this is to dry at its source the living stream of the drama. Of course, Mr. Howard and Mr. Gillette have made their hearing and keep it; but no manager would bother with an unknown writer. The theory seems to be

that it is much better to invest money in elaborate scenery than in plays still untried; the managers owe nothing to their public or to their art. Besides, how can a commercial manager be expected to know a good play when he reads it? It is much easier to buy a successful play by cable.

And yet, curiously enough, it is becoming more and more difficult to find plays enough to go around. Mr. Charles Frohman is said to be sometimes at a loss for tried material in which to employ his numerous "stars" and companies. He and the others are feverishly "cornering" the foreign market, and the intelligent observer, by reading the theatrical advertisements of a London spring, will know what to expect in New York the following September and October. The managers insist that all plays by American writers—except, of course, hack-work under contract—is bad; they never reflect that these plays are bad because intelligent workmen are driven from the field.

The English visitor to New York who recently insisted on seeing an American play, called for exactly the one commodity his hosts could not supply. The American eagle screams loudly for protection to American industries of all kinds; personally, I shall be glad when prohibitive duties are laid on foreign machine-made work like "Zaza" or "His Excellency the Governor."

Who goes to the theatre for ideas? Who goes for sweet pictures of humanity, such as one gets from Shakespeare and Dickens and all writers who have been near the people? What does our theatre offer, except stock notions, stock phrases, sentimental platitude, or inane frivolity? For one "Trelawney of the Wells," how many "Phrosos" and "Lord and Lady Algys" do we see? Far be it from us to plead for Ibsen and the intellectuals exclusively or even largely; the stage looks toward a larger morn, of rich human insight and sympathy, of

Shakespeares and Molières yet to be. Only let our stage here in America begin to be of us and for us; let it use its own material from the rich soil about it. Give our dramatists a chance to use their own eyes and free themselves from the rickety bugbear of English tradition. Only thus can be developed among us a theatre of which we as a nation can be proud. As it is, why should we provincials be edified by the spectacle of a stage absolutely dependent for subject-matter on the veriest hacks of London and Paris?

This is the most crying need for the endowed theatre prefigured in the vision beatific of Mr. Hapgood and Mr. Archer. In New York it would be an open door for the American dramatist, where all should have an equal hearing before competent judges, and where those found worthy might hope for a pathway to popular approval. Money could be taken from the account of scenery and costumes and risked on the production of untried plays. Literature and the drama might again be wedded. In such a theatre we should hope to see the classics and frequent performances of the modern plays now proscribed by the syndicate—Ibsen, if you please (though not too much of him), Maeterlink, Sudermann, and the rest. But our own writers should be first freed from paralyzing conditions, and they should teach us to care most for what is at home. There will be the true life of the drama and there will be a stimulus for other branches of art.

But this process, even at best, we must expect to be slow. A drama is not made by merely wishing for it. There will be many failures and few successes at first. We must induce men of ability to write for the stage, and a trained body of dramatists, even then, we shall not soon have. Old conventions, old fetters will with difficulty be shaken off. But how can you learn to swim if you never go into the water? Our writers must have a chance. The public, too, must be edu-

cated, and the actors; the former to think, the latter to practise self-abnegation.

If Americans only cared!

Meantime, having thus set forth its views of the theatres of New York, EAST AND WEST stands waiting for what shall come. The immediate present offers the production of an interesting experiment in collaboration by two American dramatists—the most important production

(from our point of view) for the last five years. Aside from this, our Colossus manager, bestriding the Atlantic, offers us, as we have said, all the latest London novelties. Some of these will be good and many of them will be bad; but all will find a large and a pleased public. For what is good we shall be thankful; the rest we, personally, shall try to avoid.

Reviews

(As this first number of "East and West" went to press before the appearance of the Autumn lists of the publishers, the editors have merely selected for notice here some of the more interesting novels and books of short stories, of the past season.)

NEW NOVELS BY MR. WARNER
AND MR. HOWELLS.

THAT FORTUNE. RAGGED LADY.
Harper & Bros.

The simultaneous appearance of "That Fortune" and "Ragged Lady" makes something approaching an occasion in our contemporary literature. Mr. Warner and Mr. Howells are among our foremost representatives in a field that still, however, awaits the American master, and have, because of their serious, sincere pursuit of the profession of letters, throughout long lives, made themselves firmest pillars of the literary tradition in this country.

In "That Fortune" Mr. Warner is the shrewd, kindly philosopher of old, looking out upon life broadly, sweetly, and poetically; a mentor with wit, humor, and pen making him a worthy successor in our generation to Dr. Holmes. This most recent novel sets forth that conflict between worldliness and high ideals which is ever on for youth. Philip and Evelyn, born into very different conditions of life, have this in common, that both were isolated in childhood from outer influences, and reared in the pure,

bracing altitudes of romance and abstract ideas. They were thus, the dishonest millionaire's daughter and the country lad, equally imbued with an idealism, devotion to the beautiful and true, which carried them triumphant through the conflict, causing them instinctively to cleave to the good, as Mr. Warner would have us see it, and safe to each other's arms. For thus does Mr. Warner, in good old fashion, make the poetry of right in the world work justice for itself.

If we owe much of our pleasure in "That Fortune" to the personal element projected by the author into the book, through which we view the passages of life presented, and to the easy little asides, disquisitions on a thousand topics, new or old, we must be prepared to forego this particular form of pleasure in turning to Mr. Howells and his "Ragged Lady." Mr. Warner is the critic, Mr. Howells the creator. Mr. Howells strives to make a frieze, a fresco of life as he sees it, and then, he himself withdrawing from his work, leads us to the spectacle. We are to be equally with himself the philosopher; he merely presents the text.

The reason why so many of us find

his work not altogether to our personal liking lies simply in the choice of a field for his researches. To study the commonplace, the mean in life, has been his constant occupation, just as if the essence of humanity could be most clearly and completely viewed through the still, shallow waters of the everyday—variations being but ripples to obscure. We feel, many of us, that the elemental human is deep in every condition of life, and to be found in far greater range and richness, depth and beauty amid the stress of the unusual—in the prince and in the pauper, rather than in the peasant and the burgess. Romance, not the dead level of actuality, is the true revelation of human nature.

“Ragged Lady,” needless to say, is a typical study in the commonplace. The material is not promising; the canvas is very narrow, the observation very minute. The difficulty in art so opposed to the impressionistic, so different from the easy, broad sketches in which Mr. Warner covers the whole social range, is, while rendering the detail, to keep the proportion of the whole. That Mr. Howells succeeds in this is beyond all question. The sketch of Mrs. Lander, that awful picture of the vulgar, selfish woman, grows more painfully life-like with each succeeding touch. But here Mr. Howells’s real triumph is in his heroine, Clementina. In her he somehow succeeds in gilding the commonplace in fiction with some of the glory it possesses in real life. To present a heroine who has no ideal characteristics, who can neither converse nor think, who talks a strange dialect—and here Mr. Howells very inartistically over-emphasizes a detail—but who is still charming and capable of enrolling us among her many admirers, is an achievement. For the average male in literature expects the Woman Wonderful—particularly in intellect and her ability to cope with man in his own field—just as the average female will have her Prince

Charming: each oblivious in this imaginative sphere, that in the work-a-day world of prose, love goes by no allotment of the heroic, in beauty, strength, or intellect. In short, Clementina is not the sort of girl whom we should expect to carry us captive through a novel, though it is well we should know that nothing is more likely than this in the strange mysteries of flesh and blood. That Mr. Howells can so present in fiction some hint of those subtle influences and affinities that play fast and loose with so many of our intellectual ideals, is no small thing to have compassed, even though it does not produce the really great art that stirs and stimulates.

It is an interesting fact that both Mr. Warner and Mr. Howells, philosopher and artist, viewing the world from different coigns, should see it so much the same. For both it seems a good world, a happy place, on the whole, despite trials and crosses. In “That Fortune” Mr. Warner says of Philip: “He did not even know that when he became very old, the world would seem to him good or bad according to the degree in which he had become a good or a bad man.” That, therefore, now, the philosopher should not cry out utterly against mankind; and the realist not see the evil completely overshadowing the good, even if not necessarily a convincing argument for a cheerful optimism, nevertheless throws a pleasant light upon the natures of the two men the burden of whose song might be:

“God’s in his heaven—
All’s right with the world.”

RICHARD CARVEL. The Macmillan Company.

“Richard Carvel” is a very pleasant story, quite justifying that high popular opinion which has made it the success of the summer season. The theme is old, the setting more or less new. And these, with a manner perfectly simple and intelligible, give Mr. Churchill’s book the

chief requirements demanded of a popular novel. The story is the eternal one of love and adventure in their commonest romantic phases, and the last century setting is happily chosen.

All this is very far from saying that "Richard Carvel" is a great book. Indeed, this idea would hardly have entered one's mind save for the exaggerated praise of certain critics whose enthusiasm outruns their discernment. It is distinctly a novel *à la mode*. It is not one of those books which happen irrespective of the world's work or thought at the time, original, inimitable, and isolated. "Richard Carvel" was written because other stories of the same sort are being written and eagerly read to-day. It represents the prevailing literary fashion of the present, which is to rehabilitate some picturesque past period in a cloak of fiction. It is the local color method moved back from the present to the past; and the interest still lies obviously, and to the evident exclusion of anything approaching great art, very much less in the characters portrayed, who, with their stories, are stereotyped, than in interesting and unfamiliar conditions of life. The slight, pretty tale of Richard Carvel and Dolly Manners is almost crushed by the erudition of the author, who has read widely and well for his task of distancing his competitors, by giving fuller measure and variety of stage settings, properties, and persons. This he has certainly done. Most novelists of his class are content with one complete, carefully studied set of scenery. Mr. Churchill gives us two, and of historical lay figures, not one, but a dozen. It cost Cooper two novels to present Paul Jones and George Washington. Mr. Churchill puts them both with endless others into a single volume.

This is said less in dispraise of "Richard Carvel," than of the critics who claim for it "an enduring place in literature," etc., and who will leave a hundred thousand credulous readers in great perplexity when it shall have run its course and

fallen gracefully back for the next. Ay, in perplexity, and with a wavering faith in the real worth of literature, the great examples of which are so very mortal, so easily turned out, two or three a season, and then forgotten. "Richard Carvel" is a good book of its kind—a kind that gives us no insignificant share of what pleasure we get from reading—better than the average, perhaps. But it is not a great book, like "Henry Esmond" or "Peg Woffington," stories with an old setting, truly, yet in which this setting is properly subordinated, as it always is in life and true art, to the personalities of men and women, and the vital interest of a deeply human story.

THE FOWLER. By Beatrice Harraden. Dodd, Mead & Co.

A novel like "The Fowler" is more than ordinarily difficult to criticise quite fairly. Miss Harraden has aimed higher than her strength could reach, and the failure, already accentuated by the success of an earlier work, is brought into still stronger relief by the possibilities of greatness inherent in the characters which Miss Harraden attempts to portray. Theodore Bevan, the Fowler, the type of evil, the spirit of pessimism; Brian Uppingham, the type of good, the spirit of optimism; and Nora Penhurst, the prey of the Fowler, and the beloved of Brian—these are the three significant characters of the book, and the story is the story of Nora's struggles under these two influences.

In her subjection to the Fowler the reader does not feel the sense of fear, of recoilment, and yet of inevitability that makes the greatness in Hawthorne's portrayal of Chillingworth. We are told of the fascination of the Fowler, but we do not feel it, and we finish chapter after chapter, wondering why the strong-minded heroine ever fell into his toils. Brian Uppingham is, on the whole, far more satisfactorily portrayed, though he, too, is not quite convincing. But, worst

of all, having failed to take advantage of the material offered by such antipodal characters, the author allows a mere device, and a very evident and hackneyed one at that, to be the final cause of Nora's escape from the net of the Fowler. We are left in doubt as to whether Brian would have overcome Theodore Bevan, whether virtue or evil would have predominated, had not the villain—strangely carelessly, be it said—missent his diary containing a record of his evil designs into the very hands of Nora Penhurst.

We congratulate Miss Harraden on having aimed somewhat higher than usual. That itself is worth while, and recognition of it constitutes high praise for this present day, when, indeed, people who write, ordinarily do not aim at all, save at some well-riddled bull's-eye of popularity.

THE GREATER INCLINATION. By Edith Wharton. Charles Scribner's Sons.

There are three admirable stories in Mrs. Wharton's volume—the first three "The Muse's Tragedy" is interesting and suggestive—almost faintly reminiscent, it is so convincing—in its curious probing into the morbid mysteries of genius and love, literature and life. It is delicately done. "A Journey" is a masterpiece in the school of De Maupassant. It is simple, direct, true, and terrible. It deserves to live as a brilliant example of its kind. "The Pelican" gains over its fellows in having humor and lightness. It contains excellent satire, with a flavor of burlesque.

The remainder of the volume does not bear out its early promise. The whole is a study of human nature in its less usual, often its yellowest phases. But the first stories had a certain distinction which saved them to literature. The rest, unless, possibly, we except "Souls Belated," are unjustified in presentation by good art or interesting psychology. In con-

clusion, the constant hard, light, occasionally flippant reference to grave social crimes with their attendant circumstances—and here we would cite the story last referred to—gives a note of vulgarity almost, indeed, inseparable from such subjects, except when treated far differently, in their profoundest human aspects, by the great moral masters of literature.

MEN'S TRAGEDIES. By R. V. Rislely. The Macmillan Company.

In a preface which arouses hopes not destined to be fulfilled, the author of "Men's Tragedies" lays down the dictum that "life is but a realized fiction." How, then, we wonder, could he ever have followed this preface by a work of fiction which gives a false impression of life? And we ask this with all the more regret because there are many passages which would seem to indicate that the author really knows what is most worth while in men's actions.

There are nine stories in the book, and through each one runs the same *motif* of shattered ideals; and in every case it is some deed in which an impure man or an impure woman is involved, that leads to the final tragedy. Thus the impression that the reader must receive will be that in this world the pure and the lofty-minded have no place. Whether they love, or hate, or sneer, or care, or kill, they seem to go through life isolated, and not helpful to their fellow-men.

For the same reason that these stories are untrue to life, they lose in interest considered merely as stories. It was a great mistake of the author to put in one volume nine articles of fiction so nearly alike in plot and treatment. Nor do the statements in the preface that "each of these tales has an intention," and that they are "studies of intensity," lead us to change our opinion, for analytically and psychologically they offer little that is new.

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