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## NOTES

For permission to reprint the second part of "*For the Marriage of Faustus and Helen*," *Secession* is indebted to Mr. Harold A. Loeb, editor of *Broom*. Part two appeared under the title of "*The Springs of Guilty Song*" in *Broom*, January, 1923.

"*For a Declaration of War*" is one of the essays included in *Salvos* by Waldo Frank, to be published shortly by Boni and Liveright.

The resignation of Mr. Kenneth Burke as a director of *Secession* is announced with regret. To Mr. Burke's passion for letters, fighting spirit and corrective vision, the magazine owes much.

No further subscriptions for *Secession* will be accepted. In accordance with the statement published in the first number, the magazine will suspend in April, 1924.

## FOR THE MARRIAGE OF FAUSTUS AND HELEN

*“And so we may arrive by Talmud skill  
And profane Greek to raise the building up  
Of Helen’s house against the Ismaelite,  
King of Thogarma, and his habergeons  
Brimstony, blue and fiery; and the force  
Of King Abaddon, and the beast of Cittim;  
Which Rabbi David Kimchi, Onkelos,  
And Aben Ezra do interpret Rome.”*

—Ben Jonson.

## I

The mind has shown itself at times  
Too much the baked and labeled dough  
Divided by accepted multitudes.  
Across the stacked partitions of the day—  
Across the memoranda, baseball scores,  
The stenographic smiles and stock quotations  
Smutty wings flash out equivocations.

The mind is brushed by sparrow wings;  
Numbers, rebuffed by asphalt, crowd  
The margins of the day, accent the curbs,  
Convoying diverse dawns on every corner  
To druggist, barber and tobacconist,  
Until the graduate opacities of evening  
Take them away as suddenly to somewhere  
Virginal perhaps, less fragmentary, cool.

*There is the world dimensional  
For those untwisted by the love  
Of things irreconcilable . . .*

And yet, suppose some evening I forgot  
The fare and transfer, yet got by that way  
Without recall,—lost yet poised in traffic:  
Then I might find your eyes across an aisle,  
Still flickering with those prefigurations—  
Prodigal, yet uncontested now,  
Half-riant before the jerky window frame.

There is some way, I think, to touch  
Those hands of yours that count the nights  
Stippled with pink and green advertisements.

And now before its arteries turn dark  
 I would have you meet this bartered blood.  
 Imminent in his dream, none better knows  
 The white wafer cheek of love, or offers words  
 Lightly as moonlight on the eaves meets snow.

Reflective conversion of all things  
 At your deep blush, when ecstasies thread  
 The limbs and belly, when rainbows spread  
 Impinging on the throat and sides . . .  
 Inevitable, the body of the world  
 Weeps in inventive dust for the hiatus  
 That winks above it, bluet in your breasts.

The earth may glide diaphanous to death;  
 But if I lift my arms it is to bend  
 To you who turned away once, Helen, knowing  
 The press of troubled hands, too alternate  
 With steel and soil to hold you endlessly.  
 I meet you, therefore, in that eventual flame  
 You found in final chains, no captive then—  
 Beyond their million brittle, bloodshot eyes;  
 White, through white cities passed on to assume  
 That world which comes to each of us alone.

Accept a lone eye riveted to your plane,  
 Bent axle of devotion along companion ways  
 That beat, continuous, to hourless days—  
 One inconspicuous, glowing orb of praise.

## II

Brazen hypnotics glitter here;  
 Glee shifts from foot to foot,  
 Magnetic to their tremulo.  
 This crashing opera bouffe,  
 Blest excursion! this ricochet  
 From roof to roof—  
 Know, Olympians, we are breathless  
 While nigger cupids scour the stars!

A thousand light shrugs balance us  
 Through snarling hails of melody.  
 White shadows slip across the floor

Splayed like cards from a loose hand;  
 Rhythmic ellipses lead into canters  
 Until somewhere a rooster banter.

Greet naively—yet intrepidly  
 New soothing, new amazements  
 That cornets introduce at every turn—  
 And you may fall downstairs with me  
 With perfect grace and equanimity:  
 Or, plaintively scud past shores  
 Where, by strange harmonic laws  
 All relatives, serene and cool,  
 Sit rocked in patent arm chairs.

O, I have known metallic paradises  
 Where cuckoos clucked to finches  
 Above the deft catastrophies of drums;  
 While titters hailed the groans of death  
 Beneath gyrating awnings I have seen  
 The incunabula of the divine grotesque.  
 This music has a reassuring way.

The siren of the springs of guilty song—  
 Let us take her on the incandescent wax  
 Striated with nuances, nervosities  
 That we are heir to: she is still so young,  
 We cannot frown upon her as she smiles,  
 Dipping here in this cultivated storm  
 Among slim skaters of the gardened skies.

### III

Capped arbiter of beauty in this street  
 That narrows darkly into motor dawn,—  
 You, here beside me, delicate ambassador  
 Of intricate slain numbers that arise  
 In whispers, naked of steel;  
religious gunman!  
 Who faithfully, yourself, will fall too soon,  
 And in other ways than as the wind settles  
 On the sixteen thrifty bridges of the city:  
 Let us unbind our throats of fear and pity.

We even,  
 Who drove speediest destruction

In corymbulous formations of mechanics,—  
 Who hurried the hill breezes, spouting malice  
 Plangent over meadows, and looked down  
 On rifts of torn and empty houses  
 Like old women with teeth unjubilant  
 That waited faintly, briefly and in vain:

We know, eternal gunman, our flesh remembers  
 The tensile boughs, the nimble blue plateaus,  
 The mounted, yielding cities of the air!

That saddled sky that shook down vertical  
 Repeated play of fire—no hypogeum  
 Of waves or rock was good against an hour.  
 We did not ask for that, but have survived,  
 And will persist to speak again before  
 All stubble streets that have not curved  
 To memory, or known the ominous lifted arm  
 That lowers down the arc of Helen's brow  
 To saturate with blessing and dismay.

A goose, tobacco and cologne—  
 Three winged and gold-shod prophecies of heaven,  
 The lavish heart shall always have, to leaven  
 And spread with bells and voices, and atone  
 The abating shadows of our conscript dust.

Anchises' navel, dripping of the sea,—  
 The hands Erasmus dipped in gleaming tides,  
 Gathered the voltage of blown blood and vine;  
 Delve upward for the new and scattered wine,  
 O brother-thief of time, that we recall.  
 Laugh out the meager penance of their days  
 Who dare not share with us the breath released,  
 The substance drilled and spent beyond repair  
 For golden, or the shadow of gold hair.

Distinctly praise the years, whose volatile  
 Blamed bleeding hands extend and thresh the height  
 The imagination spans beyond despair,  
 Outpacing bargain, vocable, and prayer,

## FOR A DECLARATION OF WAR

## A

Those years, as I see them now, were years of initial manoeuvring for war. Pitched battles and campaigns I may then have judged what were only guerilla sallies, skirmishes, movements of reconnaissance. The spiritual forces of America were in too great chaos for definitive and intelligent encounter. This is true today. But in 1916 the confusion was enormous. Men did not know their enemies or their friends: they did not know themselves.

The chief business of the American literary artist and critic of those days was therefore the launching of a call of rally. Primitive, lyrical, adolescent was our spiritual impulse; and were our spiritual leaders. The men in whose lives or works revolt from the material fixities was best incarnate, appeal to a creative life most eloquent and implicit, were the paramount figures. This explains the emergence of the Chicago Group in whom the note of protest and the paean call to "life" were simplified and lovely. It was a time for individual forage, impetuous escapade, for the sweet rhetoric of the emotions. There was no line of battle, no organized roll or standard: there were no Generals equipped with intelligence and strategic science to fortify their good will. So there could be no veritable war. We who yearned to join the ranks of an Army not yet in existence spent ourselves largely in seeking comrades, in exchanging signs of allegiance and in scanning the skies for signals of the dawn at which the ranks should serry and the true fight begin.

This state you will see was not one for the clear establishment of standards: it was not one for criticism. When we are lost and anxious we look for warmth and the assenting handclasp. We wander about in the confusing darkness. Some apparitions cheer and to these we give the accolade: others seem to threaten and at these we let fly an arrow. There are blunders and there are lucky hits. Plighted friends fall off; impulsively judged foes turn out to be friends. Measuring a chaotic world we are in deed at grips with inner chaos. The rarest consummation in America is achieved personality. To such there is no chaos anywhere.

The chaos is with us still. But we are at least so far advanced in it that we know it to be chaos. And no longer do the chaotic calls of rally . . . the salvos and arrows of confusion . . . impress us as ultimates in criticism or in creation. We know that even as art is far more than expression, criticism is more than smiles and grimaces and frowns. We know that good will and a vague sense of Spirit do not suffice for a spiritual leader. We realize that the leader must have the intellectual might to control the physical and passional forces of our world: not to condone or condole or lyricise escape, but to make them over into a working milieu. And above all, we realize that criticism in its *obstetrical* function is due in America and has not yet arrived: criticism which is the determining of potential values, not the harping on values already spent; criticism which is the lifting up into the experience of the mind of the impulses that make men write and read; criticism which shall draw the battle line, direct the blows, and release at last our intellectual youth from the confusion of its larval struggle into the joy of consecrated war.

## B

I speak of criticism and of war.

It is a great war: wider than America and deeper than the issue of our generation; a war vastly more important than any clash of states or social orders. It is the first spiritual war in which America may engage as a protagonist and as an equal of Europe. It is the war of a new consciousness, against the forms and language of a dying culture. The values and convictions which are in opposition have, however, remained for the most part latent. Practically all that passes for criticism in book and magazine and journal is based upon *tacit* assumptions of fundamental values which have themselves been challenged and brought into transitory flux. Practically all that passes for criticism is hence not criticism at all. In periods of admitted cultural status, criticism may dwell on the surface of personal opinion: since it shares the base of its opponent. But clearly where the base itself is of the issue, criticism must begin by articulating its own foundation and by stating its reasons for not accepting the foundations of the other side.



When new cultural foundations are erected the process is by the creating of new conceptions: *Words* whereby these foundations enter the experience of man. Such new words are forms of art. It is clear then that art today is an issue of the cultural shift. The roots of culture are philosophical; religious, ethical, aesthetic. There can be no criticism for our modern world until there is a modern philosophical synthesis. Without it, the brightest and solemnest discussion is just as impertinent as the dullest.

Needless to say I cannot in this paper give even the most shadowy sketch of the profound cultural structure that is disappearing nor of the new one that is forming. That is the subject of many books of which I pray for the strength some day to write one. All that I can gather here is a sheathe of statements that may at least suggest the immense seriousness of this spiritual war . . . and the immense work that critics will have to do ere they can talk better than gibberish . . . pleasant or unpleasant . . . about the Moderns.

### C

It has been said more than once that the imperative of a culture is unity. Culture implies a Whole. If you consider the word *whole* you will see the inclusiveness of this interpretation. In the old Anglo-Saxon, whole is *hāl* and from it comes *hālig* which means holy. We have from this root such words as hale, health, heal. The sure articulation of our language has therefore sealed for us the ideational unity of wholeness, holiness, haleness and health. The latin *religare* means to bind together, to make whole, to make one. From it we probably have our word religion. The two major sources of our language conjoin into this fundamental symbol. Religion in its true sense is the experience of being bound together in some universal principle related to our personal experience; *i. e.*, it is the experience of wholesomeness, of holiness and of health. The experience of beauty is one of harmony between a subject and an object. This harmony may be biological as in the case of a beautiful girl or horse. The beauty of a work of art is the communicable experience of a more basic wholeness inspired by a specific form. The great work

of art invests the individual with the ecstasy of participation in the Whole. This function is not kin to the religious, it is one with it. The great primal artists were creators, prophets and sustainers of religion. This is no more true of the artists of ancient Egypt, Judea, America than of the great moderns: Aeschylus, Dante, El Greco, Bach, Blake, Spinoza, Whitman, etc., etc. And it is merely our inadequate perspective that makes less clear to us the religious basis of such a work as *Don Quixote* than of such a work as the *Book of Job*. Moreover, there can be no cultural exchange without a unity of basis. As an instance, there was no fundamental dissonance between the assumptions underlying Plato and Aristotle, the Egyptian mysteries, the Jewish Prophetic Wisdom: else Hellenism and Christianity could not have been their organic successors.

There has been then for the entire term of History in the Western world a common culture: a common Whole. The matrix of this whole was a group of spiritual and intellectual convictions. In this matrix, the man of religion and the artist worked, and from it the peoples looked out upon the world. Here, with no attempt at thoroughness, are some of these convictions:

1. Unity is truth. This is a universe, not a multiverse.
2. Earth is the most important part of the universe. Sun and stars revolve around it.
3. Man is lord of the world of creature. He is physical life's highest and ultimate expression.
4. Man's reason is autonomous.
5. Man's conception of reality is fundamentally correct. This is so
  - a. Because the senses tell the truth;
  - b. or because reason corrects the senses;
  - c. or because God (Wisdom) supplements the senses and cooperates with reason.
6. God (or Gods, unified by the Greeks as well as by the Hebrews) is good and is related to man's experience.
7. The exercise of reason tends towards happiness.
8. The exercise of virtue tends toward blessedness.
9. We know what is good and what is evil.
10. We know what matter is, even if we cannot define it.

11. We know what thought is, even if we cannot define it.
12. Time and space are what they seem to be.
13. Energy and matter are indestructible.
14. The Law of cause and effect, upon which logic rests, is absolute.
15. A man may be builded of myriad individuals . . . electrons, atoms, cells, monads, etc. But man himself is not such a particle. There are no individuals of which the *instantaneous* individual man is possibly a cellular, atomic or relational part.
16. Intellect is three dimensional: and life is three dimensional.

These basal assumptions had various forms. Some lands stressed some of them, some epochs ignored others. Many of them were rejected by individuals whose revolt, however, did not adumbrate in the experience of the race. They provide a rough estimate of the matrix within which civilization was born, and of the foundations in which it was reared and nurtured. Thinkers, poets, scientists and priests established them. Through the aesthetic experience and the religious dogma they based the experience, however unconsciously, of billions of men and women.

They are breaking up.

The process of their destruction, *i.e.*, of the destruction of the spiritual and experiential whole which their acceptance meant, left the sporadic and entered the organic state with such men as Copernicus, Bacon, Descartes, Spinoza. In the Nineteenth Century the process accelerated vastly. With such forces as Kant, Schopenhauer, Darwin, Kelvin, Freud, the Non-Euclidean and n-dimensional mathematicians and with the apposite introduction into Europe of Hindu religious ideas which have always been based upon a deeper unity, the destructive work, *on the intellectual plane*, was practically rounded.

The war of which I speak is not this intellectual process of destruction. That war was restricted largely to the scientific and philosophical planes and is mostly over. The great war is one of the whole man . . . of his spiritual and emotional life: it is the world's resistance to giving up the comfort of its old cultural whole:

it is the emotional refusal to admit the new truths as experience. It is the war between Inertia and the displacing experience of a new synthesis, a new culture, a new vision.

The reader who is at all aware will know that not a single one of these basal convictions has been spared, *except the first*.<sup>\*</sup> And the first is the categorical imperative of any culture, the expression of the social will to survive. It is a conviction whose mechanics in the individual man is analagous to the instinct of the atom or cell to adhere in the major organism.

The key to our present anguish lies in the fact that we have temporarily lost the power to support this crucial first assumption. That is the reason of our chaos and of our misery. To ascribe them to such symptoms as the European war or Industrialism or the machine is too shallow to need refutation among intelligent people. Why, for instance, should the machine make for chaos? If I want to cut a chunk of beef can not I do it more neatly with a knife than with my fingers or teeth? That knife is *all* machines. The machine is an extension of limb, ear, eye and mouth. The fundamental machinists were the inventors of wagons, oars, the fashioners of words, the tamers of horses. Fulton, Morse, Marconi, are epigone. But just as the machine is good in controlled hands, it is evil in the hands of a madman: in the hands of a dissociated person. If I take a knife made for cutting beef and wood, and run amok with it among my brothers, or set it up as a god or multiply it worshipfully in such numbers that there's no place left in my house for sitting down but a blade cuts my flesh, do not be so absurd as to blame or abolish the good steel.

We are in misery because we have lost the control which comes with the experience of unity and wholeness. We are in misery because we are in chaos. We live in fragmentary thoughts, desires, acts. Quite literally, the *form* of our life is decomposing. And that means death.

We are decomposing because the experiential assumptions that held our culture together are on the wane, having intellectually been destroyed. The old spiritual

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\* The significant Dada movement of Tristan Tzara is an attempt to articulate the rejection of this first principle.

body is breaking up. Ere we can be whole and hale again, we must create a new spiritual body. And that means birth.

The travail of birth, like the persistence of inertia, is an inscrutable constant. In certain aspects, we call this war. The war of which I speak is therefore the eternal war between a death and a birth.

It is internecine and treacherous, because of the sporadic way in which spiritual change is reported by the inadequate mind and is accepted by the conservative emotion. Philosophy has stated the break-up in the stupendous lineage which dates in metaphysic from Spinoza and in epistemology from Kant. Science has negatively proven what philosophy, which can prove nothing, stated. Science has done this after a complacent period of positivism in which it ignored the intuitions of the poets and the statements of the philosophers who had declared in a hundred tongues and in a hundred ways the disability of positive science logic to enter the domain of the *noumenal*: the disqualification of positive science from any contact with causes. But this past arrogance of science is found today only among journalists and pedagogues who are always at least a century behind the times. The study of a Poincaré or of an Einstein is pure of it. Positive science has achieved its greatest dignity in the admission of Nescience: the admission of Mystery as the circumambient limit. It has prepared the intellect to receive Mystery, but it does not itself understand what Mystery is.

To the positive mind, Mystery means something outside itself, a not-knowing, a balking and blanking of experience. Whereas the experience of Mystery is the beginning of participation in a truth merely beyond the scope of our accepted words. The man who receives Mystery in his mind is already part of the truth: for Mystery is the first apperception of truth and is ineffable only in terms of inadequate language. Neither mystery nor truth is ineffable, as was taught by the shallow William James. What is ineffable is conventionalised language—the set of symbols which have crystalised a consciousness smaller than the experience attained by man. *The language that expresses Mystery, which is the threshold to the truth, is Art.*

The break-up stated by philosophy and proved by

positive science, has already been articulated by Art. In solitary cases, Art has even begun to articulate the new unified experience that will again bind men together in holiness and wholeness. But these statements, portents and Words are still too scattered to have impressed the mediocre minds (functions of the inertia, not of the intellect of Man) which control our universities and schools and churches, make our laws, rule our states and write almost all our books. These inert groups still act like automata on assumptions that have lost all contact with the evolving reality of man.\* Their arguments are of course insincere rationalisations of defence against the new experience which will wipe them out. For the old world, shattered, still persists. And on its side, innumerable sophistries, dogmas, decorations, graces: agile postures, fine chisellings of sarcophagus, fine chop-pings of logic. On the side of this death, an intricately smooth-worn pleasant language. On the side of our birth, only the harsh and guttural beauty of new Words.

These apologists of inertia are shrewd enough to know that their worst enemies are the creators of art. They know that the artist and the bringer of the Word are one. They know that their ancient forms must be savagely defended against the explosive menace of new forms, new words for the new experience of man. For purposes of defence, they have erected other assumptions beside those which I have mentioned, but for the most part also unexpressed and treacherous and latent:

1. Intellect is three dimensional, life is three dimensional: therefore
2. Art must be three dimensional, and must remain the presentative of three dimensional consciousness.
3. Art's function is to subserve—as documentation, criticism, exposition, explanation, corroboration, decoration—the status quo spiritual, intellectual and ethical, in which man finds himself at the moment of encountering it. Therefore

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\* The reality of man in my sense is that phase of absolute reality which has entered man's experience. I believe this reality to be expanding, although it may be perfectly true that this reality in America, A. D. 1900, is smaller than this reality in India, B. C. 400. This reality is in relation to the "reality" of the literary realists somewhat as a sphere is in relation to a fly speck on its surface.

4. Art must adhere to accepted norms of positive science and psychology.
5. Art must remain within the stated boundaries of the consciousness of man.

Upon these tenets of self-defence there is War.

Upon the outworn bonds of a glorious but dying culture, there is War.

Upon the "honest" critics who, consciously or unconsciously are functions of this spiritual inertia, there is war.

We hold:

1. Intellect is three dimensional, but intellect is as capable of change and transfiguration as all living organism.
2. Intellect has had increasing intimations of values and dimensions of life beyond the scope of its fixed symbols (language).
3. Life is vastly dimensioned beyond intellect. Intellect has, by a juncture with the supra-conscious forces of life, erected an instrument for the apperception of life in its full dimensions.
4. This instrument is Art. Art, by the elements of its creation, brings *into* the consciousness of mind quantities and values of life which mind alone is unable to perceive or control.
5. The noblest function of art is, then, not to subserve the intellectually accepted forms of life; but to conquer new forms of life and to bring them within the reach of the intellect. Art is the language which expresses vision of being that has not yet been conventionalised into simple words and concepts.
6. The domain of Art is therefore precisely beyond the domains of science, philology and psychology. But these domains are as materials within the domain of art.
7. Art conquers truth for the mind which autonomously can conquer only fact.
8. Inspired intellects have glimpsed certain truths still largely alien from human experience. As that
  - a. Our sense of matter, space, time, thought is sub-

- jective, inadequate and untrue.
- b. Only the relativity of time, space, matter, etc., are true.
  - c. And true as measures not of Being, but of our consciousness of being.
  - d. Hence the laws of cause and effect, the laws of logic, the laws of scientific research and experiment, the laws of mathematics are sub specie aeternitatis null and void.
  - e. What has been accepted as cause and effect and absolute sequence in time is mere juxtaposition in some superintellectual direction.
  - f. Hence the laws governing the mechanics and forms of art are to be superseded.
  - g. Our convictions of limits and individuals are merely the limits of our present consciousness and may be superseded.
9. In consequence of these convictions, the art which adheres to the formed phenomena of intellect and sense is a weak, retroactive, atavistic art.
  10. The art that will articulate man's widening and deepening participation in life, and make this participation the base of human experience must come in the guise of forms and words for which the conventional criticism has no measure by the very definition of that criticism as an intellectual adoption from previously created forms and words.
  11. Before the word is a word, it is a form of art. After the artform has become a cultural experience, it is a word.
  12. Before the form of art can become a cultural experience it must by means of criticism be naturalised into the domain of the intellect.
  13. Criticism can perform this function only when it contacts the work of art on a common plane of spiritual and philosophical conviction.
  14. In periods of basic cultural transition, therefore, the criticism which does not start out from metaphysics and a true understanding of the religious experience as I have explained the term, is idle, irrelevant, impotent and anti-social.

WALDO FRANK.



*THE MOONLIGHT*

I waited on  
 In the late autumn moonlight,  
 A train droning out of thought—

The mind on moonlight  
 And on trains.

Blind as a thread of water  
 Stirring through a cold like dust,  
 Lonely beyond all silence

And humming this to children,  
 The nostalgic listeners in sleep,

Because no guardian  
 Strides through distance upon distance,  
 His eyes a web of sleep.

YVOR WINTERS.

*TEWA SPRING*

Red spring  
 In deep valleys

The peachtree  
 Lies in shadow  
 Deep as stone

The river  
 Is unheard.

YVOR WINTERS

## OPEN LETTER TO THE NEW REPUBLIC

Sir: "The official timers have not yet determined whether, on pages 292-3, the non-stop kiss record is broken or only tied." This sentence, patently journalistic, was committed by a reviewer who, unabashed by his obscurity and unrecommended taste, announced concerning another novel: "I am sending copies of his book to the readers most certain to appreciate it, to Lucian, Alexander Pope, Voltaire, T. L. Peacock and Heine." (J. K. Singleton, *New Republic*, Je. 27, '23). In a category of critical writing irreconcilable with the gauche smart alecisms just enumerated lie the following remarks: "The translation is in hexameters—not the monotonous hexameters of Longfellow and Clough, but hexameters that have variety of stress. Longfellow and Clough attempted to make the natural rhythm of the verse—the rhythm it would fall into if we were speaking it naturally—identical with the scansion rhythm—the rhythm we would give it if we attempted to put the six stresses on their proper syllables." Etc. (Padraic Colum, *New Republic*, Jl. 11, '23). Mr. Colum is the expert treating his subject with dispatch, precision and authority and Mr. Singleton is the journalist straining to be facetious. The *New Republic* by sanctioning both raises questions: what is its standard of good literary criticism? what does it consider bad critical practice? what is its sense of responsibility toward its readers *and* toward the literary milieu in which it is a force? To what extent does it share the prevalent and ingrained prejudice of journalism against the expert?

For journalism, as Mr. B. H. Haggin lately stated (*New Pearson's*, Jl., '23), makes a cult of incompetence. The headline must be arresting and determines an arbitrary sequence. The column beneath it must present what is striking and what is entertaining; it must have bulk sufficient to pad out the advertising matter. Journalism cannot be concerned with a sequence based upon intellectual values, or with space apportioned strictly to the needs of elucidation, or with completeness of treatment. Hence, it has no use for the literary expert and plenty of use for the reviewer who will fill an allotted space with what is superficially striking and entertaining about a book or more frequently about himself. Enter-

tainment, in fact, has become an implied canon of criticism. "But his audience soon grows weary, and while the doctor looks myopically and somewhat askance at literature, looks elsewhere for entertainment." (J. E. L., *New Republic*, Oct. 3, '23). Of more dignity than the notion of criticism as an entertaining knockabout turn at the expense of literature is the conception of criticism as persuasion, always the ruling conception in British and American literature. This conception holds that criticism is an appendage to creative work, that the best the critic can do is to play up those qualities of literature which an advertising copywriter would call its "human interest points," that the function of criticism is to induce or dissuade the reader to procure or from procuring a certain book. Both entertainment and persuasion fit admirably into the journalistic scheme and both constitute a large proportion of the *New Republic's* critical columns. The center of interest in the two types of criticism named is in the audience; this coincides with the center of interest of journalism which, by pleasing a wide public, gains a wide circulation. The expert by being interested solely in his subject goes counter to journalism and writes a criticism that is essentially supported statement, and in my opinion it is not often that we read carefully supported statement in the literary criticism published by the *New Republic*. Since the *New Republic* is one of the few American organs dedicated to intelligence which occasionally justifies its professions, it is not unfitting to protest against the impurities which surround such clarities as Mr. Colum's, or Mr. Lovett's excellent period surveys built around Victorian memoirs, or Mr. Aiken's study of *The Waste Land*, or the specialist reports on books dealing with such matters as the housing problem, prisons or immigration.

The literary expert may be defined as a person of taste adequately regulated by knowledge and thought. As such, he is interested in saying more than simply "I like or I dislike this book," or in recording the impressionistic spatter of images that has hopped through his mind while reading. His is an analytic intelligence and his absorption, like that of experts in other fields, is in technic. He postulates criticism as an independent exer-

cise, one which encompasses its stimulus and adds a term to the appreciation of literature, namely, analytic understanding. He is likely to ask himself after writing a criticism: have I reached the center of the work under survey? have I considered in detail its claims to permanence? have I accounted for the means by which its effects were made, for its author's *mode of apprehension* as well as for his content? have I attained completeness? And he will question his prose, its cadences and adjustments, before it will occur to this economical person to inquire if he has been entertaining or persuasive or striking, to ask whether he has performed what journalism wants.

The literary expert, by reason of his knowing and his thinking, comes finally to display as a special earmark an uncanny awareness. He is vigilant in detecting his own latent assumptions and in dragging them out to expression; he probes the assumptions, latent and expressed, of his assigned author. His awareness is his safeguard against such inexpert and unaware writing as Mr. Robert Littell's Waldo Frank (New Republic, Sept. 26, '23). Mr. Littell declared at the outset and again mid-way that he did not "really understand what he (Frank) was after," and "nothing would induce me to re-read the book (Rahab) in order to find out," thereby convicting himself of a refusal to prepare thoroughly on a topic to which his reactions were cloudy. Honest, but hardly the procedure of an expert who is willing to resign when his limitations interfere with his grasp. The principal point, however, is that when Mr. Littell writes of certain excerpts from *The Dark Mother* that they are "the product of a way of thinking which may be called the delusion of Oneness" and nothing more, he is operating on latent, not expressed assumptions, and he does not supply us with data sufficient to articulate his case for him. To what branch of positivism does he adhere? Upon what is the mysticism of Waldo Frank founded? How has he measured his positivism against Frank's mysticism and gained the victory for himself? As a positivist attacking the "delusion" of a mystic, what does he think of that trend of modern science and modern nescience to which contemporary mysticism refers for corroboration? In short, Mr. Littell is un-

scientific in that he publicly scrutinizes neither his own premises nor those of Mr. Frank.

In perplexity at the confusion I have outlined, I ask of the *New Republic*, is it deliberately a showroom for all manner of critical writing, bad and good, for all kinds of approaches, exploded and tested?

Woodstock, N. Y.

Gorham B. Munson.

Note: Mr. Robert Littell is an editor of the *New Republic* who may be introduced, according to documentary evidence in my hands, as a man who believes that in proportion to the specialization of thinking and writing visible in a critique, that critique becomes less good. He also distrusts most attempts to get down to fundamentals and readily admits his superficiality.

The above letter was written at his request. "Accordingly, I cordially invite you to attack me, the *New Republic* and the critical standards and methods of either the person or the journal to the extent of, say, 800 words, which we shall publish immediately as a letter. You can make it as hot as you like. It will all go through. If you have so much to disagree with—with our attitude toward the reader and the specialist, this, for your sake as well as ours, should be publicly rather than privately stated." (R. Littell, letter of Sept. 24, '23). There followed a hurry-up letter before I could finish my statement. Eventually, the statement, which unfortunately *had* to be 1100 words long to cover the issue, reached the office of Mr. Littell. Silence for several weeks and then came a request to cut it to 800 words, which would have meant an incomplete attack. The invited guest declined to mutilate himself, and the door slammed curtly in his face.—G. B. M.

## THE RESURRECTION

Spring penetrated  
Slowly  
To the doorstep  
Where the snow lay  
In gray patches—  
March was pale.

The stallion  
Stood like water  
In cold shade  
On riven soil.  
The trees were bare as glass  
About the open doors.

Leal was dead.  
And still his wife  
Carried in pine-logs  
Split, and yellow like a man's hair—  
Wet earth, shadow of the winter,  
Motionless beside the door.

YVOR WINTERS

## A PROGRESSION

So all these people are adding their mite to the fortune of Mr. Dougherty. That little bald-headed man, for instance, is head of the bookkeeping department; only last week he was publicly lauded by Mr. Dougherty himself for working out a system which would take care of the new factory in Hoboken. He is evidently worried, says something over-hasty to the treasurer, comes down the green plush carpet on the run; so that the treasurer winks at the filing clerk, who winks back, hoping thereby—in accordance with a vague enough logic—that he will get his five-dollar raise next Friday. As Miss Rosenberg's typewriter goes tink at the end of the line, Mrs. Murdock's typewriter is just being charged with a white sheet and two carbons, and the typewriter of the new girl in the corner leaps into the beginning of a new paragraph. A man from one of the departments upstairs passes the head of the bookkeeping department, while an office boy is crossing the room diagonally, steering among the desks.

Dougherty had evidently done right to wait for Griffiths to call him. "Never let 'm think you're too anxious, that's my philosophy," he said in the direction of his private secretary. Then he dismissed his desk completely, lighted a cigar, and went over to the window. He could see down twelve floors of the building opposite him before it dropped on out of sight; looking up, he could see five floors before the partly drawn blind cut him off.

But it was already after four; Mr. Dougherty would have to be starting home soon if he did not want to get caught in the rush hour. He slapped shut a few drawers, put some papers somewhere else, got his hat and coat out of the wardrobe, and left. As he stepped from his private office into the general offices, the ripple of prestige preceded him. An aisle was cleared through the comers and goers; the operator put her best into a "Good evening, Mr. Dougherty"; the elevator boy caught the door half-way as he was closing it, and held his car for Mr. Dougherty; downstairs, the starter saluted professionally; then Mr. Dougherty stepped out into the street.

Objects moved. Things passed irregularly, some slick and shiny, some looming up and approaching like a

broadside, some wheezing. Others crossed, went down, went up, bunched, shot ahead. One peculiarly agitated division kept working in and out, crying. He moved himself among shapes, sizes and directions. The wind of an approaching storm writhed through a gulch, but he was firm in his resolution, and drew close the flap-pings of his mantle. He advanced, steering himself without question.

Suddenly he swerved, dipped behind two other figures that were moving to cross him, and plunged into a warm, breathy chamber, descending into the thick smells. He reached a platform in time to catch the local which was just pulling in; he took it, changing for the express at Chambers Street.

The first fifteen minutes or so of the ride was carried off without anything unusual occurring. In fact, the train had already pulled out of the station at 116th Street without the hint of a catastrophe. But there the tracks become temporarily exposed, running high in the open for a disturbingly long time before they would dive into the protecting earth again. Suddenly a swarm of airplanes descended on the train, buzzing about it, flying in among one another, dipping at the cars, and swooping up and over them. As one airplane drew up for a moment alongside the speeding cars, it became clearly evident that it was filled with Indians. And judging from the hideous expression on their faces, they were giving war-whoops, although nothing could be heard but the spitting of the airplane engines and the rolling of the car wheels. Then something shot out of the airplane, breaking the window directly in front of Mr. Dougherty. A second later he was lassoed firmly about the waist, jerked out of the window, and hauled rudely into the airplane, the swarm of them disappearing toward the south, flying all the way to one of the deserted islands in the South Seas, in fact, where they killed Mr. Dougherty and ate him, which recalls the somewhat similar case of Ellery Smith.

On returning home one night over a not particularly difficult road to his farm less than a mile out of town—further, there was even a full moon—Smith lowered the bars of the pasture gate and discovered that he was in an unknown country. He started back to town; but



the town was gone. Between that and early morning when, crawling with open arms toward the broad, clean sun, he fell into the abandoned quarry south of Crow Hill, and broke his neck.

But there is this difference: that Ellery Smith suffered mishaps of an obviously superhuman or metaphysical import, whereas the loss of Mr. Dougherty bears heavily upon one of the most deplorable paradoxes in all the length and breadth of modern society. For in Heaven's name, how can we without blushing speak of Progress when we mean thereby the invention of a mechanism thanks to whose ingenuity not only can remote and seemingly inaccessible places be reached by methods which at one time would have appeared almost Divine, but also the unscrupulous can utilize as still another accessory to rapine and murder! This, I say, is nothing other than a vomit in the face of that Higher Idea of Progress, which takes into account, besides the increase in man's scope of mechanical effectiveness, also a concomitant chastening of the spirit; which, burning away through education all dross of savagery, leaves the greatest of God's creatures with a mental and moral equipment capable of putting to the complete—and undefiled—advantage of society those super-tools which our restless ingenuity has fashioned.

How, for instance, to take the problem up from yet another angle, can a society consider itself anything but ridiculous wherein the man of thorough and well-digested learning, the scholar and the philosopher, finds his liberties infringed upon by the meanest superstition-monger, the lowliest believer in ghosts? Pursuing the matter still more deeply, we see that scholarship itself cannot exclude those persons of a weaker mental muscle who, lifting the burden of much learning upon their shoulders, display thereby how miserably unfit their frame is for sustaining it. My mind runs at this point to the case of M. Henri Basle, a member of several learned organizations in France, and an excellent stylist as well, but yet whom I must quote as a muster of dark and crooked thinking:

“From behind thick smears of trees and the unevenness of the ground—which, in addition, was

covered with a tall grass—you could see certain parts of the upper story of the house. Especially, if you had had courage enough to climb inside the wall. A gravel path wound toward the house, and a boy once took a stone from this path and threw it at one of the windows. Where the hole was made in the glass, a butterfly fluttered away, the boy dying that same evening. . . . All this happened, it is true, before my time; but I did see the house and the gravel path which led up to it, and I have heard noises come from it with my own ears. . . . If I remember rightly, it was constructed of some dull grey stone, which had been made even duller by the soot coming from the mills along the river.”

In the above quotation kindly notice first of all that the writer's honesty has proved even greater than his credulity. It is more than significant that in the very paragraph which aims to plead for ghosts the author's characteristic circumstantiality contains the germs of the rebuttal. If *this* man had seen the butterfly, I should be much more inclined to waver in my denouncement of the whole thing as either quackery or superstition.

Then again, if ghosts really do exist, how are we to dispose of the problem of their propagation? For if the ghost is the simulacrum of the human, by what logical step can it be denied the possession of male or female organs, whichever the case may be? Or, if the possession of these is granted, by what further logical step could it be maintained that the ghosts were barren? Yet there are no more so-called ghosts than there have been people to contain them. And if the body is rotted, and the soul is in Heaven, Hell, or Purgatory, what is there left whereof a ghost could be constructed? Nothing but the memory of man, which is to say, *nothing*. For memory is a mere inclination of the worms of the brain, like the leaning of tall grass after a storm.

Therefore, *there are no ghosts*. The invention of the ghost is a mere northern aberration, with an origin that is easily felt when one considers the blunt mists rising from our bogs, or if one has happened to observe the broad blossoms of fog which frequently nose through our dark forests. If we will even grant that one could wish there were ghosts, to sift about the rooms of a

deserted mansion, or blow down low corridors, serving, in short, to counteract the increasing blatancy of our customs. The truth is that these unearthly existences about us are not ghosts, but *ghouls*, or *demons*, devoid of all this austere, ghastly poetry. They are hard little pebbles of malice, and cancers of envy, and running sores of hatred, and like the Great Bent Master of them all, quick moving, keenly intelligent, and fiery-tongued.

“Fiery-tongued,” I say, for at times when I consider the idiocy of those who maintain that the devil’s tongue is rounded, I marvel that I could hold my peace even so ably as I have. For why, I ask, if the devil’s tongue is rounded—or even has that soft amorphousness at the end which is the property of the tongues of humans and of cattle—should we associate the lascivious with those things which protrude in points? You have but to cast one glance upon the azalea when it is flourishing at the height of its lubricity to become convinced that the tongue of the devil is as dart-like as a flame, and as disastrous as that object—if we could call a flame such—when it penetrates into the vase of the ear. And ah, Christ! what ill-formed dreams come frequently of this copulation. But I am being led by passion to wander from the topic—for there are times when a passion will engross me much the way a blood-hunger will engross a gnat; the gnat (or in some parts of the country I should better speak of a black-fly and in others a punky, while I believe the sand-fly of the southeastern beaches is also similar) when it has at last succeeded in alighting and penetrating the skin and the water under the skin, falls into such a rage of feasting that it seems to forget everything else, even the necessity of fleeing to preserve itself, so that the bitten party can approach his thumb with leisure and crush the life out of it without its so much as attempting to leave the well it has sunk into the flesh. But let me close this digression abruptly, and step forth now, once and for all, and declare myself as avowedly against the round-tonguers and the soft-tonguers as I am against the Black Angel himself.

Yet, almost without knowing it, I find that we are naturally prone to over-stress the darker phases of a subject; applying which to the present writing would mean that there was a constant danger of giving too

much to the devil and his horde, and not enough to God. So I consider this decidedly more pleasant aspect of the child Argubot, whose father and mother always told the truth, told the truth so much, in fact, that while Argubot was still young the King came and had his mother's ears cut off, while his father was put to death. Thereafter the boy lived alone with his widowed mother, who still told the truth even though her husband was dead and her ears were cut off.

But Argubot never told the truth at all. Once when he was late for supper, his mother asked him where he had been, and he said that he had been out with the ghost of his father riding on the moon. His mother said that he was untrue, and that he had fallen asleep in the hay, and called him to be whipped. But Argubot said that his mother must not whip him, because his father told him he would be King some day. So that his mother had to put the whip back behind the stove unused, for the ghost of his father *might* have taken the little boy for a ride on the moon, and she had always felt that Argubot was going to be King some day. At other times he told similar perplexing falsehoods.

Until the poor woman didn't know what to do. She wanted her boy to be honest, like herself and her dead husband, whom the King had killed; for she didn't want him to become another untrue King. She puzzled for many days how that she could prove that her son was not true, so that she could whip him. Although she was very poor, she gave a candle to Mother Mary. Then a plan came to her; but she would have to tell a lie. She hesitated for a long time, finally deciding that she must do so for the sake of her son.

She went to a neighbor at the far end of the town, whose cat had kittens, and asked for one small black kitten. Then she came home again and called Argubot to her. "Little son, I have brought you three kittens, but that you may not get tired of them, you may have only one of them at a time. But as all the three kittens are nearly alike, it will be hard to tell them apart. But if you look into their eyes, you can tell them apart, for their eyes are different. One is called Big-Eyes, because the black of his eyes is always as big as the whole eye; I

will let Big-Eyes come to bed with you; if you awake in the night, and are afraid, just move your toes under the blanket, and Big-Eyes will tumble and prance at them. The second is called Little-Eyes, because the black of his eyes is only a slit; he is a lazy fellow, and at noontime you will find him stretched in the sun on the back door-step. The third is called Medium-Sized Eyes, because the black of his eyes is neither big, nor is it just a slit; you can play with Medium-Sized Eyes in the mornings and afternoons, but be careful of him, for he is the liveliest of the three, and is liable to scratch you."

*But Big-Eyes, Little-Eyes and Medium-Sized Eyes were all one kitten, although Argubot did not know it. For at night a cat's eyes are big, and at noon they are very small, while in the morning and the afternoon they are neither big nor small. And the widow was sorry that she had been untrue, but she stood by her plan and waited to see what would come of it.*

The next morning, when they were eating their porridge, she asked Argubot about the kittens, and he said he awoke and was afraid, but he didn't have to call her because Big-Eyes was there and played with his toes. And his mother said nothing. . . . The next morning after that, when they were eating their porridge again, she asked him about the kittens and he said that he awoke and was afraid, but he didn't have to call her because Big-Eyes was there and played with his toes. And again his mother said nothing. . . . But the third morning, when she asked him about the kittens, Argubot exclaimed, "Oh, mother, Big-Eyes and Little-Eyes and Medium-Sized Eyes were all three on my bed last night." And now his mother knew that he was untrue, and she went behind the stove to get her whip.

But Argubot ran out of the house and became King.

And when he was King, he despatched a messenger to the south, telling him to bring back a cat with big eyes, and one with little eyes, and one with medium-sized eyes. But the messenger returned cold and hungry, and fell before King Argubot, saying, "My Sire, I could not contain the cats, for some evil spirit changed them in the bag. . . . The first day, I caught a cat with medium-sized eyes, and put him in my hunting-

bag, but when I rested that night and looked at him, there was another cat like him in his place, but his eyes were big. 'Very well,' said I, 'we will let this be our big-eyed cat.' The next noon I caught a cat with little eyes, but when I sat down to rest in the afternoon I looked at him and his eyes were medium-sized. 'Very well,' said I, 'we will let this be our cat with medium-sized eyes.' And the third day at noon I caught another cat with little eyes, and returned home, happy in that I had fulfilled the commission of my Lord. But after trudging all day I came upon the castle at nightfall, only to find that all three cats had eyes as big as the full moon."

King Argubot was displeased, and despatched the same messenger to the north with the same mission, but the result was no better. Then he sent other messengers in other directions, and they all returned with the same tale. Thereupon the King had all the messengers thrown into the dungeon.

The King was sad, and went out into his garden. But here a good fairy appeared before him and said that if he would release all the messengers from the dungeon, the three cats would be given him. He did so, and they were.

Then he sent the messengers out over the land again, this time to find his old widowed mother, if she was still alive. And they returned with his mother, bringing her before the King, but she did not recognize that he was her son.

"Old woman," he said to her severely, "do you see that cat at my feet?" and he pointed to the three cats which the fairy had given him. "Now I pick it up and its eyes are big. I put it down and pick it up again and its eyes are little. I put it down and pick it up a third time, and its eyes are medium-sized. Is not that so?"

And the old woman began to weep, and said, "Please, my Lord, but it is not so. There are three cats at the feet of my Lord."

Then King Argubot roared out with anger, so that the old woman began to tremble, "What! does this old woman dare to gainsay the King!"

"Please, my Lord," she sighed, "but I lost my dear son, once when I was untrue. And now, although I can

not understand it, I must tell the truth, even though it cost me my head, even as it cost me the head of my husband many years ago." King Argubot was sure that this was his mother before him, and he told her who he was, and stepped down from his throne, and led her into a great banquet prepared for her.

Soon after this, King Argubot, hearing of a beautiful princess who was weaving a golden garment of a golden thread on a golden loom, but who lived in a country very far off, went in search of her to make her Queen. When at last he found her, she looked upon him and fainted with love, so that she broke the skein of gold with which she was weaving. But there was a curse upon this princess, whereby, if it should ever happen that this golden thread was broken, she was doomed to die nine months after that time.

The King and his Queen began wandering to fling off the curse; by royal decree, thousands of witches and ugly old women were burned; but the curse could not be flung off, so that at the predestined date the Queen died, after giving birth to a Prince, who lived on after her. King Argubot returned to his own country, and mourned for five years. Then, finding that his people were at the mercy of usurers, he had all money-lenders put to death, and devoted himself to the welfare of his kingdom, at the same time teaching the young Prince also to love and protect his subjects.\*

So wisely did King Argubot pilot his kingdom that all who were good became favored and happy, while the malicious and the scheming among them could not flourish nor take root, so that finally they crossed the border into other countries. And when at last it was time for the King to die, all his subjects threw down their tools and neglected their crops, allowing pests of all sorts to spring up among them; for, they said, they

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\* Not to be confused with a later Prince Argubot, of a different lineage, and of whom it is recorded: While walking on the seashore and thinking of the problems that beset his kingdom—most especially the pestilence which at that time was raging in the larger cities—Prince Argubot was suddenly conducted away on a carpet of zephyrs, and into an intensification of beauty which was beyond the endurance of mortal eye. When he was returned to earth, little children hid at the mention of his name, and old men marveled that their Prince, once so kind to his people, should have grown more cruel than even his uncle before him.

wanted to die with their King. But when the King heard of this, he blessed his people, but asked that if they still heard his authority they should return to their tasks, so that his corpse might not be buried in a land of desolation. And the people, hearing of this, returned to the fields and the work-benches, that a thriving state might be maintained as a monument to their beloved monarch.

Soon after, King Argubot breathed his last, and as his soul rose out of the window, the voice of his Angel-Wife was heard calling him to her couch in Heaven. O, glory of their re-union in that gentle land above the sky!

KENNETH BURKE

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### TINKERING WITH WORDS

Galimathias. By Matthew Josephson. New York: Broom. \$1.

Josephson has an admirable ear. Controlled by it, his lines never fail to please by a springiness, a clean metallic ring, and a flexible pace. He is sufficiently skilful to distort grammar into beautiful libertinage, and at times he succeeds in subtracting subject-matter almost entirely from his poems so that they are sustained principally by their non-representative qualities. Thus, he is in danger of violating the inherent ideational and representative properties of literature for the sake of music and "abstract" design.

The other unifying element in his little volume is looser and personal, and results from a limitation of his subject-matter. In one of his *Etudes*, Josephson expresses his satisfaction at returning from a mountain-top to a locked-in valley: "we are within our microcosm again!" And the sensibility to which these poems refer



is appallingly microscopic. All those major areas of human life upon which the great artists are driven to crucify themselves, Josephson eschews or fears, and exploits instead with more intensity than they permit the superficial regions of personality. A form of sentimentality, for it is essentially emotion in excess of the fact. He does not take his trivial fact and draw out or distort its inherent proportions until it becomes humorous. He transfers emotion that properly should find some larger outlet and treats his fact in terms of the borrowed emotion. Hence, hysteria rather than humor. So, from a false and hidden angle, he gives us poems upon an urge to miction, lassitude, a mimic and fanciful dispute among table vegetables, the pursuit of himself by a homosexual, the destruction of an afternoon by the light striking of a stranger's cane against his knee. He even gives two specimens of light verse that Oliver Herford or Arthur Guiterman might equal.

It is easy to surmise that this lack of any fundamental attitude toward life, this indulgence in trivial fancy, make him especially susceptible to influences which swallow him with little resistance. However, he has the cunning to pick influences new to American poetry,—*The Lay of Maldoro*, Gertrude Stein, the dadaists,—and so his work glitters with a novel reflected brilliance. At the same time one is depressed by an emptiness in back of his shrillest exclamations, the emptiness of one who cannot create his own artistic world and assimilate into it the stronger poets he reads.

*Galimathias* is a notebook of experiments, a depository of good lines and of three excellent poems,—the first, second and fourth *Etudes*. It even makes one hope that its author may as a sensibility outgrow his timidity, grasp a sense of proportion toward his fooleries, and develop a rhythm of personal vision, a progression into maturity of thought and feeling, to accompany his real gift for verbalism.

## THE AMERICAN MURKURY

A few people hoped that Mencken and Nathan, freed from *The Smart Set*, would transcend several of their editorial limitations. They buy No. 1 of *The American Mercury*. Therein an article by Ernest Boyd entitled *Aesthete: Model 1924*. It annoys a few writers who are really intelligent enough to disregard derisive gestures of this calibre. But they make a fuss, a journalist contributes a mess of trivialities (one finally gets the impression that Boyd had no actuality in mind when he wrote this thing, or at least no specific persons in mind—is this cowardice?), finally Bodenheim squeals once more over Cowley's devastating critique of him. We must get back to the trivial source of this trivial disturbance. *Aesthete: Model 1924* is a veiled attack, it is a composite and in this case therefore untrue portrait since writers who have nothing in common but their age are telescoped together to produce inconsistencies, it is a piece of mud-slinging bristling with gratuitous inferences of log-rolling, ignorance, perversity, etc. Instead of clarifying the existing situation, this article is calculated to make it murkier.

I commend *The American Mercury* to the following publics:

1. Liberated adolescents who wish to kick up their heels.
2. The middle or muddle generation in American Letters.
3. Blockheads who think that Masters is a great poet.

I think that Bob Littell, Burton Rascoe and J. V. A. Weaver ought to like it.

"O rain gently descending and I am bored," Cowley wrote in a totally different connection. I am too bored to amplify or specify, too bored. . . .

In a totally different connection, jh remarked, it contains nothing for adult education. I think that covers our new magazine.

G. B. M.

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## EXPLANATORY

*Secession* number three was edited solely by Matthew Josephson, though a note to that effect was unfortunately omitted. I take this late opportunity to disclaim any responsibility for *Peep Peep Parrish*, a short story by Josephson printed in that number.

*Secession* number four contained a mutilation for which I was in no way responsible of the sixth poem by Mr. Richard Ashton. I have apologized fully in private for this smirching of our editorial honor, and wish now simply to make the fact of my apology public.

Matthew Josephson resigned as director after number four. The differences were literary as well as managerial.

The printing of *Secession* numbers five and six was entrusted to Mr. John Brooks Wheelwright, who kindly offered to supervise their production in Florence. But it is regrettably necessary to state that Mr. Wheelwright also assumed editorial duties in the matters of revision, comment and acceptance, and it is perhaps fairest to Mr. Burke and myself to shift the entire responsibility for these issues upon Mr. Wheelwright.

*Secession* is now printed in America under my sole control.

GORHAM B. MUNSON

“The total effect of the new ideas is to make the universe of physics less objective; to an unsuspected extent this indifferent universe, with its iron laws, is a product of our own minds. To some extent this fact was always recognized, particularly by the Continental physicists, but as a general persuasion it is comparatively recent. We cannot escape the structure of our own minds, it is true, but we do not yet know what that structure is; we do not know what barriers are breakable; we do not know what thoughts are thinkable by man. A universe in whose construction so plastic and mysterious an entity as the mind of man collaborates, may very well hold great surprises.”—J. W. N. Sullivan in *Aspects of Science*.