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*The Wisconsin  
Literary  
Magazine*

Volume XVII



Number 3

The New Poetry: A Critique

---By William Ellery Leonard

The End of the Charm

PUBLICATION OF THE STUDENTS OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

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December 1917

# If You Think

This issue of the LIT is good

## Wait Until You See

# “SHUX”

It's Amazing

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# The Wisconsin Literary Magazine

VOLUME XVII

Madison, November, 1917

Number 2

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THE whole Feise incident could be characterized by the single phrase—*it would be funny if it were not so sad*. The incident itself is so insignificant that it is hardly worth mentioning, but its consequences have made it a matter of national importance. The fact that Professor Feise's remark cannot be mentioned in public has given it a sense of mystery upon which sensational newspapers can prey.

Far be it from us to approve of Professor Feise's conduct. We may say, however, that while no gentleman would make such a remark in public, ninety-nine out of a hundred gentlemen make such and similar remarks in private, to friends, colleagues; and unless the latter be fossilized pedants or puritan skeletons, they accept them as jokes and the matter ends right there. Professor Feise's unpardonable offense is in the fact that he made this joke to a colleague who apparently had no sense of humor. This colleague reported the matter "higher up", where it was stamped as "offensive and scurrilous." The incident was then picked up by a local paper which gave it a political interpretation, and the bad joke thus became an act of political treason.

There was, however, nothing in Professor Feise's remark to imply such an interpretation. Professor

Feise's remark was but a satire on a type of men who stamp their convictions and sympathies on a button. Similar satirical remarks have been made by thousands of gentlemen who don't like the idea of buttons, pins, ribbons, penants, or any sort of tag or stamp, quite irrespective of the purpose for which these may stand. Professor Feise's remark was nothing but a joke, he himself more than anyone else realizes that for a public statement it was improper. "My remarks were not meant to give offense. As must be expected under present circumstances, a strict interpretation was given to the words which were not meant to offend or to hurt," Professor Feise said to a reporter of the Wisconsin State Journal.

Professor Feise is an Associate Professor in German Literature. He came to the University as an instructor in 1908, and his rapid promotion was the result of his meritorious service. He is one of the keenest interpreters of modern drama; he is an artist as well as a scholar; he has done a great deal toward the promotion of literary and dramatic interests among students, and extended his educational influence beyond the walls of the classroom.

As a member of the department of German in an American University he helped to spread among American students the German ideals of Democracy, which, until the beginning of the world war, were the foremost enemy of Prussian militarism and Autocracy—ideals which will eventually unite the democratic, liberty-loving people of America with the democratic liberty-loving people of Germany against their common enemies, commercialism and junkerism. In his interpretation of German life and ideals Professor Feise helped to discriminate between the German military clique and the German people, a discrimination which formed the basic principle of President Wilson's declaration of war against the German government.

As a students' literary publication, the Wisconsin Literary Magazine has felt and appreciated Professor Feise's services to the University. The Wisconsin Literary Magazine could never have been what it is without the moral support of a very limited number of

only in terms of democratic reconstruction of our social and political life."

Our entire political situation is built on a paradox. We must appeal to militarism in order to crush militarism; we must curb democracy in order to establish democracy. The situation is delicate indeed, and requires continuous introspection and analysis. We believe in war and in the necessity of checking the invasion of autocracy, lest we be swallowed up by German militarism. We believe in Democracy, in the necessity of having control of and checking when necessary, our own militaristic tendencies, lest they become a permanent institution in our life and encourage Germanistic ideals among us.

This paradoxical situation made us take a dual stand. On the one hand we are in full sympathy with the measures which our government took to check this Prussian invasion. We believe that neither Peace Palaces nor Grape Juice Policies are adequate against highly organized militarism, but we must fight man for man, a Howitzer for a Krupp gun, a dozen aeroplanes for a zeppelin, for a dozen submarines a destroyer, until the German government be made to feel a moral defeat and the war end in a general disarmament.

On the other hand, we insist on keeping wide awake to current problems, to fight jingo-patriotism together with rabid radicalism, and refuse to dilute the high ideals set forth in President Wilson's proclamations with the trite and hackneyed honeyed democracy with which certain "democratic" elements are now saturated. This is our position. We have the right to take such a stand because we are a *literary* publication, and appeal almost exclusively to college men; college men whom Emerson, James, and Wilson believe to be worthy trustees of the Ideals of Democracy.

If intellectualism is our offence, we are proud to plead guilty of it. And if our critics consider this to be treason, we feel sorry for their powers of critical judgment.

—P. A. A.

**T**HE CASE for the American Drama sways back and forth like a pendulum. Lovers of the art behind the footlights often become so discouraged, that the rare enthusiasms of the critics fail to lure them from the domestic cigar or mending or bridge-playing. But now and then some play or group of players cajoles them out of their resentment, and they begin to see glimmerings of a saffron, majestic dawn over the dark American stage.

It seems as if we get these insinuations of a glowing future, not from the conventional stage, with its rose-

festooned interior sets that would make even the esthetics of a butcher feel dubious, but always from some independent theatrical organization, like the Portmanteau Players and the little theaters, which have the courage of their convictions, and dare offer the public something frankly artistic or literary, perhaps both. Such experiments the general public, as distinguished from the appreciative minority, is free to take or leave; and it is a good sign, not so much for the experiments as for the public, that they have been successful. People enjoy Shaw and Dunsany when presented by artists.

One production which may mark an epoch in the drama is the *Medea* of Euripedes as presented by Maurice Browne. It is undoubtedly a stupendous thing. The striking color effects, gained largely through off-stage lighting, and the majestic simplicity of line in the setting, make Belasco stage effects comparatively mediocre. The Gordon Craig doctrine has come into its own in the *Medea*. The work of the Chorus is perfect; in rhythm, movement and voice-music it leaves nothing to be desired.

The *Medea* will probably not be popular with the average audience. It is too magnificent and consistently tense for the "pleasure" that the American public as a whole demands in its drama. But those who get anything at all from it,—get everything.

The Wisconsin Forum was responsible for bringing the Little Theater to Madison. Better drama, live, thought-stimulating drama, is one of the ideals of this courageous institution. There seems to be an idea among the suspiciously-minded of the University that any organization which stands quite frankly and sincerely for "that continual and fearless sifting and winnowing, by which alone the truth can be found," must be anarchistic and unqualifiedly devoted to whatever is extreme. But the Portmanteau and Washington Square Players, and the Little Theater of Chicago, have not only failed to outrage anyone's sensibilities along any line, but have opened the eyes of many of us to what the drama can really do in the hands of idealistic craftsmen. Putting the University students in touch with true drama, true esthetically and artistically, is only one of the aims of the Forum in its program of helping them to think honestly and clearly, without the befuddling of issues through conventionality—which is often another word for cowardice.

—M. K.

#### EDITORS

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AGNES DURRIE  
ERNEST L. MEYER

## The New Poetry: A Critique

(This paper was the result of an all day frolic with myself one summer Sabbath. Since then I have been made to realize, through a chastisement administered by Harriet Munro in the colyum of *B. L. T.* and the viva voce rebukes of students and colleagues in Madison, that there are some things that some people had better take in the proper spirit, or not take at all. Its present publication is an act of penance, or possibly defiance, that I may suffer to the full the punishment that waits on stupidity—whether my own or other folks'.—THE AUTHOR.)

I'M GOING to write something about the Imagists. Not that I particularly want to—for my leisure is scant and there are many great books still unread on my shelves. But that I ought to—for I seem to be the only human being in America who understands them, their one authentic prophet. Perhaps there is compensation in doing one's duty.

But the Imagists will renounce me as their prophet. They will say, first, that I have not read *all* the Imagist poems—God forbid that I should. They will say, too, that I *don't* understand them—God help me, I've tried to.

They will *certainly* say that I confuse the divine Imagists with their secular imitators. I have in mind, however, nothing less than the authentic membership as officially recorded by Mr. Aldington in the magazine *Greenwich Village*, July 15, 1915, and as extensively discussed and illustrated in *The Egoist*, for May 1, 1915. These hierophants of the New Poetic Dispensation are ten in number (the muses were but nine) and well distributed in sex and nationality:

### American

Mr. Ezra Pound (High Priest)  
H. D. (Miss *nominis umbra*)  
Mr. Fletcher  
Mr. Williams  
Miss Lowell

### English

Mr. Aldington (Keeper of the Scrolls)  
Mr. Flint  
Mr. Lawrence  
Mr. Upward  
Miss Sinclair

That every name, save two, on the sacred roll is humble homespun Anglo-Saxon should not make that roll the less magniloquent of performances high, strange, and immortal.

They will say, finally, that I'm a professor, an academic pedant, with my eyes in the back of my head looking into the past, with my ears on the horizontal listening to admonitions from the critic graves of Aristotle, Quintilian and Scaliger, and to verses of Pope and those awful mid-victorians who sang "In Memoriam" and "Saul." And to this charge, inevitable and serious, I must premise a defense. What is a professor, in any field? Why, simply a man so interested in a particular phase of art or science that he makes it his life-work to examine and to master it. He is the one above all who knows causes, values, tendencies; he above all is in a position to distinguish fact from folly, the permanent from the ephemeral, shape from shadow, and (on occasion) beauty from buncombe. I suspect "The Man in the Street" who answers the professor of political economy merely by calling him a professor—is in truth merely giving expression to his helpless irritation; and I suspect the Futurist, the Imagist, the Vorticist, the Twistist, and any other Cyst (a cyst: "any abnormal sac in which morbid matter may be collected and retained". *Standard Dictionary*) is in precisely the same situation. I may be an unappreciative ignoramus in poetry—but, in spite of, not *because* I'm a professor of literature. Yet that the knife of this charge may be completely blunted, I shall make a confession. On the "Popular Reading List," prepared last spring for our university undergraduates by a committee of the English Department, the Imagists will find their own prize volume "Some Imagist Poets." "Why did you put that in?" I asked of a member of the committee, as I turned over the pamphlet at the University Club. "Oh, 'The Stranglers' (a student group who meet once a week to read one another to sleep out of their own or other ultramodern versicles) 'The Stranglers' have been reading it, and we ought to concede something to student taste." Thus even some Professors have been hoodwinked. No, if I'm a dull old fogey, let the Imagists not brand-mark me professor.

Once more, before going after them, let it be clear that I have no personal dislikes. Doubtless, I'd enjoy a game of billiards with a male Imagist, and an afternoon's canoeing with a female Imagist,—as long as I talked with the former on the flavor of cigars, and with the latter on the sunset or Morris chairs or tatting, and with neither on poetry. But under no conditions would I either poison or stab an Imagist. Man or woman, each would be treated by me with that self-possessed urbanity and that tactful kindness with which the alienist always treats the mentally unbalanced.

## II

Perhaps our examination should begin with a definition, especially as that is the academic tradition. Myself I may not define the indefinable. But the Imagists are voluminous propagandists, in essay and preface. Manifestos are their forte: they are as expert with syllogisms as with imagisms. Into their prose pronouncements go, moreover, the same *elan* and the same picturesqueness as into their verse. And one of them so defines: "Imagism: a form of expression, like the Japanese, in which an image is the resonant heart of an exquisite moment." If the printer finds space, let him repeat this below, thus:

## Imagism

A form of expression  
Like the Japanese  
In which  
An Image is  
The resonant heart  
Of an exquisite  
Moment

Here, then, is both definition and illustration; analysis and poem. Here is the image, the allusiveness, the compactness, the rhythm, the elimination of rhyme and all unnecessary flubdub, even to punctuation, that I find in all Imagists *qua* Imagists. For be it admitted, once for all, that the Cult doesn't always breed true to type, and that sometimes Imagists, ceasing to be such, do write good verse, and deserve honorable mention as respectable, hard-working minor poets. Another cue is at hand in a "Book of Don'ts for Beginners in Imagism" prepared by Ezra Ounce. I read, for example, "Don't use such an expression as 'dim lands of peace': it dulls the image". *Vive l' image!* In fine, let's have no more factitious tickling of the emotions by words that convey mere mood and idea—let us get, as in reality, our emotions by realizing the object, as such, in all its angles, lights, shadows, sounds. Mr. Ounce would unquestionably cite Wordsworth's line,

"The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep"  
as imagery, but bad imagery, child of an outworn mythology; the next,

"No more shall grief of mine the season wrong,"  
as (besides containing a clumsy inversion) a superfluous statement of a subjective state; the next,

"I hear the echoes through the mountains throng,"  
as superfluous in its reference to the percipient speaker (for do not "mountain" and "echo" contain all the sense symbolism?); but the last,

"The winds come to me from the fields of sleep,"  
as triumphantly illustrating the very vice of "dim lands of peace": "the fields of sleep" dulls the image. Read the four lines together:

"The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;—  
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong:  
I hear the echoes through the mountains throng,  
The winds come to me from the fields of sleep."

"Voila" (the Imagists, who are clever at French phrases, would say), "*Voila tout. Fanfaronnade execrable, mes enfants.*" And yet I find myself murmuring still on lonely walks at night,

"The winds come to me from the fields of sleep"  
. . . "the fields of sleep . . . the fields of sleep".—*Mesdames et messieurs, je vous en prie.* . . .

But Erasmus Darwin, grandfather poet-scientist of the author of *The Origin of Species*, in the quaint prose Interlude between Canto I and II of his *Loves of the Plants*, has the following. The Poet in the dialogue, answering the Bookseller's puzzled query, "In what, then, consists the difference between Poetry and Prose," expounds: "Next to the measure of the language, the principal distinction appears to me to consist in this; that Poetry admits of but few words expressive of very abstract ideas, whereas Prose abounds with them. And as our ideas derived from visible objects are more distinct than those derived from the objects of our other senses, the words expressive of these ideas belonging to vision make up the principal part of poetic language. That is, the Poet writes principally to the eye." . . . Except for the traditional heresy on "the measure of the language," the old-fashioned Erasmus seems to have anticipated the doctrine that gives the modern cult of the Imagists its asserted novelty and its imposing name, and I suggest to all Imagists a more thorough-going study of his works.

Their manifestos are prettily adorned with occult references to Japanese poetry and criticism, with much expenditure of printer's ink in spelling out exotic-looking syllables in ki, ka, and ko. They are, indeed, in their verses, very skilful in the artistic use of the exotic. Which seems strange. For what is the psychology of the exotic but the generation of a mood—wistful, far, romantic—and is this, is this a poetic effect induced in the delighted reader's mind by their one poetic cathartic, the image?—which is

"The resonant heart  
Of an exquisite  
Moment."

Much do they murmur no less of Sappho, Villon, and Catullus—an hexameter, by the way, but let it stand: the Imagists have already turned prose into

verse; so why should their prophet not use verse for prose? But let me at least print it properly:

'Much do they murmur no less of Sappho, Villon, and Catullus.'

I don't see exactly why. Unless the names be to their ears somewhat unfamiliar and exotic. Unless, perhaps, because these poets are by literary tradition the conventional names in use among people who talk about lyric poetry and the resonant hearts of exquisite moments. But, then, the Imagists abhor the conventional and all literary traditions. Certainly, the Lyric Three (like the Imagists, I find something impressive in capitals), the Lyric Three were scarcely Imagists. I suspect not one Imagist in a dozen can read Greek, Old French, or Latin (however insistently they tell us of the scholarship of this or that neophyte in their Mysteries). All that Sappho, Villon, and Catullus are, the Imagists are not—in fact that is why they art Imagists. For the moment (exquisite or otherwise to the Imagists), let us compare merely the approach to the subject matter of lyric discourse, the kind of attack, as observable in Sappho, Villon, and Catullus, and in the Imagists. How does Sappho approach her subject matter, whether it be the Lover's poignant sensations when seated beside the beloved, or a Prayer to Aphrodite, or the Time of the Evening Star? How does Villon approach his, whether *The Long Dead Ladies* or his *Last Will and Testament*? How does Catullus approach his—the *Tomb of his Brother in the Troad*, the *Return to Sirmio*, *Lesbia's Sparrow*, or the *Epithalamium for his friends Manlius and Vinia*? How? Why, as every great poet, in so far as he is great. How? By coming directly toward it, eye to eye. By meeting it at close quarters, erectly, vigorously, confidently. By striking blow on blow. But such is not the way of the Imagists. No, that is too brutal, too obvious, too commonplace. "We Imagists" (they would say) "are not butchers. The arena in which we attack and master our themes is of a more delicate atmosphere. We are not ordinary *gladiatores*; we are rather to be likened to the *retiarii*, who conquered their adversaries through backing off and entangling by the cast of a net." Indeed, they sidle up to their theme, they dodge and they duck; they tickle it with the spine of an acanthus leaf on its palms, they prod it with a twisted ribbon of cloud or with a star-ray or with a Bird-of-Paradise feather under its arm pits; they blow a little scented breath into its hair—and run off. For the deed is done—the poem is written. Now this may be new art, better art,—but why, then, talk more of Sappho, Villon, and Catullus?

[Note.—I had suspected that this repeated reference to Sappho-Catullus was in fact based merely on that

one most familiar stanza of Sappho's—translated by Catullus—which describes in verbs of such exactness and poignancy the dazed Lover's physical sensations,—exact and poignant terms for physical sensations being a cardinal principle among Imagists (see below). The stanza is besides, in Catullus' Latin, very easy reading—

Lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artus  
flamma demanat, sonitu suo  
tintinant aures geminae, teguntur  
Lumina nocte.

with all the verbs (as in Caesar's *Commentaries* of the more classically trained Imagists' schooldays) in the third person indicative. The suspicion has since been confirmed by finding this very Latin stanza (and *only* this) admiringly quoted in an article on *The Imagists* by their Keeper of the Scrolls. (i. e. Mr. Aldington).]

As well talk of Burns, Wordsworth, or even Walt Whitman.

The *New Poetry Cult* does, for a fact, talk of Bryant. Poor old Bryant. He was living a quiet, grand old life, like Memnon's statue in far Egypt's sun, breathing high music in our poet-dawn, until the other evening good Miss Munro told a Chicago audience of rapt ladies in their summer fluffs that she had been re-reading him that very afternoon—and that he wouldn't do at all. Of course not. I know too. For it happens that (for my own purposes) I myself reread during this past year all his verse—yes reread it four times. There was, I found, a wide vision of the race of man and of the forces of nature, delicate observation of childhood, bird, flower, and furry creature, many deep and austere tones voicing universal griefs and joys, phrases and rhythms so simple and true, so close to the way all men (except Imagists) would talk if they could, that I realized how stupid I had been, even before I got wind of Miss Munro's ultimatum to his reputation. So I must take down from my study wall the grandiose profile, engraved from the famous Sarony photograph, with its shaggy brows over the keen eyes, and its white beard and its flowing cloak. But the frame I'll keep, if some representative Imagist will give me his own (or preferably her own) profile for remembrance and inspiration. For my world is getting pretty dreary.

But let me make an end of irony. Irony is dangerous in writing of the Imagists. It is too easily mistaken. The other day I was two thirds through an essay in *The Little Review* on the advantages of "free verse" by Mr. Ficke before I remarked its humorous purpose.



And I'm not the most obtuse of men, either. But I had just been reading much bona fide stuff that was only a degree less ridiculous. Why should I not have been taken in? Or was that, too, irony—and is the whole movement a concerted joke on the part of a set of wags with plenty of leisure for elaborate, intellectual tom-foolery? Were those Futurist paintings, as the "Woman Descending a Staircase" (which looked like an explosion in a shingle factory), likewise a joke—or is the Caucasian played out, in this new birth of pseudo-orientalism, these Japanese fans and Circas-

sian tea-trays made into printed poems, these fantastic Persian rug effects hung up in our art galleries for paintings? Yes, I fear the New Art expects itself to be taken seriously. So from now to the end of the chapter I'll be serious with it. *Paulo maiora canamus.*

—WILLIAM ELLERY LEONARD.

(Note: Mr. Leonard's Critique will be concluded in the January issue of the Wisconsin Literary Magazine.)

## The End of the Charm

AS ALLAN came up the steps on to the dark porch, May-Louise was standing in the doorway, the lamplight shining luridly through her red hair and leaving the rest of her face in shadow. That peculiar article of feminine apparel known as the Balkan blouse had just reached the secluded village of Hattenville, and May-Louise's blouse was Balkan in the extreme. She had on baby-doll shoes and a loud-colored skirt and a loud-colored hair-ribbon, and everything she wore seemed a little bit soiled. In high-pitched tones she requested Allan to come up and sit down on the porch.

"I reckon I will," was the hearty response. Allan also had the South Mississippi twang, that softened in his voice to an agreeable drawl.

"We was baling corn silage at the farm today, with me feeding the press, and it like to run the fool out of me. I'm dead tired!"

What momentous results often come from small beginnings! A pistol shot at Sarajevo set the world ablaze with war. Perhaps events were to go as they did that night because Allan got a bad start so early in the evening.

"Oh, you selfish thing!" exclaimed May-Louise with a pout. "I thought you wanted to sit with me! And all you want is to rest yoh' lazy bones—"

"But I do want to sit with you, honey." This with a half-grin.

"Don't call me honey," she snapped contrarily, tossing her head. All girls with thin necks wear neckless waists. May-Louise was no exception to this rule.

Allan was in no way abashed. His sense of humor was tickled by the deliciousness of his *faux-pas*.

"Oh, well, let's sit down anyhow," he smiled.

"No, I don't want to. Besides, we'll be late for the party if we don't start now. Wait, I'll get my shawl."

When she reappeared, a wrap about her shoulders,

she seemed to have forgotten her huff, for she chatted gaily about the doings of the village younger set. The two walked down the hard clay path which was called a sidewalk, crossed the railroad tracks, and went on through the town, past the drugstore with its crowd of loafers outside along the covered walk, past the dark bank, and the blacksmith shop, lit redly from its glowing forge. Hattenville boasted no sidewalks outside the business districts, and so the couple now took to the middle of the street, because it was unsafe to cut across lots on account of gullies and stumps. The waxing moon shone softly, illumining the dusty road, and touching with light and shade the low cottages, the gullied streets, the bare hillsides of the straggling saw-mill town, trying to transform it into what it could never be—a thing of beauty.

May-Louise kept up a steady stream of what she considered sprightly conversation, punctuated by intervals of silent and rapid jaw-movement. She was using Spearmint that evening. Allan became vaguely conscious that as a sport gum-chewing was more pleasant to the actual participant than to the bystander. Since May-Louise was one of the principal California Fruit consumers of the community, it was a wonder that he endured her. Indeed, he himself could not have told why he "went with her." She was as good, in her class, as the town afforded; that much must be said. And the two had always gotten along very, very well. Half-listening, he walked by her side, holding her arm, the better to guide her along their perilous path. His twenty-dollar suit of hand-me-downs, bought of Nathan Cohen, could not conceal the fact that he was well set up; and even with a neck-shave he was good-looking. His face would have seemed immobile if it had not been for the intent, searching look in his dark eyes. But maybe that look was there because he had to pick his way so carefully through the young canyons of the village street.

"An' Melvin Stone an' Jennie Stark," his lady rattled on, "went by this string of box-cars—it was pitch dark—and just then there was a noise in front of 'em—"

At this juncture the narrator tripped over a dark mass which she had taken for a shadow. Her shriek was mingled with a squeal and a volley of grunts from the dark mass, which lurched to its feet and scuttled off down the road. May-Louise clung in terror to her escort, who was laughing in his quiet way.

"Why May-Louise Higgins," he soothed, "that wasn't nothin' but an old hawg."

"I don't care, it scared me. Darned old pig! What'd it want to lay right in my way for?" Now she was trying to be cute and coquettish.

Laughter echoed around them, and they realized that other guests hurrying to Maggie Tate's "doings" had seen and enjoyed the incident. They were now approaching the Tate's. The various couples got through the rickety gate somehow (no two gates in Hattenville have the same kind of catch), and proceeded to the house, entering directly into the front parlor, where the entire assembly had gathered.

The room was full of people and furniture, both of about the same grade. Prominent among the heavier objects were a battered piano and Mrs. Tate. That lady was seated in the doorway to the dining-room, with the guests ranged in chairs along the wall at each side of her, the whole giving the effect of a bulky enshrined Chinese idol with its subsidiary josses. Graven images were about as lively as these young people, too. Most of the boys made remarks with an evident effort, and the girls replied chiefly by giggling. A young people's gathering in a southern backwoods village is a very frivolous affair.

Maggie Tate fluttered up nervously to greet the newcomers, who laid aside their hats, etc., in adjoining rooms, returned to the parlor, and took seats. Then a ghastly silence fell upon the company.

"Let May-Louise play the piano," suggested some bright spirit.

"Yes, yes, come on, May-Louise," a chorus set up. "And let's dance," added Tom Wilts, a village gallant, in an effort to appear devilish. He was quelled by a look from old Mrs. Tate. The bare mention of the word 'dancing' was forbidden in her house. The desire to have May-Louise play grew apace, and that artiste finally allowed herself to be coaxed on to the stool before the tin-panny old piano.

Of May-Louise's playing, the less said the better. Suffice it to explain that she furnished the music at the Dixie Theater on Saturday nights, rendering "He's a Devil in His Own Home Town" while the crowd watched with bated breath a stirring episode of "The

Mystery of the Gripping Clutch." Her method of playing was to attack the instrument and give it a fight for its life, the combat being governed by packing-house rules. And yet a crowd now clustered about the piano and appeared to derive pleasure from May-Louise's efforts. Allan was at her side, leaning against the piano in a careless and unstudied way that showed to advantage his well-built body. But he did not appear to share in the general enthusiasm over his girl's musical talent. Indeed, his thought at the moment was: "Man, man, I wish she wouldn't pound so hard and pay more attention to what she was playing!"

"Now I'll do the Hesitation Blues," announced Miss Higgins. "I'm just natchally crazy 'bout that song." She went through the Hesitation Blues time and again, increasing her speed all the time, until the effect reminded Allan of Number 4 tearing along the down-grade to Flint Creek. Just then May's express-train struck a de-rail in the shape of some difficult chords and came to awful grief. It seemed as if all the cars had telescoped and rolled into the ditch, and the tender had landed on top of the engine.

"Oh, darn it!" she exclaimed pettishly. "That's just the hardest place!"

"Go on, May-Louise! Start over again," urged her loyal audience, as the last echoes of the catastrophe died away.

But May-Louise had seen Allan jump when the crash came, and she was in no mood to go on. Giving the keys an irritated bang with the palm of her hand, she jumped up and joined a group at the far end of the room, and the party had to look for other amusement.

So they played post-office, and guessing hands, and touch-me-not. But there was no kissing in these pastimes; Mrs. Tate's sense of moral rectitude would not allow that. Instead of the customary osculation the couples would go for a short walk in the front yard. Anyone who has never indulged in these denatured diversions has no idea what highly innocuous things they really are. A kissing game without any kissing has about as much kick to it as a whiskey-and-soda without any whiskey.

May-Louise went with Allan several times on a short-course promenade, and although she kept up a high-pressure flow of chatter, it seemed to her that Allan was silent and moody. To tell the truth, Allan was disgusted—with the party, with those present at the party, with himself, with May-Louise, with everything. He was accomplishing a rather unusual thing: although he had never known anything else, he was sensing dimly the vacant barrenness of the surroundings in which he passed his days, and of which the

party was the type and climax. But because he had never known anything different, he could not interpret or justify his feeling. All he knew was that an unreasoning wave of loathing was surging up within him.

However, this loathing was temporarily lulled by that agent which has quelled many stronger emotions—food; for a halt was called in the hilarity at this juncture, and refreshments were served. Mrs. Tate "sure knew how to get things together;" and while consuming cake and sherbet the boys laid aside their goggle-eyed embarrassment, the girls their simpering vacuity, and in the words of the village paper, a good time was had by all.

After the refreshments, cards were proposed. Mrs. Tate regarded a deck of cards with Kings and Queens and Jacks as an instrument of the Devil, but she saw nothing wrong with other packs which had no face cards and were divided into colors instead of suits. The difference certainly was not apparent to the casual observer, but it soothed Mrs. Tate's conscientious scruples, and everyone else seemed satisfied. Now an amicable game of cards would naturally be the very thing to adjust the strained relations already apparent between Allan and May-Louise. Unfortunately, it brought the difference between the two to a startling crescendo.

As they were proceeding to their table, May-Louise sidled up to Allan and whispered stridently:

"I know a way to beat that old Joe Hicks and Maggie Tate. We'll just signal to each other. When I'm strong in Black, I'll put my finger on the tip of my nose. My right eye'll be for Red, and my left for Green, and my chin for Yellow, and when I chew my gum—like this—it means I want to know what you're strong in. See?"

Allan made no reply, and May considered the thing settled. The two couples seated themselves at the table, and cards were dealt. Immediately May began to dab furtively at some portion of her countenance. She was signaling Black. Allan gave no sign, and when his turn came, coolly bid in Red. May's brow clouded and her form stiffened. Nor were her outraged feelings calmed when Allan failed to take the necessary tricks and the couple found themselves deep in the hole, with little prospect of getting out.

On the second deal May had scarcely taken up her cards when she began chewing her gum with vigor and abandon, the while she cast meaning glances at Allan. But Allan seemed blind—and deaf—at the moment to everything but Maggie Tate, and consequently the only result of May's masticatory efforts was a remark from Joe Hicks, who spoke as follows:

"I swear, May-Louise, you go at that gum as if

every chew was goin' to bring you a doll-baby done up in blue ribbon!"

"She sure is a gum-chewin' poor thing," Miss Tate chimed in.

"Y'all hush," said May coquettishly. But there was a hard note in her voice.

Miss Tate bid in Green and made a little slam.

On the third round there was a renewed outburst of gum-chewing on May's part immediately after she had scrutinized her hand, but Allan remained lost in contemplation of his own cards. Beside herself, May lifted her foot and gave Allan a sub-table tap on the shins. Seeing that Allan stirred not at all, she repeated the tap again and yet again, throwing more energy into the thing each time, until the most impartial observer would have admitted that the third essay was very much in the nature of a kick. It got results, too, Allan hunched himself up in his chair, looked his partner in the eye, and drawled:

"For the Lord's sake, May, cut it out! What you want to be jabbin' and kickin' me for? I ain't studyin' about your crazy signals!"

There ensued a moment of electric tension. Miss Tate giggled nervously, and Mr. Hicks guffawed. May-Louise sat petrified, her mouth open, her foot poised beneath the table in the act of administering another reminder. Then she slammed her cards down, jumped to her feet, bleated "Allan Pringle, I'll never speak to you again as long as I live!" and rushed from the table.

Thruout the room the hum of conversation and the slap of cards died down, and curious eyes were turned toward the scene of the "ruction".

"Gee, Allan," Maggie Tate accused, "you've made her awful mad!"

"I don't care," was Allan's rather uneasy reply. "She was cheatin', or tryin' to and she had no business to do it." (Maggie looked surprised. She had often 'signaled' herself, and had thought nothing of it). "How are we going to play with only three of us?" was Allan's matter-of-fact query.

"I'll get Mama to finish the game with you."

"All right, I'll play with her all the rest of the time, if it's all right with her."

So Allan played a rather absent-minded game with Mrs. Tate for the rest of the evening. Which was not long, because the party presently ran its hectic course. Someone suggested that it was getting late, and soon there was a bustle and confusion of leave-taking and departure. From the room where the girls had left their wraps appeared Miss Higgins, looking very tragic. She slipped out to the porch, after a plaintive good-night to Maggie Tate, and Allan fol-

(Continued on page 73)

## Verse

## THE WINDS' PLAYTHING

Thou art so like me, little pale brown leaf  
 Fallen from the bough wheron thy birth was sung  
 By many melodious throats, and thou hast hung  
 A trembling joy all summer long. How brief  
 Our bliss was! O thou little dead dry leaf,  
 Forlorn, forsaken of thy native bower,  
 The very mem'ry is dim of that rapt hour  
 Amid the voice of bird and honey-thief.

Thou, like a wayside phantom dreary, blown  
 By the chill breath of autumn, hurried on  
 Till at last winter in his mantle wide  
 Of snow shall fold thee softly. Then, alone,  
 A joyless wanderer, I, still denied  
 The rest, still wayfaring.—Where shall I hide?  
 —SHIGEYOSHI OBATA.

## THE PASSING.

(Dedicated to Josephus Daniels.)

The old gods are dying fast,  
 One and all, they go:  
 One by one I see them pass  
 With feeble step and slow;  
 But the one god, the young god,  
 Thou of the bound brow,  
 Bacché, thou laughing god,  
 Must thou go, too?

The old creeds are worn away,  
 One by one they fall:  
 Each hath had its little day—  
 Out of mode are all;  
 But the bright creed, the light creed,  
 Communion of the brew,  
 Bacché, thy merry creed,  
 Must that pass, too?

The old joys are going hence,  
 The old songs grow few—  
 Man counts his hoarded pence,  
 Gives not joy her due.  
 But the gay song, the May song,  
 The vine-sap and the brew,  
 Bacché, thy living song,  
 Must that die, too?

—CLIFFORD F. GESSLER.

## THE DREAM CANDLE

Away from the dark and petulant night  
 I have rushed,  
 Where the winds rage, and mists arise  
 Above my home.  
 Here have I fled, and yet—  
 Am I alone?

Gracefully drips the wax of the candle,  
 In ribboned rows it freezes  
 Like the icicles without my window.  
 The smooth-rising flame arouses the room from blank-  
 ness  
 And dark, musty black are the shadows it forms.  
 The candle, alive and radiant, sheds friendship abroad  
 And peoples the corners with figures.  
 Singing whispers about me I hear  
 And vaguer breaths of swishing spirits  
 Whose names and senses are known to none but one—  
 This wavering, shade-spurning Dream Candle.  
 And this I know—that I'm not lonely now.

—DOROTHY E. BRIDGE.

## THE BIRTHRIGHT

He drew the bow across the strings once more,—  
 Then let it sink,  
 And listened to the fleeing waves of sound  
 That whispered mockingly,  
 And taunted him.  
 They whispered of a song-created soul,  
 And told aloud a tale of talent bound,  
 Imprisoned by the years of weariness;  
 They told of toil that smothered life  
 And dried the fountains of his youth,  
 That cramped his brain and hand,  
 And broke the fine tense links  
 Between his spirit and the world.  
 His hand had carved his name and set it high:  
 He, only, knew the birthright of his soul  
 Had been withheld.  
 Within the throng of stifled lives, he walks,  
 And wonders in his heart if God is wise.

—EVE KNOWER.

## KORLAH.

The eyes of Korlah, like a half-lit stage,  
Are filled with dreams and dusk and shadowy things.  
Who knows what fragrance of some ancient age  
Still underneath those drowsy eyelids clings?

She speaks as would the dusty Sphinx aroused—  
Old inenarrable, cryptic melodies—  
Songs of an unseen, weary singer housed  
In incensed temple by the sleepy seas.

Ah Korlah! Korlah! If the mist should rise,  
And I should see beneath the veil—to thee—  
Should I still love those twilight-haunted eyes—  
Or shrink as from the cobra's mystery?

—MARJORIE KINNAN.

## PRESAGE

The sunburned rocks still scorch and glare and bake,  
The tired Earth-mother suffers poignant pain  
Within her womb. She seeks surcease in vain;  
Mysterious sufferings stir and vaguely ache.  
The wheat fields lift their slender finger tips  
In suppliant prayer to heaven to ease the load;  
Down by the marsh there runs a thirsty road,  
The rushes yearn for rain's sweet soothing lips.  
At last relief descends with freshening breath,  
The earth inhales the sweetness of the sky,  
A grey shroud comforts with its softening veil,  
A resurrected earth smiles out from death—  
An earth pregnant with life and in travail.  
The marsh grass whispers as the winds go by.

—JANET DURRIE.

## THE LULLABY.

Death sang a lullaby to me,  
A little plaintive crooning as of wind  
Tangled like cobwebs in a tree,  
With storm-swept hill and wavering stars behind.

O dim, caressing melody,  
Have you forgotten how I slipped away,  
And laughing, would not list to thee—  
Too much in love with life and mirth, to stay?

I left you humming in the night,  
And when some other traveler came by,  
Him you seduced with veiled twilight.  
It must have been some other—'twas not I.

—MARJORIE KINNAN.

## SOLDIERS

I saw some soldiers drill today;  
Two dozen big strong men were they,  
That trod the ground as soberly  
As if the putting down of feet  
Meant more to them than food to eat.  
As if the putting down of feet  
So firmly on the sunlit street  
Meant more to them than lust of blood,  
Meant more to them than killing could;  
As if the putting down of feet,  
In measured steps, precise and neat  
Could blot corruption from a war  
And make them into men once more.  
—R. D. JAMESON.

## CRY PRIMITIVE.

Ho! The tearing of the dripping flesh,  
The steaming meat—warm,  
The warm smell of entrails,  
Oozing of the good-tasting juice  
Around the gums.—Good!

Good!

Ugh! The drawing up of the cold water,  
Sucking up of the clear spring water,  
Chest upon the broken limbs, the grass,  
Rough feel of the earth upon the skin,  
Hands clutching the grass,  
Deep swallows of the cold water.—Ah! Good!  
Good!

Ah! The warm panting of round breasts,  
And fast beating beneath of the heart,  
The hot breath against the face,  
Red lips, burning cheeks, eyes like the night-fires,  
Twining of white arms, heaving of round breasts.—  
Good!

Good!

Ho! The straining of sweaty bodies,  
Flash of the yellow axe in the sun,  
Clutch of the fingers deep in the throat,  
Clash and fire of the blue stone,  
Thud of the blue stone buried in hair.—Good!  
Good!

A-A-y! Flaming of the black sky,  
Roaring and loud stamping,  
Crash of the falling forest,  
Howl of the wind, sweep of the rain,  
Blinding stroke of the thunder-flame—Good!

Good!

—B. B.

## War and Temperament

**I**N WRITING a story, the habit has become alarmingly prevalent to end with the marriage of either the hero to the heroine, or the heroine to the hero. If the ceremony does not actually take place, a more or less affectionate scene on the moonlit terrace or in the odoriferous rose-garden is appropriate. However, if there is no heroine to be had, for the bride in this unique case is only incidental, perhaps the departure from custom may be pardoned. The marriage takes place first of all.

They were married; not excessively, but perhaps as much as the average. It was not an affair calculated to arouse throes of ecstasy in the aesthetic mind. The bridegroom was not the great lover, but then, he was not properly inspired. And his occupation did not nourish his higher sensibilities, at least not to any marked extent. He held a high position in the slaughter-house of a meat-packing concern. He stood on a platform, and when the hogs came, shrieking with anticipation, to his outstretched arms, he poked them scientifically, and they shrieked no more. Exalted thoughts never obtruded themselves upon him. They left him strictly alone.

The girl, whom he had wooed was just the proper girl for him to marry. Selfishness was the key-note of her nature; conventionality, a fetish. She talked a great deal, but said very little, and the hardest worked word in her vocabulary was "ain't". At the time of the marriage, she was violently, alarmingly, patriotic. He, like so many others of his kind, saw nothing to be excited about. She could be very obstinate when she chose, and she had decided that, if the marriage were to take place, he must enlist in the army. She bullied him into it against his judgment, and she saw to it that the reporters were notified. As soon as the step was taken, she regretted it.

Behold the brawny figure of the eminent pig-sticker, arrayed in the omnipresent khaki. His bride, now that she has served our purpose in getting him into his costume, may depart in peace from these pages.

At one of our Universities, there lived the incarnation of enthusiasm. Not content with a single star, he hitched his wagon to each that came along, neglecting, like so many others, to watch always for wash-outs in the road. Emotional and impulsive, he was among the first to volunteer, when the president called for men. Impatient of delay, he was unwilling to wait to try for a commission, so he joined an infantry regiment as a private, and went blithely off to war.

At the training camp he met the ex-packing-house employe for the first time. The two men happened to

be in the same squad, and in time, such is the democracy of the service, the college man became a rather close friend of the representative of the proletariat. They bore the hardships of the training easily: the college man consciously, as a disagreeable means to a great end; the other, as a necessity imposed upon him. When they had absorbed a certain amount of knowledge, they left in a transport with a convoy of cruisers for the scene of action on the western front. The trip over was uneventful. No submarine paid them a visit. Nothing occurred to mar the serenity of their trip. After landing, an intermission ensued, filled with drills, reviews, and more training.

At last, however, their initiation into the realities of war took place. The American regiments were given a section of front line trenches to hold, relieving several gaunt and haggard regiments of Frenchmen.

The lives of the Americans promptly became filled with horrors, things which they had never imagined as a part of their own lives. The trenches of the enemy were only a few hundred yards distant, but the sector was very quiet. No attack by either side marred the monotony. When the rain poured down upon them, they stood in a miniature lake until the water slowly drained away. The college man was sickened by the conditions around him. He could bathe, not every day as he had been accustomed, but only on rare occasions. The food was course, and not always clean. Rats, vicious and fearless, abounded in the dug-outs, especially at night. Imagine, if you can, the unspeakable disgust and loathing which possessed him, when he discovered lice on his body. The thought of such a possibility had never entered his head, and when he did discover them, he was extremely sick for a time. He felt that he could never become clean again.

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Cleanliness had been a passion with him, but now he lived in what seemed to him filth.

Contempt had always risen in him on reading of attempted desertions from the army. Soon he began to feel a strong sympathy for deserters. It seemed to him that he could not endure the life much longer. It was very hard for him to eat, to sleep, even to exist at all.

The recruit from the stock-yards, on the other hand, bore up nobly under the scarcity of bathing facilities. He minded the dirt not at all. He was among the first to answer mess-call, and gobbled his food like an animal. He cursed energetically at the rats, incidentally adding some effective words to his vocabulary of invective, which was already awe-inspiring as to size. Blood did not bother him. In fact, it almost made him home-sick. The clamor of the artillery reminded him slightly of the familiar din of the pigs back in Chicago, an uproar comparable to few others in the world.

The same roar of the big guns nearly burst the eardrums of the college man. The friendship of the two men had dissolved into mutual contempt. The collegian abhorred the other's lack of care for his personal appearance. The former pig-sticker mistook the desire for cleanliness for effeminacy, and nervous tension for a senseless hysterical tendency.

In the days that followed, a second lieutenant in the regiment shot himself through the head in despair of bearing the awful conditions which surrounded them for an indefinite length of time. One man in their very company went crazy during the unending crash of an artillery engagement. The college boy feared that he might be going crazy. He lived mechanically, and his thoughts wandered. He slept but fitfully, eating at meal times because it was a habit. The great desire of his mind was to escape from the trenches. A wound, even death, would have been welcome to him.

Then, without warning, the thunder of the artillery became continuous. The blessed hours of comparative silence seemed never to return. For twenty-four hours there was not a single moment of silence. The boy was fast reaching the limit of his endurance. Each crash made him flinch and cringe. Sleep was impossible. He walked stiffly up and down, pressing both hands to his aching head. He was frantic, frenzied, losing his self-control.

An idea occurred to him. His rifle held several cartridges. One bullet through his hand and he would be useless for the service. How foolish not to have done it before! He snatched up his rifle, and hurried through the mud, until he came to an angle in the trench where he might be seen from one direction only. Now he placed his left wrist over the muzzle of the gun, and, holding the barrel steady with his knees, he reached down and pulled the trigger. The bullet tore

through his wrist, from which the blood spurted jerkily forth. He swung up the rifle, and pointed it over the parapet with his right hand. When the others glanced casually toward him, they saw nothing unusual, for his wounded arm was hidden from their sight. He knew that he must tear off his sleeve, which was burned by the powder so that the wound might not be obviously self-inflicted. Yet he did not do this at once. The significance of his act penetrated his dazed mind, and he was horror struck at the realization. He ran back to the dug-out, and with a shoe lacing hastily formed a stricture on his arm. As he finished his task, an officer stuck his head in the door. "An attack is ordered within an hour," he called. "Get ready for some real work now." Immediately everyone attempted to become very cheerful at the prospect of action.

The pig-sticker roused himself from a nap which he was enjoying and promptly noticed his comrade's wounded arm with its blackened sleeve. Its meaning quickly dawned on him.

"You low down yellow dog," he snarled. "You'll get stood against a wall for that, you high-browed baby. I knew damn well there was a crook in them silk under-cloes."

This sneering tirade drew no reply from the other, who lay stretched out on his bunk with closed eyes.

An hour later, the men stood before the ladders, with their bayonets fixed. Then with a shout, which, though it quavered slightly at first, grew into a full-throated roar, they sprang at the ladders, dashed up, and rushed on through the treacherous mud. The first man up, a young lieutenant, received a bullet in the throat and fell back onto the bayonets of his men. On ran the men toward that trench which lay so near, but yet too far for many of them. Among them, lumbered the man from the stock-yards. Many dropped at his side. He staggered a little as he ran uncertainly on. A bullet from the racing machine guns grazed his cheek, and he grasped at the furrow with an anguished howl, letting his rifle fall. It was too hot for his taste. A shell hole yawned before him, inviting him to be safe. He dove into it, snuggling against the front wall for shelter. There he lay, panting, whimpering, touching gingerly the scratch across his cheek.

The man from college mentioned his useless wrist to no one. When the order to attack was given, he was among the first to mount the parapet. No yell burst from his lips. His teeth were clenched, and he ran as had never run or tried to run before. Yet he, too, never reached the German trench which his comrades were so shortly to make American territory. He fell rather close to his goal, with four or five fatal wounds.

That night the moon looked down, as moons must

do, over the scene of the advance. The big guns were firing only occasionally, with long pauses of delicious way and I have bowed to convention; for in reality, silence between their outbursts. The form of the boy his lips were drawn back from his teeth in a savage volunteer sprawled where he had dropped. His face, snarl, and the momentum of that last plunge had bearing a smile for the first time in many long, long rammed his strained face into the black mud.)

days, was turned to the stars.

—LEON WILLIAMS.

## Born to Blush Unseen

I HAVE always tried to love Aunt Jenny; just as I try to love castor oil and mastoid operations and flannel nightgowns. They seem inevitable; and because they are necessary, I try to think affectionately of them. The theory seems all right, and I often wonder why it doesn't work. I should have been glad, willing and ecstatic to love Aunt Jenny, if it had ever seemed possible. But her theories on diet, her New Thought and her dog Peter have always been as dynamite to my nerves. It is all most unfortunate.

You see, the very necessity of making myself agreeable to her made it that much harder. In my easy-going existence I am a human marvel under circumstances where it doesn't make any difference at all. I missed my calling in not being a desert rose born to blush unseen. Although I am as plain as a clean sheet of paper, I feel that in a desert I would have been some blusher. But when duty calls I am a regular stick or a Missouri mule as regards my response. With Aunt Jenny I am a combination of both. For Aunt Jenny is the only person in the family with a few kopeks salted down, and I was the logical person to get them—if I had behaved myself. Aunt Jenny's kopeks wouldn't have made so much difference if I were the sort of person who could ever earn a living, honest or otherwise. But the very word "earn" makes me camp harder than usual in my rocking-chair. I should much prefer to have the ravens feed me manna. Icha-bod—or was it Isaiah—had nothing on me.

Do I sound morbid as I tell of it? I do want to keep my poise, no matter what happens; but I cannot but feel, under the circumstances, that my life and education have been wasted. I had counted so on the kopeks, and now that they have vanished like a sweet dream, I see that if the ravens don't feed me, God knows who will. I say that hopefully—I hope He does.

It all happened last Saturday when I had luncheon at Aunt Jenny's. I was nearly an hour late in arriving, and of course I was cross. I am seldom more than half an hour late. When Aunt Jenny floated across the hall to meet me, with her cold eyes glittering

angrily, I threw my muff across the room. That was hardly the thing to do, I thought afterwards.

"Don't say a word!" I cried. "I can't stand another thing!"

Aunt Jenny folded her thin hands (I never *did* like thin people) across her stomach, and pursed her lips smugly.

"If you would only listen to me, and take up New Thought, you wouldn't have any nerves. I never allow myself to show irritation. Come. Luncheon is ready."

As I looked at that table, my head swam. It was the last straw. I clutched at the chair for support. Mixed emotions are as upsetting as mixed drinks. There were boiled fish without sauce, bran muffins and beets. Fish—bran muffins—beets! If you knew how I loathe them! How I loathe each one—how I grow dizzy at the sight of all three together! The deadly combination had never happened to me before. But I might have known I would get it at Aunt Jenny's, along with New Thought, and Peter, who was rubbing his watery nose against my clean hand. Yes, I remembered that those were the pettest of her dietary pets. She was serving a most miraculously nutritious and calming lunch. Fish! Fish to eat; Aunt Jenny's eyes were fish's eyes; her mouth was the mouth of a carp, brought up on bran and beets and New Thought; even Peter smelled of the fish they had recently fed him. Fish!

And all the time I kept crooning to myself, "Oh God! I mustn't forget the kopeks! Oh God! I mustn't lose the kopeks!"

I was served. I took a huge mouthful of bran muffin, and swallowed it like a capsule. Then, desperately, I poked in some fish, for Aunt Jenny was watching me suspiciously. It simply would not go down. I felt as if I had been two days out on an ocean liner, with rough weather. I draped my napkin protectively across my face. Then I made a dive for my glass of water, gurgled happily, and was temporarily safe. The fish was down. After that, I felt privileged to dawdle. Aunt Jenny looked at me reprovingly as I played with the food on my plate.

"Are you playing marbles there?" she finally asked.



I begged her pardon, and laid down my fork.

"You don't mean to say that your finickiness extends to food, do you?" she demanded. "Are you refusing to eat my carefully prepared, nourishing dishes in my own house? I shall probably not live much longer, and I should appreciate a little courtesy."

Aunt Jenny has been pulling that one-foot-in-the-grave line for some twenty years, so it seems as if it were about time for it to be true. I smiled soothingly.

"Dearest Aunt, how could you think such a thing! I'm enjoying everything immensely. And I'm so glad to be here with you to-day."

I was glad; about as glad as I'd be at waking up in a crematory. I temporized by burying myself again in my glass of water. And then—then—the telephone rang, and Aunt Jenny was called upstairs to answer it.

How did I ever think to do it? I do not know. It seemed genius at first, but now I see that it was merely its close relation, madness. I looked at the platter in front of Aunt Jenny's plate, then at my plate. And with one eye on the door, I scooped up the fish on my plate and dumped it on the platter, where I messed it around until it could not be distinguished from its brethren. It was as much fun as making mud pies. When Aunt Jenny returned, I was scraping my plate with relish. She seated herself.

That woman is uncanny. I might have known—I

might have known! Do you know, there may be something in New Thought, after all. Her eyes turned instinctively to the platter. And as she froze, I froze too.

"Well!" she said, smooth and icy as lemon sherbet, "did you eat up the parsley, too, while I was gone?"

And there, innocent as a primrose by the river's brim, in the middle of the fish on the platter sat the one spray of parsley which Aunt Jenny had conceded to my artistic temperament, and which she had carefully arranged on my portion as she served me. If ever I wanted anything inside of me, it was that parsley. I might have known—oh!—I might have known!

Still eyeing the parsley, Aunt Jenny said, "The wanderer seems to have returned."

Then, New Thoughtfully calm, "Won't you at least have the decency to leave?"

And I left, with Peter getting in my way as I did so, wagging his scrawny tail against me. The big oak door banging sonorously shut behind me, sounded like the door of a vault closing—a vault in a bank which had many kopeks.

And as I wandered down the street, I wondered if the ravens *would* feed me. It seems to me I'm just as deserving—certainly as trusting—as Ichabod. Or was it Isaiah—

—MARJORIE KINNAN.

## And in the Beginning

I KNOW but can't you see I *won't* catch cold, an' I *won't* fall out, an' I *won't* stay out late. Hones' mother, sleigh rides 'er a lot different than they was—"

"*Were*, dear."

"Than they *were* when you went on 'em. Now," he waved his hand nonchalantly, "you just go out for a pleasant sociabul time with a nice *congenyul* bunch," he smiled sweetly, "an' you ride around for a little while, not until you 'almost freeze to death.' Of course not!" His tone was scornful. "Good heavens!" he burst forth. "Don't you think a fella can ever grow up to know what's good for him better than his family can know what is? Am I always going to be bossed around 'til I'm eighty? Gosh, you don't realize I'm about sixteen, an' I'm wearing long pants, an'—an' everything!"

He considered silently for a moment. Not much headway was being gained, and he knew it. His mother had reached the calm stage—the horrible, unperturbable stage that experience had taught him to dread.

"Oh, mother-r!" he wailed, unmanly tears in his eyes. "Please, plee-yeese! I don't see why I can't

go." Suddenly he swerved from emotion to reason. "Darn it! You freeze your foot on a sleigh ride about fifty years ago—so no sleigh rides for me! Uncle Ben gets heart trouble playing football—so no football for me! I can't do anything! Don't you see you *must* be wrong some of the time, because whenever I want to do a thing you just say 'no' whatever it is? Dorothy can do anything," he continued bitterly. "She can go out all she wants to, an' you don't say a word, an' she gets about twice the spending money I do."

"She *saves* her money," interpolated the mother.

"Saves—of course she saves! Who wouldn't if they got all the allowance she gets. Gee, I don't see what you want me around for," he shifted his weight woefully to one foot and looked out of the window. "You don't seem to give a darn about me. You never let me do anything." The tears were dropping freely now, and the mother was visibly weakening. Robert saw and rejoiced and was hopefully silent. Then, at this crucial point, at this moment when victory was in sight, his heart suddenly sank.

"My word!" said a tantalizing voice from the doorway. "Is that boy making you nervous again by his everlasting unreasonable arguing? Why don't you

simply tell him what to do and make him do it? If he were my son—"

"Shut up!" snarled Robert in a tone of honest hatred. "Thank the Lord I'm not your son, an'—"

"Robert! Don't be sacreligious, and don't speak to your sister in that manner," said mother weakly.

"My what a *sweet* disposition the boy has!" shrilled the sisterly voice as Dorothy passed through the living-room. She laughed with a superior air, mirthlessly. "I'm sure if he were—"

"Mother-r-r," wailed Robert anew, trying to make up for lost opportunity by eloquence. "Don't listen to her. Dad says she's too bossy, an' you know she's always butting in."

"Mother-r-r." He flung his arms about her neck and sprawled lankily onto her lap. "I've asked a *gurr!*" he whispered passionately in her ear. "Don't tell the fellas, will you?" He flushed painfully.

"Don't fer 'eaven's sake tell *her* or Dad either, please. I don't think I'll ever do it again anyway," he said, remembering the pain of it. "But you can see now how I *gotta* go."

"Mercy!" said the mother. "Of course you must go—but Robert, you! Old enough to invite a girl—why Robert, you're only fifteen. Mercy!" She looked at her flushed overgrown darling. "Why—Robert!" she repeated sadly, rather dazed.

"Gee, it was fierce, mother," Robert confided, giggling through his tears. "I'm never goin' to do it again. I didn't know how fierce it was to ask 'em, but you see I *gotta* go— this once."

"Yes, yes, of course," said the mother, still dazed.

"Fer 'eavens sake, don't tell Pete!" he said, turning back as he ambled nervously out of the room.

—MILDRED EVANS.

## Glamor

Characters:

The Scholar

The Youth

The Maiden

*Scene: The library of a scholar of the fifteenth century. Two high, narrow windows at the south end admit a fading light. A soft glow of the setting sun, faint and illusive, seems to linger about the small table with its slanting top and the stiff-backed chair pushed under it. Opposite the table is a closed door. A half-burned log smolders in the fire-place to the left, casting an occasional gleam of light upon the table at the center of the room upon which several manuscripts lie open. A slightly turned chair near it bespeaks a recent occupant. In the gathering shadows at the north end of the room the tall figure of a man is distinguished before the shelf of heavily-bound books. He takes down a ponderous volume and moves slowly with it towards the table. As he comes into the light, he is seen to be a man past middle age. The features, in spite of years of seclusion, are still strong and commanding. The eyes are deep-sunken. His long, dark robe enhances the pallor of his countenance. He lays the book on the table and slowly seats himself. He reads for a time then with a gesture of utter weariness, pushes the book from him and with a hand on either arm of the chair, rises and paces the room, his arms crossed on his breast. Then he speaks and his voice vibrates with the intensity of his feeling.*

The Scholar

Life, life! I have tried to fathom your meaning!

I have tried to send the piercing rays of knowledge into your dark abysses to illumine and to reveal. Naught but darkness confronts me. Blackness hangs like a pall about me and I stifle in its depths. My soul yearned for your secrets. I exalted in the joyous revelations that Mind was to lay bare before me. A void engulfs me. I grope and sink! Alone! Alone!

*(He raises his hands to his head and stands still near the table.)*

Mind, Mind! Where are thy treasures! The glorious vistas thou holdest out to Youth lead to an impenetrable Beyond, and self is lost in chaos!

*(He sinks into his chair. His head drops on his breast and a look of utter weariness ages his face and eyes. He sits motionless. Only his deep breathing betrays the struggle going on in his soul. Then he relaxes and a look of repose comes over his features.)*

The fire in the grate glows into vivid brightness. The lower end of the room seems bathed in warm sunlight. The sudden glow of light reveals a youth, strangely like the scholar, seated at the small table. A manuscript lies open before him. Eagerness for the treasures of knowledge suffuses his countenance. There is a subdued elation about him as he bends over the manuscript. The door opens softly and a maiden enters. She tiptoes into the room, her eyes bright, her cheeks flushed, her lips slightly parted. She puts her hands over his eyes and laughs gaily. The youth turns quickly and rises. He takes both her hands and kisses her. The maiden looks about her, and her expression becomes wistful.)

## The Maiden

These, all these, your possessions, mean so much to you? For days you forget there is a world—and forget me. I am afraid of these, dear. Sometimes in the night I start from sleep. I seem to see these, all these volumes and ancient manuscripts reaching out for you, drawing you ever closer to them until you seem to vanish in their midst and I shriek lest they hold you ever. Even when awake and sun shines upon me that feeling haunts me.

I shook the dew from a blossom this morning and told myself my fear was such as that—a phantom of the night that must fade with the approach of day.

*(The youth smiles at her slowly.)*

## The Youth

You are right, love. Such fears are phantoms of the night and they must pass with the night. This, (his gesture encompasses the room) all this is Intellect; Knowledge, great, uncircumscribed. It does not draw within itself, but itself pours out in a glorious effulgence; mind, knowledge, great, wonderful Life!

*(While he speaks the maiden draws a little away from him. For an instant, a look of foreboding saddens her eyes, then she smiles.)*

## The Maiden

Knowledge is Life, you say; great, glorious Life? Then knowledge is happiness and my dreams are false!

*(A darkness seems to fall over the room and in the dimness a distant echo seems to repeat the words:*

False! False!

*A faint light gleams for a moment upon the motionless form of the scholar in his chair—then fades—and light again glows at the lower end of the room. The youth, older and graver, sits at the table. Manuscripts lie before him. A grave-like stillness pervades the room. The door opens and the maiden, grown to womanhood, enters. She pauses half-way across the room and her sad eyes remain fixed upon the man. He does not hear her; does not look up. She stands motionless then turns with a movement of despair.)*

## The Maiden

He has chosen; chosen and it is irrevocable!

*(Sudden darkness falls then lifts and as it lifts the word "Irrevocable!" seems to tremble in the air. A dim greyness now envelops the entire room. The fire again smolders. As the word "Irrevocable!" vibrates the motionless figure of the scholar awakens with a violent start. He stands up, trembling, and starts toward the door.)*

## The Scholar

No, no Linore! It is love, love, not knowledge! Forget the years that have passed! Forget!

*(He rushes toward the door and recoils as he finds it closed, crying out again in a voice of poignant entreaty:)*

Forget!

—LAURA JULIO.

## Flakes of Gold

THE SYMBOL of the home has variously been a cleft in the rocks possible to be slept in, the hearth, the bungalow-built-for-two, and a sculptured altar to Greek household gods. To me it will always be the golden flakes that have fallen on the rug through the half-curtained window, just before the setting of the sun. Those flakes are mellow, warm, laughing. They are live things; and they are memories, and old dreams. Just such gold patches we saw flying under the forest trees; they are the gold coins we saw lying on the pavements of the city streets when we were children; and once, at this very hour, we saw flecks of gold like those fluttering over soft golden hair, so that tiny little flames leaped all about it. . . . They steal imperceptibly along the floor, and in the warped wood and the worn rug we see rich mellowed colors we never knew before to be there. . . . The garden outside, with its hollyhocks and zenias, its sweet-elysum and lavender and mignonette, is most beautiful,

now, in the softened light; the parched plants have drunken the dew and lifted high their heads again; through the window comes witness of their grateful, prodigal spending of perfume after long thrift. In an adjoining room a kettle seems to be humming, and there must be a table spread with tea things there, and with an old-fashioned bowl in the center of it, filled with fresh flowers. Pleasant dream odours of warm corn bread and honey are wafted in. There is an air of expecting something, someone. . . . And sometimes, beside the sunflakes, I have seen the vague form of a child sitting on the rug; earnest, rapt, it clutched with awkward, dimpled little fingers at the flat, gold things on the floor. But they were elusive, and slipped through the fingers and perched on the hands, beside the dimples. The leaves on the cherry tree outside the window tinkled against the pane, and I heard gleeful laughter.

—SYLVA BEYER.

## The End of the Charm

(Continued from page 64)

lowed her. He expected to be violently rebuffed, but the girl said nothing, and in a dead silence the two walked down to the gate. Then as they got out into the road May-Louise, unable to stand the strain any longer, snapped:

"Think you're pretty smart, don't you?"

"I thought you said you weren't going to speak to me again," remarked Allan drily.

This, of course, was the worst thing he could possibly have said. The floodgates of May's wrath were opened, and the sea of her anger poured down upon Allan's defenseless head.

"Think you're pretty smart, don't you?" she repeated with added bitterness and fire. "Sit there like a grinning ijjit and tell me to quit *kichin'* you under the table! You didn't care if that catty old Maggie Tate heard you, or old Joe Hicks, did you? You didn't care! Oh, no! Just wanted to make out you're so *good* you wouldn't do such a thing as *signaling!* You old two-faced thing!"

It was perfectly plain that to May-Louise the only crime in cheating lay in getting caught.

"Listen, May-Louise," Allan managed to interpose while the former was drawing breath, "I know I shouldn't have said what I did, and I'm sorry. But you made me sorta mad. You know as well as I do it wasn't right."

"Old two-faced thing! Trying to make out you're so much *better'n* anybody else! Little angel, with his wings sproutin'! Little—"

"For land's sakes, hush!" Allan cut in. "Tom Wilts and his girl are right behind us. They'll hear—"

"I ain't studyin' 'bout who heahs me!" shrilled May-Louise, sliding her voice up another octave or so. "You didn't study 'bout who'd heah you when you told me t' quit kickin' yuh, didjuh? You never think about me or my feelin's! You *never* have!"

"I have too.—"

"You have not!" Wrathfully she introduced variations on this theme, and developed them fully; all the way to her home she made the calm night discordant with her remarks. Finally, when they reached her gate, Allan exclaimed—shouted, almost:

"For land's sake, hush up! You've worked yourself up 'til you're just babblin'. Go in and calm down. G'night!"

He turned and strode down the street, and before May-Louise could recover her power of speech, he was out of respectable earshot; thus was she deprived of her rightful privilege, the last word.

Allan lunged on home, taking steps three or four

feet long, his mind a welter of varied emotions. He clumped up the steps, slammed his way into the front room, and stopped short. Beside the center-table sat his sister Gertie, the dim lamp beside her lighting up her pale, clear-cut features and touching her crisp golden hair with an occasional shining gleam. She was sewing; for thus she contributed her share toward the support of the family, in addition to doing all its housework.

"You're mighty noisy, tonight, Allan," she murmured between her teeth, as she bit a thread in two. "Don't you know Papa and Frankie and LaVerne went to bed long ago?"

"What are you doing up so late?" Allan counter-questioned.

"Finishing a waist for Mrs. Compton. Besides, I wanted to heah what the party was like. Did you have a good time?"

"Yeah, I had a good time!" grunted Allan derisively, as he seated down beside her. He grinned sardonically. "May-Louise and me had an awful fuss. Man, I mean it was a *fuss!*"

A small smile hovered on Gertie's lips. She too was blessed with a sense of humor.

"Tell me about it, Allan," she gently suggested. "It'll do you good."

So Allan told her, haltingly at first, then with increasing eloquence, while Gertie listened attentively. It was not the first time that Allan's troubles had been poured into her ears. She was more than a sister to the family; in helping, advising, and even coercing, she took the place of the mother who was dead, and of the father who might as well have been for all the affection and aid he gave his children. Moreover, between her and Allan there was a bond of common feeling, some similarity of thought and heart which drew them together. To no one else would he have dreamed of confiding this story of a fuss with his girl.

"I know I oughtn't to have said what I did," Allan wound up with heat, "but I told her I was sorry, and apologized. And then she called me all the names she could think of, and stormed and ructioned 'round right out in the street, and I don't think any real nice girl would have done it, either!"

Gertie sewed steadily for a minute or two before she replied. "I reckon you're right, Allan," she said finally. "May-Louise sure didn't act the lady tonight, if she did what you say. But you're partly to blame, too. You know that, don't you?"

"Yeah," Allan grinned, sheepishly this time.

"But I can't tell you what to do. You'll have to decide that yohself. I'll say right out that I think if you never went with May-Louise again it would be small loss to you. But then I reckon it doesn't hurt

you to go with her, either. However, that's something you'll have to fix up your own self."

"Gertie," blurted the boy, struck by a subtle tone in her voice, "don't you get tired sometimes of—of—the way we live, an'—this town, an'—an' every-thing?"

His sister looked at him for a moment. "Yes, child, I do," she said slowly. "But we can't change things, and—" she paused;—"and we've got to make the best of them." Then, seeing the conversation drifting in a direction in which she did not care to have it go, she rose, gathered her work together, and said:

"It's getting late, and I see I can't finish this waist tonight, so I'm going to bed. You better go too, and sleep on your troubles. You'll probably," she said with a half-giggle, "decide to kiss and make up."

"What you mean, kiss and make up?" exclaimed Allan. But all the reply he got was a laugh-smothered "Good-night" as Gertie slipped into her room.

Allan carried the lamp to the room which he shared with Frankie, moodily undressed, carefully put away his best clothes, blew out the light, and clambered into bed beside his slumbering brother. For a long time he turned and tossed. He hated having to sleep with Frankie, he hated the barren box of a room, he hated everything, he hated May-Louise. Suddenly he sat up in the darkness and swore that he'd never go with her again or have anything to do with her if he lived to be a hundred.

But a resolution like that was easier to express than to carry out. May-Louise was Femininity—as good a specimen of femininity of her age as the town afforded; and the boy of nineteen who displays no interest in the so-called gentler sex and who derives no pleasure from its presence is a very unusual person. Besides, Allan had been going with May-Louise long enough for the thing to become a habit; and it is a well-known fact that it is hard to break a habit. Lastly, he had managed to believe at times that he cared for May-Louise. It had been a pale and sickly belief, a plant of forced growth; but it had existed.

During the day, as he worked on the farm, he became uneasy; and his uneasiness was distinctly increased by what he saw Friday evening at the movies, where he had gone in the company of several male friends. As they slid on to one of the pine benches which in the Dixie did duty for seats, Allan noticed two people a couple of rows or so ahead. One glance sufficed to tell him that the girl was May-Louise; her red hair was unmistakable, and so was her Balkan blouse. But who was her escort? The lights flared up just then, and Allan saw that without a doubt the miscreant was Joe Hicks.

For a moment red rage surged over Allan. May-

Louise did not dispense music for the Dixie on week-nights, and he had always taken her to the show on Friday, this habit not being irksome financially because May got in free. And now runty Joe Hicks had usurped his place! He entertained thoughts of bodily violence for Joe in the near future. Then he remembered that he was mad at May-Louise, and could not help smiling bitterly at his own impetuosity. But now his companions had noticed the couple ahead. They guessed the true state of affairs, and Allan received an unmerciful ragging for the rest of their stay in the show.

His one ray of consolation came from the apparent lack of cordiality between May-Louise and Joe, who sat like wooden Indians during the entire performance. Nevertheless, Allan spent the rest of the evening in a state of intense mental tumult.

The next evening, Saturday, Allan took Gertie to witness the Dixie's presentation of Episode 10 of "The Gripping Clutch." May-Louise was down in front mis-treating the piano, a hooded lamp throwing its light upon her and making her stand out brightly against the dark mass of the audience. Gertie looked at the haloed pianist and then at her brother, her action not passing unnoticed by the latter.

"Allan," she said, with a little note of mockery in her voice that belied its earnest tone, "May-Louise looks awfully lonesome. Why don't you go down there and talk to her? You used to be a fool about doing that."

"If I didn't think you was joking, Sis, I'd sure say you was crazy." Thus said Allan, indignantly. "The whole town's here, and every last one of 'em knows May and me has had a fight. You think I'd go down there right in front of 'em? Besides," he added, "I don't want to talk to her."

Gertie smiled inscrutably and said nothing. She judged that this would irritate Allan more than anything she could do, and she was right.

As they were leaving the show she calmly asked:

"Are you going to wait around until she comes out?"

Allan merely glared at her, whereupon Gertie repeated her sphinxlike smile, and took leave of her brother, going down to Pratt's store to converse with a friend who had been obliged to clerk late.

"I wonder," she said as she walked along, "I wonder if he'll do it."

Allan drifted down to Jake's pool-room, drifted out again, loafed awhile in the crowded arcade in front of the drugstore, and finally sauntered over to the Dixie Theater. In the back of his head Gertie's remarks were sizzling, but his feet seemed to carry him along through no volition of his own. Perhaps—perhaps

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Lake and State Streets

May-Louise was through playing now, and would come out. And if she did come out? Allan didn't know what then. But ten minutes passed, and she did not appear. Allan paced nervously up and down. Absent-mindedly he slid the ring on his finger back and forth, and then remembered with a start that it was May-Louise's! She had given it to him a few weeks ago, with many giggles. And he had held her hand a while after the momentous event!

The whistle of the 9:40 train wailed up beyond the canning factory, and Allan, like the rest of the people on the streets, made for the station. Maybe May-Louise had fallen in with a bunch of girl friends, and he would find them, arm in arm, parading along the gravel platform. But although he searched all through the crowd, hoping and yet fearing, he could not find her. The train rumbled out, and the crowd began to disperse, most of them heading for the drug-store.

A sudden thought stabbed Allan. Perhaps the object of his quest was at that moment seated at a table in there, consuming ice-cream with the unspeakable Joe Hicks! He sped to the pharmacy for confirmation of the dread idea, but he did not obtain it. The crowd within was entirely neutral.

Allan stood for a moment or so like a suddenly becalmed schooner. Then another idea came to him. Maybe she had gone home. Maybe she was sitting there, crying or something. He would go and tell her how sorry he was about everything, and tell her he was in the wrong (he knew he'd have to say that) and ask her forgiveness, and then everything would be all right again. Even as he thought he was hurrying in the direction of the Higgins home.

The Higgins front door stood open, sending a shaft of yellow light out into the warm, moonlit night. In response to Allan's knocks came Mrs. Higgins, gaunt and austere, her sleeves rolled up to her elbows. No, May-Louise wasn't home.

Allan stood helpless, the wind once more gone from his sails.

"She ought to be home right soon now," continued Mrs. Higgins, not unkindly. "Do you want to wait a minute?"

Yes, Allan decided that he would. He entered. "Just have a chair," added the matron. "You'll excuse me, won't you? I'm mixin' up a pan of bread," and on receiving Allan's hearty assent, she retired to the kitchen.

Allan sat for a while and composed a moving and eloquent oration, to be delivered to May-Louise on her arrival. He rehearsed it several times, rounding it off and polishing it up, but still she did not come. Allan's nervousness was increasing with every passing second.

He fidgeted about the room, looking for distraction and finding none. Then his eye lighted on the table.

Mrs. Higgins had a roomer, a dashing young fellow just down from the North, much given to reading the popular magazines on dull evenings. When through with them he would pass them on to Mrs. Higgins, who disapproved of them for May-Louise but read them herself from cover to cover. One such periodical it was which now caught Allan's roving gaze.

It was one of those magazines with over a million circulation, made up in the big flat size, and this being before we entered the War, the cover was occupied by the portrait of a girl. It was a really excellent picture, and a really beautiful girl. She seemed sixteen or seventeen years old. Her black-and-white striped waist barely showed the gently rounded outlines of her figure. On her head was a boyish sort of felt hat, from which escaped a mass of glorious dark curls, falling about her neck and shoulders and framing the fresh, delicate bloom of her face. Her eyes, big and deeply blue, looked out from under long lashes with a shy innocence at the beholder.

Allan stared on, entranced. He had never before seen a picture, much less a real girl, like that. And then suddenly, inevitably, in spite of himself, there flashed across his mind the contrasting picture of May-Louise, scrawny, red-haired, freckled, simpering. It was unfair, low-down! He knew it, but he could not help it.

Through his brain flickered scraps of his conversation with Gertie a few nights ago—"I think it would be small loss if you never went with her again"—"Yes, child, I do get tired of things here"—Again he looked at the picture-girl, with her darkling eyes and tremulous smile.

He gripped the edge of the table, and on the under side his hand came in contact with a hard, round blob. With dawning wonder he ran his fingers over the protuberance, then he stooped down and examined it.

On the under side of the table, stuck fast near the edge, hard and flint-like with age, was a wad of gum.

For a long minute Allan looked at it. Then he straightened up as if he had been shot.

"Mrs. Higgins!" he called.

That personage appeared in the doorway, her arms to her elbows white with flour.

"I don't believe I can wait any longer," the boy said. He hesitated; then he remembered something. Slipping the ring from his finger, he dropped it into Mrs. Higgins' floury palm.

"Give this to May-Louise and tell her I'm much obliged for it," he blurted. And before Mrs. Higgins could reply, he strode out into the soft spring night.

—EUGENE S. GUILD.

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## WHAT MAKES A STORY

*A Book of Narratives*, by O. J. Campbell, Jr., and Richard A. Rice; New York, D. C. Heath & Co.

It is one thing to feel a distinct reaction upon reading a story; it is another to understand the art by which the writer has caused the reaction to be produced. The former requires merely the ability to read and a sympathetic spirit; the latter requires study and analysis. And it goes without saying that an intelligent understanding of the workmanship involved in writing literature of enduring value is not only an invaluable asset to young writers but is also an indispensable aid to the layman who wishes to increase his enjoyment in reading by looking beneath the surface of the product to the art and craft of the producer.

It is this fact that makes *A Book of Narratives* not a mere text book to be droned over by a class in English composition but a suggestive volume that will appeal universally to readers of fiction. In place of a handbook of dry formulae and impossible "hints to authors," we find a series of illuminating discourses on the varied aspects of literature in the making and a wisely-chosen collection of representative works of fiction upon which the discourses are based. Proceeding from the definition that a story is composed of "the imagined or actual facts of life arranged in such a way as to make human conduct more intelligible and more entertaining than it is to the ordinary observer," the authors analyse the methods by which writers have achieved the aim of all good fiction: that of shedding light on human emotions and impulses. The analysis concerns itself with aspects of plot, setting, character, etc., and is based on a searching examination of the selections included in the volume.

*A Book of Narratives* will be of inestimable aid to writers of fiction. One of its primary aims is to lead writers to see life imaginatively, and with this end in view stress is put on the problem of seeing materials for a story in the everyday life around us; the everyday people whom we meet, and the everyday incidents which creep into routine. The chapter is intended to correct a fault which every magazine editor and instructor of composition is aware of: that amateur writers, striving to escape the commonplace, wrench their fancy to the breaking point and choose characters, plot, and setting that have no counterpart or resemblance in this or any other life. "The problem of the story-writer who wishes to make an effect with the unusual is not to choose the unusual for its own sake, but for the sake of throwing over it a coloring of imagination to render it significant for the rest of experience."

—E. M.

## UNDER FIRE

By Henri Barbusse, New York,  
E. P. Dutton & Co., \$1.50

Facts—facts of ugliness, grimness and bestiality, facts that stare at you all night in your dreams, facts of war as it is, facts by a hater of war; such are the experiences of Barbusse and his squad and they are set down accurately and critically with no hint of patriotism or glory for France.

Barbusse's story has for its heroes all the men of the squad, for its action the movements of one squad in reserve, at the front line, under the flame of shells in attack and in its damp underground trench life, and for its background the vast water-logged desert of earth with its network of long ditches carpeted with their layers of slime. At first the many men of the squad confuse you, but as they tell you their intimate stories they become distinct individuals. Three of them you will never forget, Endore who fails to have the coveted days with his wife when on leave, because of the mails and the rain; Poterloo who ventures into Boche territory for one look at his wife only to see her smiling and contented by the side of the Boche officer (and this is the most heart-stirring story), and Lamuse who burns with passion for the fair haired Eudoxie, that wanderer about No Man's Land who shunned him in life only to fall upon him as a moulding corpse as he digs in an old trench.

"You clinch the position? I was forced to hold her up with one arm as well as I could, and work with the other. She was trying to fall on me with all her weight. Old man, she wanted to kiss me, and I didn't want—it was terrible. She seemed to be saying to me, 'You wanted to kiss me, well then, come, come now!' She had on her—she had *there*, fastened on, the remains of a bunch of flowers, and that was rotten, too, and the posy stunk in my nose like the corpse of some little beast."

These revelations of character Barbusse does surely and sympathetically but he shows greater power in his narration and description of the action of battle. In the chapter *Under Fire* when his squad is in one of the regiments that attack and capture Boche trenches and *The Fatigue Party* when whole companies drown in mud and water this narrative is vivid, sustained and tense with movement.

Only a Frenchman could write the kind of realism that is found in this book, so detailed, accurate and horrifying it is. It is not the realism of Zola who piles up the awful facts of life for their own sake, it is the realism with a constructive purpose. Barbusse has an ideal of progress toward equality, of an understanding among democracies when there will be no more war. Therefore he shows the bestialities of men, the vermin and filth, the cold and hunger, the fields of grimacing corpses, the mouldy underground refuge caravans, and in the rear the shirkers and money makers, the jingo patriots, the traditionalists, the parsons, the lovers of supremacy by force; he shows all this in its grimness that the spirit of war may be defeated, that all men may learn to hate war the way the common soldiers, the material and flesh and soul of war hate it.

—A. D.

## NANCE OF THE SLUMS AND THE SMILE

*Calvary Alley*, by Alice Hegan Rice.  
New York, Century Co.: \$1.35

Behind the author of *Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch* is a background of tremendous humanity, maternal, kindly and understanding. It never fails her; and that is why her latest book, *Calvary Alley*, is rich with truth and sweetness and humor. The characters are pulsingly human and unfailingly viv-

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id. They are of the sort that one takes to one's heart, and makes a part of one's intimate literary acquaintanceship. Nance Molloy is not a girl in a book; she is a friend that you would know at once, if you met her on the street. "She's got a personality that climbs right over the footlights."

The theme seems common enough; it is that of a ragamuffin of keen mind, and big, passionate, but untutored instincts, who develops a character as subtle, fresh and fragrant as a red rose, in spite of the unutterable squalor and hideousness of the Alley where she was bred. Nance was never a "good" child. She was too alive, too filled with animal spirits and daring. As Mrs. Snawdor, her stepmother, said of her, "She's got her faults. I ain't claimin' she ain't. But she ain't got a drop o' meanness in her. And that's more than I can say for some grown folks present."

The trouble with Nance was that no one had ever set up any standards for her. "She simply got the signals mixed." But if she "was to once git it into her head that a thing was right, she'd do it if it landed her where it landed her paw, at the foot of a forty-foot embankment with a engine a-top of her." And when, in the Juvenile Court, after a battle royal with some "swells," the judge told her and her pal, "I believe you can both make good, but you'll have to fight for it,"—

Nance's irregular features broke into a smile. It was a quick, wide smile and very intimate.

"Fight?" she repeated, with a quizzical look at the judge. "I thought that was what we was pinched fer."

But she did fight for it. And when, on probation, and under the motherly influence of Mrs. Purdy, she began to see possibilities for the future, she asked of her chum, "Say, Dan, if folks are borned pore white trash, they don't have to go on bein' it, do they?"

Nance got her education at a Reform School. The result, while gratifying to herself and to those who know "what is what," was disturbing to Calvary Alley. The inhabitants thereof absolutely refused to sleep with the windows open.

"What's the sense workin' yer fingers off to buy coal to heat the house if you go an' let out all the hot air over night? They filled up your head with fool notions, but you ain't goin' to work 'em off on us. You can just tell that old maid Stanley that when she's had three husbands an' five children an' a step, an' managed to live on less than ten dollars a week, it will be time enough for her to be learnin' new tricks!"

"Don't you ever want to clear out and go to the country?" asked Nance.

"Not me! I been fightin' the country all my life. It's bad enough bein' dirt pore, without goin' an' settlin' down among the stumps, where there ain't nothin' to take your mind off it."

So Nance grew up. She escaped Calvary Alley by her brief sojourn on the stage. But after tragedies of pocket-book and of heart, and after a hospital course in nursing, she found that Calvary Alley was where she wanted to be after all. But to tell you how, or why, and about Dan, and "Mac," the handsome, dare-devil youth of wealth, would be to spoil the charm and humor, the pathos and drama for you, when you read the book yourself. And you mustn't expect Nance to become a perfect lady by the last page. She still uses slang, and is still full of mischief—but I think you'll like her better that way.

—M. K.

## NEW THOUGHT IN OLD DRESS

*Wisconsin Sonnets*, by Charles H. Wilke; Milwaukee, The Badger Publishing Company: \$1.

Fitting the sonnet form to modern thought may be compared to dressing youth in an old coat: the wearer may squirm and fret under the restriction, and if the coat be especially stiff may try to burst its seams and escape. The free-versists and the writers of ambling meters have combined to spread the notion that modern ideas require modern vehicles of expression in which they may puff out and expand, and that to harness the ideas to the strict limitations of the old verse forms is like hitching Pegasus by a ten-foot rope in the middle of a cindery back yard with rich pasturage just beyond the ten-foot limit.

It is an adventure to pick up a volume like *Wisconsin Sonnets* which not only discredits the fiction but goes far toward proving the elasticity of the sonnet form. Mr. Wilke, while occasionally making concessions to tradition, courageously selects themes that have been made much of by the free verse school and presents them without doing damage to either form or subject. The achievement strikes one neither as a freakish innovation nor a faltering experiment, but as a sincere and successful effort to combine timeliness of content with an antiquated but beautiful dress. Sonnets to *Dynamite*, *Concrete*, *Eugenics*, may seem a straining for novel effect, but Mr. Wilke cancels the criticism by handling these subjects frankly and simply—with a simplicity, it must be admitted, which at times slips into conventionalities of diction and subordinates freshness of word imagery to thought.

An ironical note has unwittingly crept into the volume as it embraces a number of poems written before America's entrance into the war. These include sonnets to *Woodrow Wilson* and *Robert M. LaFollette*, and exalt the former as the leading anti-war spokesman of the country, and the latter as the nationally beloved champion of the people. Mr. Wilke's attitude toward war and his vision of a world-wide peace are set forth vigorously in the sonnets on *War*, *The Great Lakes*, *The Great War* and others. Of these *The Great Lakes* leaves the deepest impression:

No cannon-bristling squadrons ride at rest  
 Within gun-sheltered harbors on these lakes;  
 Here but the urgency of Commerce wakes  
 The cloven waves to song, with keels deep pressed  
 Into their bosoms; hurrying east and west,  
 Trade's myriad-flagged Armada ne'er forsakes  
 These seas at Desolation's hest, but makes  
 A fruitful highway of their neutral breast.

O shores and oceans of the fort-stained earth,  
 What will the triumph of the Future be  
 When birds build safely in your every gun!  
 When all the ships innumerable that girth  
 Your shining vasts shall share the ministry  
 Of Peace and only her blest errands run!

In spite of several idiosyncrasies of diction—the frequent use of compound adjectives, the personification of abstractions—the volume displays a sureness of touch and a maturity of craftsmanship in what is perhaps the most difficult of English verse forms.

—E. M.



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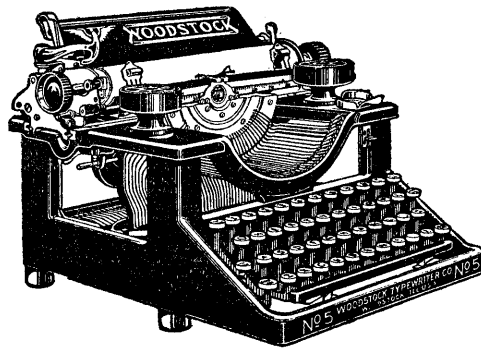
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