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MADISON

The Wisconsin Literary Magazine

Volume XXII

MARCH, 1923

Number 5



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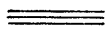
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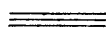
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The Wisconsin Literary Magazine

Publication of the Students of the University of Wisconsin

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Volume XXII

MADISON, MARCH, 1923

Number 5

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hour which we prefer to leave nameless, intimating only that it is considerably later than the customary retiring hour of genteel people. Here, one might well observe, is a very paradise of laxity and lawlessness. Yet even as Eve in the original horticultural precincts yearned after the forbidden, and chafed under restriction, so now there are those who find our all too lenient rules to be irksome, and consider them, forsooth, a good deal of a bore.

Let us contemplate for a moment, not without seemly shudderings, the spectacle which would greet our appalled eyes if the present pitifully inadequate barriers to personal liberty were removed. We admit that college women are intelligent, often highly intellectual, but it is practically inconceivable that they should possess sufficient judgment to know when to come home, or sufficient moral strength to do so of their own accord. Were our present sane regulations to be abolished, what would there be to prevent our girls from staying out all night? Nothing, absolutely nothing, with the possible exception of a native sense of decorum, or a normal desire for sleep. In all seriousness, we question whether these flimsy safeguards can ever be relied upon to maintain the integrity of our young womanhood. Human nature is frail, and far too susceptible to the delights of being tardily abroad. Only by rigorous edicts can we combat the insidious lure of nocturnal devagation.

We do not hesitate to urge the adoption of even sterner measures than those with which we are now blessed. Let it be remembered that here in Madison our girls are far from home and mother, subject to all the temptations of a big city; that their parents have entrusted to us their moral welfare. We must be true to our trust! What

BLOW, CURFEW, BLOW! One need not be as crusty as Juvenal nor as anile as Anthony Comstock to look askance upon the deplorable freedom of college women. We should be derelict in our duty, it would weigh upon our otherwise unburdened conscience through all future years, if we had allowed so grievous a condition to endure unprotested. For if the immoral tendency toward feminine independence be not checked, who can doubt that liberty will become licence, and restraint be thrown utterly to the winds?

It would be futile to inquire and profitless to discuss what has brought about the present lamentable state of affairs. Enough that, in defiance of all orthodox monasticism, present regulations permit the college woman to be absent from her domicile and totally unaccounted for as late as ten o'clock at night. Worse still, two evenings a week their liberty is extended to an

would father think if he knew his little Harriet was staying out until ten at night? What would grandmother think of a school which allows its girl students to walk about alone and unchaperoned after dark? Oh, for a return to the sterling virtue of our forefathers, who tolled the curfew promptly at six-thirty, or whenever it was—!

F. D. C.

THE NEW FREEDOM. Everyone knows the sort of person who tells you to break up your thoughts with commas and semicolons instead of periods. And who bewails the ignorance of modern writers. But have you met the man who sends out waving roars from defiant lips because you have murdered a word? You must meet him. Then you will want to keep on murdering words. It will become your favorite pastime. You will spend all your spare hours making coffins and shrouds for your little words before you lay them under the ground. And this isn't entirely due to the fact that you like to do the things you are told you must not do. It is just that you are finding that words are sometimes more than words, and that their personalities are as flexible as your own. If you have ever watched a word put on its hat and walk down your tongue out into the world you will always want it to do as it pleases. If you believe in vows you will make one at that moment. And now your words will make their own streets and cities and worlds. And you will watch them. If you are grammatical you will shudder at times, but if you are fortunate enough not to be hampered in that way you will sigh long and deeply. Here is ecstasy. Now you are free to add to the race of words as rapidly as you please. Quaint words, crazy words, words with limp arms and broken hearts. Don't let anyone stop you. Down with birth control!

But he will say:

"Good Lord, there are some two or three hundred thousand words in the English language. Isn't that enough for you?"

How does one answer? One must look back first at those flashing eyes and then reply:

"That is not enough for me. One word that I create myself is worth more to me than all the others that have already been created."

"Then don't bother others with them. We are satisfied with the English language as it stands."

He wants you to wilt but you must not. Instead you must ask him if he minds dying soon because you have been taught manners in the home and cannot bear to harm anyone. And your

words hurt his ears! But you are contributing to the race of words and he is only repeating. So you are more important than he is. Ask him often if he minds dying. But then you think of your soul. Your lovely white soul that you put to bed every night. It always weeps when you make others irritable. But one must be strong enough to transcend one's soul.

Sometime words will have their freedom. They will break away from their drivers and run down the road with the reins flying through the dust. Can't we give them more space for prancing?

M. B. L.

Ave Scorpio! THE LIT takes more than ordinary pleasure in welcoming the *novus homo* who made so unusual a *début* into the complacency of the university and its town. Perhaps *The Scorpion's* venom has been almost felt in the stream of watery blood that flows sluggishly through the veins of the indolent and self-sufficient body of the populace. Too torpid to sense the sting of irony, too lamblike to resent the ignominy of ridicule, a few of these *radoteurs* may be piqued by the challenge of insult, which we hope is still sufficiently virile to pierce the callousness of their apathy.

In truth, we feel it to be high time for the advent of a heretic to antagonize, *coûte qu' il coûte*, the disgustingly deadening tendency of the natural course of affairs, and if *The Scorpion's* early rampages from Dan to Beersheba, appear to be a slightly puerile *weltschmerz*, we may scatter our grains of allowance perhaps a little more freely than is customary, and indulge the fond hope that Icarus will not fly too straightly toward the sun. Indeed, it might be that we may even dare to whisper a little congratulation to the "private citizens" who edit this "political fortnightly" for their unparalleled display of faith in the supremacy of the Constitution of the Republic over certain Powers That Be.

At any rate, we are happy to wish these gentlemen success in their "private enterprize", uncensored and unrecognized though that enterprize be. We ourselves have made no pretence of being political, and very seldom have we voiced political opinions,—not necessarily because we hold none, however. As for our Indispensible, *The Daily Cardinal*,—ah, yes, *The Daily Cardinal!* Really, gentlemen of *The Scorpion*, it is exceedingly difficult for us, jaded as we are, to maintain *mens aequa in arduis*, and when we contemplate the Atlantean strength of your competitor, when

we consider how infinitely more crying is the need for battles of editorial wits over the Presidency of the Senior Class than for like battles over the disarmament of the nations—ah, we dare not even to complete our thought!

But for all of our doubts and misgivings, we hope that Scorpy's stinging tail found the heel of Achilles when Achilles tried stepping on him. One might almost have thought that Achilles was beginning to forget that he was not quite invulnerable.

Once again, *ave!*

G. K. T.

"We give the people what they want", is the inevitable response of the journalist to the denunciation which is heaped upon the present day newspaper. The enormous fortunes which purveyors of sensational news have acquired would seem to make this an indisputable fact. In blatant, staring headlines the journals of today mirror the tragedies and misfortunes of all the world. Regardless of what the long suffering "people" may or may not want, the *Chicago Literary Times* has made its appearance in the journalistic world. The latest graft charge, the prurient divorce case, create no furor in the offices of this unusual publication. A new volume of poetry, the latest novel of a writer about whom the critics are at war, the collectors' find in some obscure book shop, are the events which command black headlines and favored space. Under the editorship of Ben Hecht, Chicago novelist and playwright, this weekly journal issued its first number on February 26. Be-

sides containing news of books and authors, the work of a number of Chicago artists,—Szukalski, Rosse, and Wallace, among others—has appeared from time to time in its pages. "It is unusual, yes," said Ben Hecht, "but we feel sure that there is a group sufficiently large to merit a publication of this sort."

Selected from twenty one black and white etchings which are soon to appear in a collected volume, the cover design of this issue is an excellent example of the work of the young Polish artist and sculptor, Stanislaus Szukalski. Struggling for a long time unnoticed in the grime and ugliness of Chicago, Szukalski has now received deserved acclaim. Something of the fierceness and terror which lurks always in *l'enfant terrible*, the city, is found in his art. Covici-McGee, Chicago publishers, will bring out this collection in a private edition, containing one hundred and six half tones and fourteen color reproductions, some time in April. It has been through the extreme kindness of Covici-McGee that the LIT has been permitted to reproduce this etching. M. W. C.

EDITORS

FRANK D. CRANE	GUY K. TALLMADGE
MARGARET EMMERLING	LOUISE SMITH
MARGERIE LATIMER	KENNETH FEARING

RUBAÏ JOTTINGS

PHILIP G. FOX

And when the bells upon the watchtower rang
Announcing Eve with many a sullen clang,
I smiled, remembering 'twas with Eve
My soul unto the heart of Phedra sang.

O Maid beneath the hanging crescent moon,
O Passion that folds its tiring wings too soon,
Why nod, now that the morning light
Treads o'er the lake with silver shoon.

Walter de la Mare

MARGARET EMMERLING

They say that, chronologically, Walter de la Mare was first a journalist. Then he published a little volume of verse called *Listeners*, and people wondered at the sweetness of his voice; later came more poems, a rich wild tale in prose, *The Three Mulla-Mulgars*, a novel, and, when nothing he did could any longer surprise them, he wrote that iced-lightning dream, *The Memoirs of a Midget*. That book is new among his works, of a different color and sound, yet the thread of it ran through *Motley*, *The Veil*; through all of his poetry, I suppose, and it can be found glimmering in *Lispert*, *Lispett*, and *Vaine*, a new "sort-of story" as he calls it, in a late *Yale Review*. The thread that runs through everything is the enchantment of the tiny, the romance of the exquisite, and, in the short story, the splitting of the gossamer because it was too fine, or the rotting of it,—you can look at it in two ways.

The clearest thing about him, in fact, is the littleness of his subject; you might speak of his triumphant assertion of the minute, of patterns delicately pricked, and so on; but having gone so far, you must say one other thing: that he is never merely dainty; he is daintily lavish, or daintily exotic (yes!) but that is a different matter. In the *Midget*, for instance, he revels in a detail like this,—that Mrs. Monnerie gives to her wee friend, her "pocket Venus", a cape "composed entirely of the shimmering emerald feathers of a humming-bird."

The *Midget* goes to bed with a headache from the fumes of the horrible, artificial scents of normal people; she is made quite wretched by the scraping of their great feet upon the carpet; she shudders at their gawky thumpings and pawings. A delicate and intense personality finds out the heavy grotesque, the lumpish buffoonery of ordinary folk; that is the gist of the story. In *Lispert*, *Lispett*, and *Vaine*, the thing is done in a different way. It is the story of an ancient firm of spinners, weavers, and embroiderers, whose work finally is wasted because it is too finely wrought.

"The priestesses of Astaroth are said to have danced in the gauze of L. L. & V.'s handiwork. They exploited the true bombyx ages before

Ptolemy; their gold thread gleamed on the Ark of the Covenant; and it was apparel of their weaving in which the Queen of Sheba marvelled before Solomon. The very shoes of his apes, sown in with seed-pearls and splinters of amethyst. . . ."

Through the middle ages, down to nineteenth century England, these great artisans persist, struggling at last against the competition of machine and efficiency, but refusing to mar by one second's haste the splendor and marvel of their work. At last a young *Lispett* comes into charge, who is a little more fine than the finest before him, a little more exquisitely insistent. And the result, in the words of Maunders, the teller of the tale,—"Things do as a matter of fact rot of their own virtue—inverted, so to speak." This is what happened here:

"The story goes that a certain Empress, renowned for her domestic virtues, commanded a trousseau for yet another royal niece or what not. A day or two before the young woman's nuptials, and weeks late, arrived silks and tissues and filigrees spun out of some kind of South American and Borneo spider silk, such as only a nymph could wear. My dear K., it nearly hatched a European war.'"

And at last, "He turned out a kind of ludicrous doll's merchandize—utterly beautiful little infinitesimals in fabrics worth a hundred times their weight in rubies. . . ."

In this story, as in the *Midget*, Mr. de la Mare has rich opportunity for enumeration, arranging, and playing with delicious detail. Silks, wasps, a supper of sliced cherry and milk, and on and on. But in both there is more than that. There is the *Midget's* terrible, acute understanding of the people about her, there is her sublime serenity at moments, and then, the bitterness when they allowed her to get herself drunk (kicking, caroling, performing for them) and of course, her fine moral certainty.

Walter de la Mare is one of those persons who mix poetry with their prose. Perhaps he is influenced by the imagists, for he is very concrete; but I am quite sure that his style could be criti-

cized for the weight of its luscious detail. It has not the swift, bright simplicity of ascetic prose. It is in very fact half poetry; indeed I think that if parts of *The Tempest* or of *Midsummer Night's Dream* had been done in prose instead of in iambic pentameter, they would have had a ring very like some things in Walter de la Mare. His sentences are too rich to be swift, sometimes too intricate even for clarity. But occasionally they have grandeur.

"The spectral rattle of the parched beechleaves on the sapling, the faintest whisper in the skeleton bracken set me peeping, peering, tippeting; and the Invisibles if they heeded me, merely smiled on me from their grave, all-seeing eye. As for the first crystal sprinkling of frost, I remember in my folly I sat down (bunched up, fortunately, in honest lamb's wool) and remained, minute by minute, unstirring, unwinking, watching as if in my own mind the exquisite small fires kindle and flit from point to point of lichen and bark, until—out of this engrossment—little but a burning icicle was left to trudge along home."

To analyze such a fragment of picture and mood, solemnly to say, here it limps, there it dances, and for such and such reasons, would seem foolish. I want to point to it merely, saying, "Listen. Listen to this."

His verse is rarely so penetrating as the finest of his prose, but there are some enchanting morsels. There is

"The Moth

"Isled in the midnight air,
Musked with the dark's faint bloom,
Out into glooming and secret haunts
The flame cries, 'Come!'

"Lovely in dye and fan,
A-tremble in shimmering grace,
A moth from her winter swoon
Uplifts her face.

"Stars from her glamorous eyes;
Wafts on her plumes like mist;
In ecstasy swirls and sways
To her strange tryst."

And these two lines from *Bitter Waters*:

"We hanged up our harps
On the trees that were there."

That is, quite literally, more than Biblical simplicity; more sweetness, more hopelessness. For the Psalm has it "Upon the willows in the midst thereof, we hanged up our harps."

There is not much more to be said about his verse. It has rare touches of intimacy, of sweet melancholy, sour melancholy, and tranquillity. But you will find also occasional stale clichés, like "Those starry eyes," and such a sightless blunder as this:

"And two red lips set curiously
Like twin-born cherries on one stem."

Now and then he forgets himself and lets a commonplace slip out.

It seems that Walter de la Mare's virtues are all small, his sins all, or nearly all, of omission, for he is engrossed in little things. His art is microscopic, he illuminates what duller eyes miss. He is lightning without thunder. He stirs to poignancy, but he can not tear, shatter, or wreck. He is a delight.

Yet some there are who will say that he is unimportant.

ANACREONTIC

CATHERINE MEYER

Sing down your wineless fears!
A bouyant greekling cheers
The vine: its bursting grape
The antic heel shall rape
At Bacchanalian dance
Of goatish prank and prance.

Via Mentis

KENNETH FEARING

I

In the whole of a good rendering of Bourelli's *Kralna* the volume of sound is not once increased or diminished; the complete cycle, through passivity, portent, revelation, vitiation, and return to passivity, is maintained at a dead level as far as pure momentum is concerned. Yet how the symphony begins to glow and swell, irradiating quick, small gleams from its thousand facets, pin-points of lights that come and vanish so rapidly that they are scarcely caught, until the total effect is that of a strange prism discharging lights never seen before—lights, let us say, that lie in the core of our enveloping reds and blues; lights more intuitive than optical. And then the symphony cools to a ruby, faints to a jet, and finally lies latent, like a pale opal.

What does it? The calm violins of the prelude still echoing in the mind as overtones, while the flaccid pitch-pipes of the later movements snatch a sharper insistence? Colour follows colour, and the first throws itself with each succeeding, yet with varying and oddly converse effects. Not a chord born in *Kralna* is born to die; each is turned this way or that, now the background of a love, now the thread of a hate.

II

It was three o'clock of a December afternoon. Cummings and Randall drank their coffee and ate their oyster cocktails in Raeh's Tea Room, glittering lightly over the surface of wit, pausing in indolent, unpoised silences.

"Zola, I regret to say," commented Randall, "Zola had the lamentable habit of picking his toes in public, although there are some who say he announced God at the same time."

"But they were healthy toes," Cummings rejoined.

"Ha! You think that?" Randall retorted, mock-melodramatically.

"Not otherwise."

"Then consider *La Débâcle*. You call the spewings of a senile empire, the last yellow fevers of crinoline and gold brocade healthy?"

"No," admitted Cummings, "it's not exactly pastoral."

"A man who has read *La Débâcle* has gone to

war, suffered nervous break-down, and slow convalescence."

The buoyancy was slowly lost, and silence followed heavily. Cummings tapped the ugly sugar-bowl with his finger-nails, while Randall stared steadily and absently at a table in a far corner of the room. Here was life on a plane surface; flat, lukewarm, unattended. A thin thread of consciousness strung the colourless, transparent hours together, and everywhere there was daylight. One falls into the habit of asserting that this and this only is life, in reality, forgetting the obvious: that life is a matter of blood, bone, muscle, gland, and nerve. Curiously wrought is the nervous system, more complex than any microscope will reveal. And to say that life is only a plane surface, or even three- or four-dimensional, merely because an infinity of atoms in the body seems to have adopted ten or a score set arrangements, is stirring the salty ocean with an extremely small spoon.

"Judge Kurl has suppressed Trenton's new novel, *Cadmus!*" stated Randall with forced fervor and a show of contempt.

"When?"

"Today's newspapers. God, how it wearies me! I ask you, Cummings: is it gentlemanly to tear up a work of art I might like, and you might like, merely because it is apt to derail some already half-deranged, hysterical woman or man? And who in the devil is Judge Kurl to decide for me, for the rest of humanity, whether that book is art or obscenity? Better to chuck away half humanity than lose a *Pamela*."

"Why?" asked Cummings curtly.

"Why?" echoed Randall, amazed at Cummings' withholding assent.

"Yes, why? In the first place, I don't give a whoop how high-brow some of your intelligentsia term themselves; the most of them are neurotics, not to say erotics, quite easily unbalanced by the best work of art, if it happens to touch their own particular neuroses."

"Well—." Randall was disconcerted. "What do you draw from that?"

"You mean," supplemented Cummings, "you mean that you don't give a damn for anybody

but you. Therefore the book should be published anyway."

"Right. Why should I—?"

"Stop. Stop! Stop! Don't please; please don't tell me you're an egoist; that there's no right, no wrong, that everything is arbitrary, that you feed yourself, that there's no reason why you should go around brotherhooding the rest of humanity."

"Well," laughed Randall, "what is your particular aversion to my uttering such beatific sentiments?"

"My lad, you little reck—." Cummings interrupted himself. "Supposing, Randall, that the quaint little Victorian, Miss Charlotte Brontë, were to be dining with us today, and were to begin the conversation by announcing:

"'It's terrible, it's terrible the way the richer classes roll in luxury, paying no heed to the cries of their poor brothers, starving at their very doors!'

"I believe, Randall, that you would faint with an acute attack of nausea. In fact, your face betrays your annoyance. But picture yourself talking to a man of the next age from ours—. Your contempt for Victorianism would be a mere irritation compared to the disgust that 1999 will have for us of the age of Scepticism and Irony. They will look back at us as a brood of ghastly bodysnatchers, deriving our entire sustenance from prowling about the graveyard of Victorianism, fattening on puerile destructiveness. Today—what do we do today? Pick and re-pick the bones of sentiment, ignorance—yes, and even superstition and science. It's unfortunate we don't realize the English decadents finished the job in ten years—artistically. Americans have fallen into the habit, for twenty years now, of sneering tirelessly—in print. It's horrible. It's pathetic.

"By God, man! do you know what modern artists are doing? 'Portraying Accurately', 'Revealing', 'Voicing',—and the pitiful part about that is there's nothing worth portraying, revealing, or voicing, and worse,—much worse, by the hot arms of Baal!—the age is so ludicrous it doesn't know it isn't worth the paper it's written on; it wallows, giggles, slobbers like an old, sick archangel, in its own portraiture. Why, it's getting so bad that artists can't starve.

"The next age speaking of us—can you hear them? 'They wore dirty shirts, and they were intellectual', or, 'They didn't live—they only knew how living was done.'

"That's all they'll say of us. Nobody will want

to hear any more." Cummings concluded his oration in a breathless burst of contempt.

"Well, well, well. So you've found us out, have you?" Randall retorted caustically. "But suppose you give us the next age in another little nutshell. That would come in handy, extremely handy."

"The next age—the next age is going to explore the mind."

Randall exploded into laughter.

"Good! I can imagine how pleased the Poe-James—Wharton fans would be to hear that; to know that the psychologists' foundations were to be carried on."

"Yes. Carried on. Carried on—! 'Swept away' might be more accurate."

"I surmise that you're going in for the psychic. Beg pardon, but ghost-raising is a matter for the police, rather than literary exploration. But what form will the discoveries take? What will your pioneers have to say?" Randall's voice was coldly satiric.

"I don't know," Cummings returned abstractedly. Then he roused himself; "Let's get out of here and get some air."

As they left the building together, Cummings turned to Randall once more.

"I don't know," he added, smiling drily, "I don't know, but I can indicate. It will be like turning a stocking inside out, then turning it inside out again—and finding a third lining."

III

Walking slowly, they traversed several blocks, engaged in smooth, half-hearted conversation. Only in occasional lapses to silence, when the thunder of the city beat inward more deeply, did the cob-web of vitality spread itself, vaguely enmeshing them. A mechanical word thrown against the skein of noise and broken, changing images each time destroyed the growth of the delicate fabric. Both men wished subconsciously to be alone.

And so at the station, where Randall was to take his suburban train, they parted perfunctorily.

Cummings turned back and retraced his steps into the loop. It contented him to idle along, looking into the shop-windows, at the faces of the passers-by. Cummings found by approximate calculations that every fiftieth person in the hurrying throng was an indelibly unique individual. For every forty-nine faces in viscous putty there was one other that stood utterly apart reflecting an

alien spirit that sometimes strove to conceal itself, sometimes moved abstractedly aloof, or again seemed to proclaim itself defiantly.

Here went the portentous men and women of weakness, the race that is forever condemned to maintain an exhausting attitude of strength and authority to hide its grotesquely imagined defects from itself and the distorted world. Here passed the men and women of strength so inherent and flawless they were unconscious of it. Here went the calm dignified people, kindly and tolerant because they knew themselves and loved a god. The boys and girls who used to lead in playing robber baron and captive princess and Indian swaggered or minced by, still playing. But now they were leaders of conquering armies, suave, subtle conspirators engaged in international intrigues, mistresses of kings and poets. Here went the people who had loved so much they must have turned to hate, who had no dreams but one—that they were immune to dreams, and the hopelessness of dreams, and therefore stood apart from the rest of the world. Were it not for this one happy illusion they would indeed stand apart. Here walked the hurried victims of their own consciousness, nervous and unsocial, feeling themselves differentiated and hunted, for they could not silence the whisper that they have sinned, and it may be written on them. Dreamers passed, watching the nameless, thoughtless images that came unbidden to their heads. And there were wise, aloof philosophers, and men and women of good, hard common sense, brisk, smiling, and there were lovers of hate and lovers of sorrow, and lovers of love . . .

But somewhere among them, in these formless, crudely elemental crowds that coursed along the street like a muddy river at flood, came the fiftieth individual, who belonged to no man or woman, or pigeon-hole, or dream. His face was a single hieroglyph, unreadable to the world, and therefore incredibly terrible. Or his countenance portrayed such tangles and snarls of human emotions that the onlooker who saw would shiver back in cold pity.

Cummings looked for them, drew delight in glimpsing them through a maze of heads down the street, watching them loom nearer and larger until they passed, almost touching him. The incongruity of it—their jostling in the swarm like any one else, almost moved him to laughter.

He was surprised at the number of these creatures-apart. He would not have believed that one

man in a thousand was a distinct pattern, until he had chanced to observe more closely.

IV

As he walked, unconcentrated and unpoised, he gradually became aware of a something that did not spring from the city, nor its constant eruption of faces, noises, colours. He made a lazy, clumsy grasp at the intrusion, which ended in an unspoken jest, but quickly permitted his thoughts again to dissipate themselves in a hundred avenues. But the whisper of the alien would not be stifled; it grew more insistent, until Cummings was centered and aware.

Rapid hoof-beats, and shouts. He listened more intently, half-pausing in the middle of the sidewalk . . . Hoof-beats and cries that rose to a sharp, startling clarity and suddenly fell away.

Above the screaming and wailing of the long steel bolts, the little bolts, the iron ants, bugs, rats, and reptiles of the city, again and again there seemed to fall on Cummings' ears the hoof-beats and sudden cheers of a flying cavalcade. Through all the roaring and rumbling, there were moments when he could distinctly hear the clattering iron on stone and dirt, snatches of oaths and shouts, the ring of arms—come and gone in a moment. He seemed to feel the motion, and to half-glimpse the body of horsemen wherever he looked. An hallucination, perfect and real.

"What a splendid illusion!" he muttered to himself. "Or is it an illusion?"

Again and again the impression surged up, and left as suddenly. "A Mazzini! A Mazzini!" came the cry, like a re-echo, while the troop rode on. Or "Keghor! Keghor!" and there was a glitter of swords, a tightening of lips, while pistol-shots rang out, and a red-cloaked rider slipped from his saddle. Then they were gone.

This phantom on Clark street, in mid-afternoon, three thousand miles, hundreds of years from all red-cloaked cavaliers! Yet there it was—for Cummings.

Eight or nine times it swept back to him, distinctly, and each time he fled across the leagues of space, the choked corridors of time, penetrated the noise and bustle of modernity, and found himself in perfect accord with his illusion. A suffocating nostalgia crept over him. On that day, the day of the great ride, the Flemish wine was like quicksilver in his veins; the cool wind unendurably full of a burning springtime that consumed him, and did not consume him. The sun was ex-

(Continued on page 152)

Amatoria

PHINEAS MAHONEY

I

If she swears with lips alluring
Love is Love and all enduring,
True she is,—
Answer this,—
Close her lips within a kiss.

If she whispers, "Now or never;
Love is Love, but not forever."
Answer you,
"This is true."
Take her with a kiss or two.

If she's cold with shame and sorrow:
"Love is Love and gone tomorrow."
True is she;
Quietly
Leave her breasts with kisses three.

II

Now that my love's away and wantoning
With other lovers, seeking new desires,
New hopes, new treasures, all the joys that bring
The first warm gush of life which soon expires
With its own burden . . . Now that I've grown free
Of all those small delights and faithless tears
That love entwines with artful sorcery
About my head when timid doubt appears . . .
And now that all's unsaid and all's undone,
And pleasure, weary-footed, turns to pain,
And then forgetfulness . . . O, love begun
In mortal passion meets with death again . . .
In this mad world of lips and hearts unsteady,
New loves,—no longer love,—shall find me ready.

STREET LIGHTS

A. LAURIE BRAZEE

Purple stars
That dimly ray the blackness of the streets,
And gleam on phantom figures,
That melt into the dusty mists.
And always in the distance comes another,
And another still, with the sole purpose
Of foiling the tall shadow
That slinks behind me in the dark.

Mr. John Barrymore: An Impression

F. A. M.

"Mr. John Barrymore" is not indeed so splendid a name as "Hamlet, Prince of Denmark": but it is far from common or mean. It carries to the susceptible imagination a vision of aristocracy. Its proper associations are with hereditary estates, with solidity and permanence, with select manners, elegance, and charm. A trivial man, ordinary in appearance and demeanor, undistinguished in mind or speech, might in literal fact possess such a name; but it would not truly be his: it would be remarked by the discerning as a singular incongruity, and would render its bearer suspect.

The name, in this instance, prepares one for its owner. When Mr. Barrymore appears on the screen one experiences a shock of surprise, and then a thrill of delight. With the average performer he has nothing in common. His frame, in its nonchalant grace, reminds one of Shelley; his features are individual, intelligent, arresting; in all his appearance, in lieu of insipid immaculateness, there is studied negligence—the negligence of art. His long hair, unthought of, falls away naturally from his brow; his cravat is artlessly knotted; his clothes have become one with his person. His walk is utterly unconscious. He does not stump, or mince, or stride. He moves slowly, uncertainly, like one whose thoughts are far away; or, if quickly, then with the velocity of light. His body is at all times in the service of his intellect. When its task is completed it sinks backward to repose.

Repose is the secret of his personal manner, and a chief source of his distinction. He moves less, and less frequently, than any other actor I know. He has discovered the immense potentiality of silence and of rest. Sometimes he will stand for many seconds, with fixed gaze, motionless. Human nature at such moments finds in him its deliverer. Man the changing and the changeable, man the driven and the pursued, the down before the wind, the leaf upon the wave, has asserted his prerogative, and, still at last, looks out of quiet eyes upon the flowing world. I, too, rise up before the spectacle, and in the depths of this passionless face catch glimpses of the soul.

In this living quietness, so strangely impressive, I sum up for myself the accomplished Mr. Barrymore. I think of him oftenest as he appeared in the scene where first I saw him. It was a dinner. Seated about a table were gentlemen in formal dress. At the center of the picture were the glow of white upon black and the myriad flashings of plate; at the circumference, ominous shadows, passing at length into darkness. The scene remained constant for a while; and then slowly arose, at the remote corner of the table, an imposing figure, tall, sombre, statuesque. The face was lifted: it was the face of Hamlet. The eyes were turned upon me: they were the eyes of the Prince: and even now, as I conjure up once more that bright moment of the past, I feel their motionless gaze, and I experience once more the calm of their repose.

Theta Sigma Phi, honorary journalistic sorority, has offered a prize of ten dollars for the best short story to be published in the March, April, and May issues of the Lit. The judges will be Warren A. Taylor, assistant professor of English, Ruth Teare, Theta Sigma Phi, and F. D. Crane, editor of the Lit.

A Sort of a Play

in one act.

F. D. CRANE

SCENE I.

Myrtle, seated at a small table, by an owl lamp. In the center of the table a large amber bowl containing Faith, Hope, and Charity, three spirited goldfish, two of which are alive.

Myrtle: (reading from a letter) "Dear Myrtle: Thanks for your consoling letter, but I am not as downcast over Mae's engagement to Percy as you seem to think. Anyway, how about yourself? Seems to me you were pretty thick with Percy. What say we combine for mutual consolation? Cautiously yours, Bill." *(to the owl lamp)* What do you think of that?

(the lamp blinks suggestively, but with a certain air of staid reserve.)

Myrtle: Of course, it isn't as though I really cared for Percy. Why, I hardly knew him! The first time he kissed me I knew we should never become really acquainted.

(She arises and roams restlessly around the room. Coming to a stop before the fish bowl, she notices the corpse.)

Myrtle: Why, what's the matter with the big one—with Charity?

Faith and Hope: (together) He's dead.

Myrtle: Why, how strange! And he was guaranteed to last a lifetime!

Faith: (sadly) He did!

Myrtle: Poor dear! What a darling he was! I must write Bill about him. Bill will be so interested—and that reminds me! I can send Bill the valentine that Percy sent me last year. I'll write him now.

(Myrtle sits down at the table, takes out her stationery box and begins to write. Quiet, save for the scratching of her pen and the subdued wailing of the bereaved goldfish.)

SCENE II

(Bill, seated on a bed, somewhat dressed in pajamas and slippers. He fills his pipe with a sigh.)

Bill: O cruel world! Is there no light?

(Enter a letter. Bill seizes it by the neck, tears it apart, and devours the contents.)

Bill: O fool,—blind, blind fool!

Letter: Who the devil are you talking to?

Bill: Ah, would to God that—

Letter: You're crazy. Here, take this valentine and leave me alone.

Bill: What's this? *(takes valentine)* Oh, the darling!

Valentine: (bashfully) My muvver says—

Bill: Yes, yes, go on.

Valentine: My muvver says one should not tell
One likes somebody awful well,
And so I can't,—but if I could
I'd tell you somepin' awful good.

Bill: O bliss! O intolerable happiness! *(faints with joy.)*

(Enter troupe of mad goldfish, singing.)

1st Goldfish: Hast heard the news? Charity is dead.

2nd Goldfish: What, Charity? What did he die of?

1st Goldfish: Alas, he died of love.

3rd Goldfish: Poor fish!

Chorus of Goldfish: Alas, alas, Charity is dead, Charity is dead.

2nd Goldfish: And she for whom he died, has she been punished?

1st Goldfish: No.

3rd Goldfish: She must be punished. Write her an ode on the deceased.

Chorus: Write her an ode. Write her an ode. She must be punished.

(Exeunt all but 3rd Goldfish, mournfully.)

3rd Goldfish: (declaiming)

O Charity! O tender, soulful fish!

What cruel lot was thine, what doleful fate!

Thou us'd'st to swim in Myrtle's amber dish;

Thou loved'st too soon, and thou wast loved too late.

Yet think not that thy death was all in vain,

Thou didst behold her,—what more couldst thou wish?

Thy love, though fishy, was more joy than pain,
Soft-hearted Charity, poor, deluded fish.

(3rd Goldfish weeps a pool of tears and swims away briskly, as Bill awakes.)

Bill: (still dizzy) O happy world! *(Lights his pipe and commences to write furiously.)*

SCENE III

(Same setting as Scene I. The owl lamp sheds a feeble glow, as if moulting. The two goldfish swim uneasily in their bowl. The corpse of Charity has been removed, indicating the passage of several weeks.)

Faith: How dark it is tonight!

Hope: Why does she not come?

Faith: The sky is overcast; the night is dark.

Hope: It is late, and she does not come.

Faith: Take your fin out of my eye!

Hope: Will she come?

Faith: How dark it is tonight!

(Enter Myrtle in distress.)

Myrtle: Heavens! Bill is coming this evening. What shall I say!

Faith: Tell him Charity is dead, but you still have Faith and Hope.

Myrtle: Give me strength, O Lord.

Faith: Give us our breadcrumbs, O mistress.

Hope: Give us a rest!

(A loud knock is heard at the door, mysterious, resonant, uncanny.)

Myrtle: (frantically) It's Bill! Oh, I just know he's going to propose! What shall I do!

Faith and Hope: (in chorus) Feed the fishes.

Curtain.

Leaves From a Notebook

W. E. LEONARD

CONFESSION

My fathers, sprung from Runnymede,
Were ancient England's Norman breed;
Their sons became, beyond the seas,
Gaunt fellows of our forest trees,
Among the men of plough and forge
Who spake that English word to George.
Myself, New England's scholar, teach
The master-books of England's speech:
Yet blood, nor love, nor pride should make
Man's vision when the world's at stake.

A GOOD OLD SONG

"Wir hatten gebauet . . ."

They plotted a matter
They wotted not of—
The Form can all men shatter,
But nevermore the Love!

The form has been shattered,
From outward the blow—
But what their hands have scattered
Is empty smoke and show.

The Ribbon's been slitted,
The red, gold, and jet,
And God he has permitted:
Who knows what God wills yet!

The House may go under,—
What matters the hour?—
The Soul is not to sunder,
And God is still our tower!

We builded together
The stateliest House,
And there through wind and weather
Had made our God our vows.

We lived there so truesome,
So friendly, so free,
The base folk found it gruesome
That men so true should be!

They waited, they prated
Of treason and fraud,
Reviled and execrated
The green, young seed of God.

What God in us planted
The world did despise,
Even good men doubting scanted
Our league and enterprise.

COUNT MIRBACH

(From *Raymond Robin's Own Story.*)

It's after Brest, where Hoffmann to Trotsky said,
 "Sign There,"
 It's May-Day by the Kremlin and in the great
 Red Square—
 And the long new grave by Kremlin wall lies elo-
 quently bare.

The May-Day stand is very tall, it's draped in
 black and red,
 It towers like a monument, above the Commune's
 dead—
 But see the banners coming! But hark the troop-
 ers' tread!

Battalion by battalion, the Red Guard takes its
 place;
 And, standing at attention, chants the Marseil-
 laise,—
 With lifted hats the people join, face so close to
 face.

Count Mirbach, friend of Hoffmann, leans back
 in his tonneau,—
 As the victor's first ambassador, must he not view
 the Show!—
 But he'll keep his hat upon his head, though ban-
 ners come and go.

Is't not to laugh, Count Mirbach—this mob in
 lofty mood,
 These beaten dogs who fancy to change the world
 to good!—
 But suddenly the Count upheaps and stares across
 the hood:

Who dares to flaunt that Pictured Face, right up
 to where he parks,
 His Master's fiercest exile of all heresiarchs,
 The gaunt cheek, the grised beard—the Hebrew
 prophet Marx!

Who dare to flaunt that Legend right onward to
 his car!
 In his own tongue they flaunt it, flapping on a
 spar:
 "We'll doff a Kaiser, Comrades, as comrades
 doffed a Czar."

"Berlin shall know this, Trotsky!—You swart-
 eyed Russia crew!"
 But as the whelps draw up by him, he sees, as on
 review—
 The German step and uniform, the eyes of Ger-
 man blue!¹

Is't not to laugh, Count Mirbach, the Field-Gray
 come to this!
 But the Count sits leaning outward, with elbow-
 muffled hiss,
 And stares into the gutter-stones, as into an
 abyss.

¹ German prisoners of war—under the Czar.

The Heart of the Sapphire

GUY K. TALLMADGE

In the dirtiest quarter of Vienna there is a narrow street which they call *die Hofstrasse*. It is hardly more than an alley, short and crooked, and ending blindly among very old and very dirty shops. The deep ruts scowl at the sky; the gutters seem to be wet and filthy always. And to this vile, little corner of the earth have come a number of the race accursed of God. Why the Jews should have claimed this street for their own, when it was that they drifted there, from what remote places they came, one by one, probably none has ever conjectured. Year after year the city has laughed and has wept, has delighted in frivolity and lamented in woe; it has taken into its heart men of many nations: German, Russian, Italian, French, they all have become Viennese, but the Jew remains always the Jew.

Possibly that is why these aliens had long ago driven out the other race,—if, indeed, other than Jews had ever resided in that street. They had been there longer than anyone could remember, seldom molested, speaking in their own incomprehensible tongue, their little, dark shops becoming ever poorer and more shabby.

Among the hovels in the Hofstrasse was a pawnshop. One descended a few creaking steps, and opened a heavy door to enter an evil smelling room. When the eyes had become accustomed to the dimness one saw a great number of cases and shelves indiscriminately piled with almost every conceivable article of human use. There were worn and dusty suits of clothing, battered traveling bags, clocks which one feared were forever silent, broken crockery, old silverware, coins, vases, weapons, statuettes, dog-eared and greasy books, cheap jewelry and ornaments of every description. And yet the collector could have found among this trash precious treasures, and among the worthless paste beads on the jewel trays the eye of the connoisseur could have detected stones of real value.

For Isaac Kapp was rich. Amid these heaped-up shelves and trays of tawdry jewelry he carried on his questionable business, and the squalid and windowless room in the rear served as his chamber. In this dingy cell he lived and secreted his treasure—a collection of jewels of enormous worth, which had gradually come into his posses-

sion during long years of swindle, and theft, and occasionally even worse crimes. His whole soul was the slave of his gems: for them he had shivered in his bed when the nights were cold and long, despite his great wealth; for them he had suffered the pangs of hunger and the shame of poverty.

One evening the old Jew turned low the gas lamp in his shop and shuffled out from his counter to bolt the door for the night. He stood a little while at the front window. Snow had been falling, and it was already quite dark. The walks were tracked with footprints; the street was a mire of slush and mud. Suddenly a man passed before the dirty window, casting a quick glance inward, and a moment later the door was opened and the intruder stood before Kapp. Many years of experience in estimating men told the Jew that the stranger was of high birth, but the pallor of the young man's face belied the haughtiness of bearing and firmness of step. Kapp turned high the flame of the lamp. His anticipation—for experience had also taught him that dealings with this type of customer were usually profitable—was not less intense for being imperceptible, but when the stranger fumbled in his cloak and held out to him a very large sapphire, the Jew started, and his fingers trembled a little as he took the stone. He examined it under the lamp. It was enormous, and exquisitely cut and polished. The weak gas light darted from its angles in brilliant splendour, and shone through its perfect facets into the profound depths of the gem, seeming to linger there, glowing richly. The old man was startled at the magnificence of the stone; he must possess it. An insane greed filled his soul. There was nothing he would not do that he might own that sapphire, that he might call it his, and live secretly with it in his squalid hovel, fondling it, playing with it, gloating over its rarity, delighting in its radiance. He turned the jewel over and over in his hands, then held it still and gazed into its mysterious and immobile heart. A nameless emotion swept over him, waking old memories that had long slept quietly in his breast. All the years of his degraded and solitary existence hung heavily upon him. And yet he remembered with no pang of regret the sins with which he had

stained his soul because he loved the opal and the pearl as passionately as other men loved the beautiful women among whom they lived; he remembered without remorse the utter poverty to which he had abandoned himself for the surpassing beauty of the emerald and the sapphire. He thought of the gaudy luxury in which he might even now live did he not desire the nobler wealth of these precious gems, and suddenly his old hatred of the Viennese swept over him like a burning wind. He hated them because of their insane gaiety, because they exchanged their diamonds for money; he hated them because they were Christian, and had left him an unnoticed or despised alien in their very midst; he hated them because their delight was in empty extravagance which their friends might admire, and he hated them because they found lovely women more desirable than rubies. And then he gradually forgot them, forgot their city, forgot the abjectness of the poverty which he had accepted; he forgot the dreary years of shame and dishonour which oppressed him, and their memory fell away from him like an outworn mantle. He thought of the ancient glories of his race: the wisdom of his people, and the majesty of their Kings—

"I will sell the gem. How much do you offer?"

Kapp started a little, and looked up. The stranger's proud face was very pale now, but his voice was imperious. The old Jew raised his hand, and the fingers rubbed deeply into the wrinkled cheek. His eyes, as he stared at the young man before him, seemed dull with amazement. He remained silent.

"Come, how much do you offer?"

Still Kapp gazed blankly for a long minute.

"Quickly! The time grows short. How much do you offer for this sapphire?"

Kapp moved his eyes slowly downward again to the stone which he still held. He gulped, and looked up. His lips moved a little:

"But . . . this is no gem . . . It is paste."

The stranger was dumfounded. His face lost every vestige of colour. Somewhere a clock could be heard ticking. There was a long silence. Then suddenly he whirled sharply on Kapp.

"It is a lie!" he cried, in a choking voice.

"No . . . no. It is only paste. See!" and he held the gem against the lamp again.

"Paste . . . Paste . . . ? It is incredible!"

The young man's voice wavered; his face dripped with perspiration. He started forward, and Kapp spoke quickly:

"But it is fine in colour. I will pay . . . five thousand kronen. I can sell it again . . . who knows?"

The young man reeled;

"Five thousand kronen!" he cried, in a voice of despair, "Five thousand kronen? I must have fifty thousand!"

Kapp stared at him, speechless, then slowly held out the sapphire.

"No! No! You must give me fifty thousand!"

Still the Jew could but shake his head and offer the jewel.

"But it is not paste! I swear it is not!"

"It is worthless . . . worthless, I say. I could not sell it again. I know a good stone!" His voice was rising. "Go to another place, then."

"No, I cannot. They are already closed."

"Tomorrow, then."

"It will be too late. You must take it. I swear it is genuine. It has been in our family for generations. It is impossible that it should be paste. I would not sell it, but I am obliged to."

Kapp hesitated a little.

"No, no. Fifty thousand kronen—it is worse than foolishness."

"But you must take it. Come, give me fifty thousand. It is not paste." His voice shook with terror. "There is a debt must be paid at dawn. It is either gold or . . . blood. You will give me the money . . . ?"

The Jew considered again.

"Well . . . if it is blood . . . Well, I will give you ten thousand kronen. No more," he added, decisively.

"Only ten thousand . . . ? No, I must have fifty. It cannot be paste. I would not offer it . . ." pleaded the young man. He was devoured by fear.

The Jew held out the sapphire once more.

"It is madness. I could not sell it again for a hundred kronen."

"But you could. There is a nobleman who desires it. I will tell him I have sold it . . . for a hundred thousand. He will come tomorrow."

Kapp's eyes narrowed.

"Ah, a nobleman . . ." He paused, murmuring. "No, he will not come." He grinned evilly. The stranger was almost frantic.

"He will, I tell you. He wanted to purchase it from me. He offered one hundred thousand kronen. But I did not need the money then. One hundred thousand kronen! He will come, I promise."

(Continued on page 147)

The Ballade of the Three Loves

GASTON D'ARLEQUIN

I

Love of the evening, when the bitter rain
 And winds mourn in the desolate trees, and
 we
 Hasten to fruitless folly, and disdain
 The sorrowing dusk in idle gaiety
 That you transform to the proud chivalry
 Of Princes and their loves, O, still disguise
 This gaudy day with nobler livery:
 Blessed illusions, in your tranquil eyes.

II

Love of the midnight, when the soft stars wane,
 And lake and woodland slumber placidly,
 The perished centuries cry out in vain:
 These are the groves of verdant Sicily,
 Sweet, summer island, flower of the Sea,—
 Hear, in the glade, Theocritus arise
 And pluck his lyre,—O Love, still give to me
 Blessed illusions, in your tranquil eyes.

III

Love of the dolorous morning, when again,
 Tired out with love and laughter, wearily
 We greet with weary eyes the day, and Pain
 Leads out our hearts in sad captivity,
 Your quiet glances set remembrance free
 And turn away the sorrow of sharp sighs
 With no illusions, Love, for none need be,—
 Blessed illusions, in your tranquil eyes.

ENVOY

O proud and god-like King, you laugh to see
 My light loves;—yet, (for you are very wise),
 What are your treasures what your majesty?
 Blessed illusions in your tranquil eyes.

PRIZE TRANSLATION

Horace, Book III, 8.

An Imitation in English Verse.

HORACE V. GREGORY

Ah, Maecenas, do you wonder, do you stop and wonder now
Why this First of March has found me with these roses on my brow,
Me, a single man and lonely, with a feast that shall allow
All a bridegroom's jollity?

Do you wonder in your wisdom with all learning at your call?
I have sworn a goat to Bacchus and a joyous festival,
For I just escaped destruction at the most unlucky fall
Of a most unlucky tree:

And this day shall find its setting in the slow, revolving year,
As it opens up the bottle, set to smoke and hold its cheer
In the consulship of Tullus; for today has found me here
Fit to taste its revelry.

You must drink, my dear Maecenas, to the safety of your friend
In a hundred cups of pleasure with the joys that never end
Till the sleepless lamps of midnight wake the dawn and mirth shall send
Care to death, right merrily.

Leave your politics behind you and forget the Roman State,
For the armies of the Dacian meet their well-deserved fate,
And the warring Mede is quarreling with his brother and his mate;
We have won the Spanish sea.

O, the Scythians have left the field and peace shall rule your mind;
And you must be yourself again, forgetting all mankind,
And, Maecenas, you shall live the present with the joys you find
In the wine you drink to me!

PHILISTINISM.

IRVIN M. SHAFRIN

A peck of apples
In a tin pail . . .
Proffered by a brass peddler . . .
I picked up a red one,
A rich one, a fed one;
"Surely," I yelp,
"Here's a *real* apple:
Perfect in form;
Wine-like, and warm
To the palate."
I break it in half.
And I am caught
Despite my erudition
And eternal doubt
For it is rotten
At the core.

I swear
At my naiveté
And gullibility . . .
And then I laugh.

Ironic humor!
Some supreme brass peddler
Makes *me* an apple
In His tin pail. . . .
For, as I am picked up,
They squabble:
"How green!
How lean!
So soiled and spotted.
Must be rotted,
Ugh!"
And, with gaping maw,
The garbage-can
Gulps me.

Oh!
If they only took the trouble
To break *me* in half!
They would find an apple
Sweet and juicy . . .
Deserving birth,
Full of worth
At the core.
But then . . .
That is expecting
Jerusalem
In Sodom and Gomorrah.

Jacob Gold

CARL RAKOSI

What phantom men would wink behind his face?
They always wandered through their dusk-
shawled place.

They had inscribed under his harried features
The lineaments of plants and forest creatures.
To wound his flesh-hued image with a knife,
And prick the decent armor of his life.

He wondered if there was a Jacob Gold,
Or something else more primitively old.
He used to gaze into a glass and say,
"I think I met some Jacob Golds today."
Or, "Maybe nothing that I see is real:
Only the silken voice white nights reveal."

Old Jacob Gold had laughed at luxury,
And lived his body's Winter quietly.
He worked and bore the burdens of his race
As plainly as the wrinkles on his face.
Within his globe of years he only saw
A frieze of angels lighting stones of law.

MANY MARRIAGES, by Sherwood Anderson. (B. W. Huebsch, Inc., New York, \$2.00).

The author of *Windy McPherson's Son* and *The Triumph of the Egg* has attempted in *Many Marriages* an intensely subjective composition. The novel strikes one as being a good deal of an experiment, both in form and substance, and one which has not been crowned with overwhelming success. The story concerns John Webster, who in some mysterious way has been cured of his inhibitions and now proceeds, somewhat circuitously, to live his own life in his own way. With theatrical cunning he contrives to attract his wife and daughter to his room at night in order to tell them that he is going away with another woman, and why he is doing it. In a final talk with his daughter Jane, he tells of his married life, the emptiness and the inanity of the years, his clumsy search for beauty in casual, forbidden relationships, and the sudden and amazing awakening of love. Jane is by far the most real character in the book; her emotions and feelings are well and powerfully depicted. Then John Webster goes away with his woman. And that is all.

The story is throughout overlaid with symbolism, and much is made of the wild and almost delirious speculations of the irrational Webster. George Meredith is said to have been the first of the modernists to bring the message that the most divine love was always rooted in the good black soil of fleshly passion. In *Many Marriages* the

soil is very black; the message is just the same. Yet the novel is an honest attempt to deal with a fundamental question, a problem which today faces normal beings beset with all the inhibitions of an outdated morality. It is a pity that it is not written with more style and finish.

The Hundred and One Harlequins, by Sacheverell Sitwell (Boni and Liveright) prove to be strange, wistful little beings wandering more or less aimlessly and somberly along the streets of an alien carnival. Their spangles are poignantly faded and anemic; their buffoonery is sad-eyed; one feels their maddest *grotesquerie* (and some of it is quite mad) is performed after the manner of a social responsibility. Always they seem on the verge of startling laughter—or tears—but they never quite fulfill their elusive promise. Something, a very slight something, is forever lacking. Thus Harlequin number three:

"Reading the Paper

"The second train he boarded with a paper,
He hides behind it from his fellows,
This bird-mask let him know the news,
He sees, like they do, from the air.
There they ride, each person in the carriage,
Each of them steering his cloud through the air.
All that goes on in the world they gather.
A visor to guard, and a mask to protect them.
Now, with their speed the white mane flows
loose."

While the nimblest, most whimsical Harlequin performs:

“At the Tailor’s
 “Grimaldi never answered his tailor,
 He looked in the glass and was far too busy.
 ‘Forgive the liberty, bend your elbow.
 Where do you want the outside pocket?’
 Such words and scissors are too worldly!
 What did God say when he ordered birds?
 ‘I insist on at least two coats a year
 And made of material that will not tear.
 They shall search the grass to find their food,
 Leaving a flash of light where they stood.
 In case on their search they find some fruit
 They shall float in the air and have wings to
 suit.
 Crests I’ll allow them as gay as flowers
 And plumes that gleam bright as jewels, even
 through showers.
 But I won’t have them always calling My
 name,
 They must imitate man, and make him feel
 shame.’”

But leaving the Harlequins, who are more or less tangible, Mr. Sitwell proceeds into a sphere of such ethereal vapour as:

“Will the leaves tremble till I know their tune
 In fiery praise of all the licking tongues
 That lap the crystal darkest night has laid
 To light her feet along the fickle walls
 Unseen, but built again when daylight comes?”

Contrary to the publisher’s blurb with the volume, one’s mind refuses to be drugged—with the “brittle magic.” Nor do the “senses get their pleasure”, an ultra-mistiness veils the major portion of the things sensual; they are colorless even when they are bizarre, and occasionally quite meaningless.

Yet again Mr. Sitwell will strike out a line, or an entire stanza, that is an emerald of the purest water, glistening brilliantly from its pale setting:

“In among the apple trees
 and on their echoing golden roofs,
 a singing shower rides on the breeze,
 and prints the grass with crystal hoofs.”

Amazingly beautiful, that gossamer web, and others, such as these:

“. . . the clouds dissolve and shower-down, sharp,
 rain that the wind plucks as a harp . . .”

. . . . “and still
 Among the drums and crystal gongs of rain . . .”

Unfortunately, Mr. Sitwell is a bit too fond of such fragilities; wings are forever “lifting and flashing,” flames “burn where they snow,” leaves and pools and summer winds at night melt into accord ineffably.

Through it all one feels Mr. Sitwell’s objectivity. He describes, either impassively, or only vaguely stirred. Veil after veil, each of the same texture, proceeds from his loom, intricately woven fragments, with mad little peacocks here and there, outlined only.

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ROCK FLOWER. Jeanne Robert Foster. (Boni & Liveright. New York.)

Here is a volume of verse that contains much beauty and many moods. There are lyrics, free verse, verses for Japanese prints, a sea poem, tributes, and three prose poems. When you are in the mood that turns you into yourself for relief from an uninteresting world outside look at the *Winds in Wild Grass*. The enchantment of *The King O' Spain's Daughter*, *The Faery Lady*, and the other poems in this section will bring you back ready to visit life all over again. These lines from *When You Were Tinker Paudeen* show the richness of heather and dell caught up with the magic of wind:

"When you were Tinker Paudeen
And I was red-haired Nell
We couched upon the heather
In Sannox's purple dell.

O then the blood-red morning
Was made for purest bliss;
The ardour of the morning wind
Was netted in a kiss.

A whang of cheese—we shared it;
A crust of bread—no more;
Then, brook and dell behind us,
The high road stretched before."

Then turn the pages until you come to this:

"Dew flowers at dawn. . .
Dreams
Perishing
Of their own passion.
In the grey light,
Your face
Vanishing."

The tribute to the late John Butler Yeats is one of the fine things in the book. She must have dined with him often at the Pettipas restaurant where he sat at the head of a long table, saying brilliant things and shining at everyone. "Who gave lavishly of himself," "unwearied by life," "ripening like an apple in quiet sunshine." And these lines:

"If Heaven were a perfect place it would bore me
I like to think of Heaven as a place with dis-
cords;
As a beautiful orchestration with Love as master
of the music."

In *Elemental* and *Into Dimness* she transcends personality as we know it and becomes a great force that shows its heart but not its face:

“Air and Earth and Fire and Water,
 Hunt me with your tinkling laughter.
 I am neither maid nor woman,
 Only in my semblance human;
 Empty as a shaken bowl
 Of a torturing human soul.”

And here is the quiet of aloofness and bending leaves:

“I am the root of the yellow willow,
 The stem of the lily leaf;
 There cannot come to my marsh-grass pillow
 The cry of a human grief.”

Her book holds the songs of many things and as the pressure of these realities meets faint patterns within us we are sure that we know her.

M. B. L.

The Heart of the Sapphire

(Continued from page 141)

The old man shook his head.

“But think . . . you will gain fifty thousand . . . perhaps more, who knows?” He was frightfully earnest.

The Jew hesitated, pondered a long moment, digging his fingers into his pallid cheek again. He took up the sapphire and once more contemplated it in the lamplight.

“Come, I will protect you against loss. You offer ten thousand. I will give you a note for the other forty.”

Kapp reflected, started to say something, and then examined the gem once more. After a prolonged scrutiny he murmured,

“Yes, it is very fine in colour . . . but the cut, it is not good enough,” he added, looking up. “Any one would know it is paste. I cannot take it. It is foolish even to think of such a thing,” and a third time he held out the stone.

The young man almost staggered. Half mad with fright, his voice was incredibly shrill as he appealed once more to the Jew.

“No! No! You must . . . it is all I have to sell. He will come tomorrow, I swear. I will sign a note for forty thousand kronen. You must . . . it means my life. If you cannot sell it for more than a hundred thousand, you keep the note also. He will not accept less than fifty. I beg, I beseech you . . .”

“Well,” growled Kapp, slowly, “because it is a matter of life, I will take the note. But it is ruinous . . . ruinous,” and he shook his head dubiously, and shuffled off, returning shortly with a corroded and dirty pen, some ink, and a scrap

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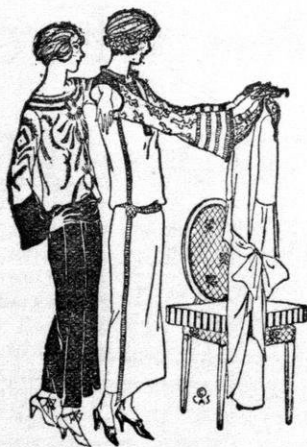
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of paper. The young man took the pen in a quivering hand and wrote:

Vienna, 16 January, 1912.

I promise to pay to the holder of this note, kr. 40000, with interest at present rate, one year from this day.

The Jew watched closely his laboured script, and eyed him narrowly as he signed the note with a scrawled *Rupert von Hirkomer*. He took the paper and the sapphire into his rear room, and returned after a short moment with a bundle of dirty bank currency. He counted five hundred bills while the stranger watched him with intense excitement. He hid the remaining notes in his garment and recounted the heap of filthy paper, rubbing each bill tightly between his wetted thumb and finger. Then he gathered them up and handed them to the young man, repeating in almost a groan,

“He will never come . . . It is ruinous . . .”

The stranger received the money with the greatest of excitement. He thrust the bills quickly into a small bag, which he secreted among the folds of his cloak, and rushed out of the shop into the darkness of the street.

Isaac Kapp stood motionless for a long time. Then he sighed a little, bolted the door, turned low the flame of the lamp, and went into the squalor of the rear room. He lighted a smoky oil lamp, and the weak and wavering flame cast his shadow monstrously upon the wall. There was a dirty couch, upon which he slept, and a chair standing before a table whose surface was greasy and black with age, and shiny with long years of rubbing from the Jew's sleeves. Yet this cell was the old man's home, and the treasure hidden in it would have made even Nero start with amazement.

The sapphire lay on the table. Kapp stared at it from the shadow. Fifty thousand kronen! He dared not think how many times fifty thousand it was worth. And a nobleman had offered one hundred thousand! He wondered where the gem came from—Rupert von Hirkomer . . . He started suddenly. What madness! He knew the nobleman—and von Hirkomer was known to possess an exceedingly rare sapphire! The Jew examined the note which the young man had given. He smiled;—it was idiotic! He held the paper in the flame of the lamp and watched it burn.

He looked at the sapphire again. This was the hour for which he waited while day after profitless

day dragged to its close; the hour when he could add one more jewel to his already priceless store. He stooped, and dug his hard fingernails into a crack in the floor. Lifting up a board, he took from the cavern beneath it a sack of leather. He was becoming excited now; his hands trembled as he loosened the string of the sack. He lifted it, poured out its contents on the table—Gems, brilliant and sparking; a great heap of them; a fabulous hoard of pearls, rubies, diamonds, emeralds, —thousands of them! The feeble light struck their facets and was shattered into countless glittering beams. The old Jew sat in his chair; he pushed his long hands into the heap of gems, revelling in their coldness, delighting in the bright shafts of radiant colour which darted from among them. He hid the sapphire beneath a great pile of other stones, and then removed them, amethyst by amethyst, pearl by pearl, until he had uncovered one perfect facet that gleamed with regal lustre. He seized the brilliant crystal and pressed it to his lips, covering it with passionate kisses. Again he placed it among the other stones, picking out the largest of them and arranging them in a splendid circle around the sapphire, and heaping against the ring hundreds upon hundreds of the smaller gems. He broke the circle with his hands, sweeping the jewels back and forth, back and forth across the table. He fondled them for hours, examining them, gloating over them, taking them up, and letting them fall slowly through his fingers again and again. Suddenly he paused, his hands buried in this vast treasure. He gazed long at the gems: the cold sharpness of the diamond split the light into dazzling rays of pale blue and scarlet; the darkness of the onyx was profound as oblivion; the mobile heart of the opal trembled and shone as though troubled by strange and soft emotions. The old Jew lost himself in the contemplation of his gems. Ancient pains and bitter memories were lulled to sleep in his breast; his exile—the exile of his people—passed out of his mind into forgetfulness; his pitifully barren hovel was transformed into an edifice of surpassing beauty: he beheld walls of marble rising before him, and pillars of inspiring grandeur, supporting the architraves of the temple of Solomon, and all of his enormous wealth lay before him in a great vessel of brass. But from the midst of that treasure there arose the remembrance of his senility, formed like a grotesque phantom which stared and leered at him—his senility, which had followed him through the swift centuries from a little, dirty street in a remote city. The old Jew wept softly, and still that phantom taunted and

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tormented him, and still he wept. Great tears flowed down his sunken cheeks and fell unheeded upon his outworn garment; he wept in grief, and sad regret, and utter woe. But in the temple there came a strain of music, and it filled his ears with sweet sounds. Suddenly it became louder, and triumphant, and in a great wave of majesty and power it arose and slew the phantom. Then it fell gradually into a cadenced harmony that lingered near the old man's ears until it wound about his heart, comforting him, luring him to sleep. His head sank lower and lower, until it rested upon his outstretched arms; his sobs became ever fainter until at length they shook his meagre body no longer.

The guttering light threw his misshapen and hunched shadow against the floor and the wall, and fell upon the mingled heaps of gems where his head lay. For many hours it wavered, while the darkness stood away, watching the Jew. Then suddenly the light fluttered, and went out, and the old man's slumber was troubled and restless, and his body shivered with the cold as the shadows crept about him.

But two days later, at almost the same hour of the evening as that when he had first appeared, the young man entered Kapp's shop once more. He was white and emaciated, seeming as though he had not slept for a night, yet he approached Kapp with an air of ease and assurance. The Jew was a little surprised at this second visit, but he greeted the nobleman almost affably.

"I am very sorry, but the gentleman who desired the sapphire has obtained another gem in its place, and since you think my jewel is paste, I am prepared to buy it back from you." He drew from his cloak a purse stuffed with gold pieces, apparently not noticing the look of astonishment which had gradually overspread Kapp's face.

"Here are sixty thousand kronen: forty thousand for my note, ten thousand for the sapphire, and ten thousand for yourself."

The Jew stared at the young man.

"But . . . but he did come! He offered me one hundred thousand kronen for the stone, and I sold it to him!"

The stranger could not believe his ears.

"What . . . what . . . ? What do you say?"

"A nobleman came, yesterday . . . at noon. He offered me one hundred thousand. I have not got it. I sold it to him. He said you told—."

"You have not got it! You . . . !" The visitor could not go on.

"But no. He purchased it for one hundred—."

"But I must have it! What have you done with it?"

"I tell you I have sold it to a nobleman for—."

"But . . . It is impossible! I must have it. It was entrusted to me. I must replace it!" His voice was filled with horror.

"Entrusted . . . ? But you said it was yours. You said it belonged to your family. You said—."

"His name! What is his name? I must have it, if I kill him to get it! His name?" cried the young man frantically.

"His name? He said his name was . . . von Hirkomer!" said the Jew, quietly, "and since that was the name on your note, I gave him that, too, for forty thousand more."

The young man uttered a cry, turned, and fled, leaving the door open. The Jew went quickly to the street. Looking down its darkening length, he saw the nobleman running away with all speed. Kapp grinned a little, turned into his shop, and shut the door.

The next evening all of Vienna was talking about the death of Friedrich von Weinhegen, son of a very proud noble. His friends knew that he had become mixed up in an affair in a café, and that he had exchanged cards with a certain foreigner. It was said that the foreigner, upon discovering that his opponent was an exceedingly accurate shot with the pistol, was frightened, ignominiously failed to keep his appointment, and offered no seconds.

They had found von Weinhegen's body floating in the Danube, and the newspapers hinted at foul play on the part of the foreigner, who was thought to have been an Englishman, and who had disappeared.

But in a little room in the rear of one of the shops in the Hofstrasse Isaac Kapp threw aside the newspaper bearing an account of the suicide, and took from its hiding place his leathern sack. He poured out his gems on the dirty table, he revelled in the sight of them, he gloated over them, he caressed them and kissed them, he let them slip through his spread fingers, he fondled them, and delighted in their splendour. He took from among his hoard his latest acquisition, the azure stone, magnificent in colour, faultless of body, perfectly cut, and held it up to the waving yellow flame of the oil lamp. And while the light cast his monstrous shadow against the wall, the old Jew lost himself in his dreams, gazing into the motionless and profound heart of the sapphire.

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Via Mentis

(Continued from page 134)

travagantly gold; the sky was lavishly blue. The grass and the flying trees, bushes, were green flames. He could smell the old virile odor of the sweating horses, feel the swing and rhythm of the gallop, while his knees pressed the warm flanks.

V

Cummings reflected on all that he had said that afternoon; it seemed to him that his words were like the jagged cracks in a mouldering wall, indicating slow processes within, whose sketchiness served only to conceal the wall's ramified crumbling. Presently the cracks would widen, widen until they swallowed the wall.

Those hoof-beats, for instance. Beautifully clear and insistent, they swept him from the surface of life to plunge him into remote depths. The hoof-beat-mood. But the depths contained more than gentlemen of the sword riding for the King, with cloaks flying and white teeth smiling out of debonair lips. He remembered that even before his fumbling fingers had clumsily chanced on the plexus of the secret, even his ordinary life had been full of swift moods. Take hate. There were many ways of hating; one could play with hate like a delicious poison, or an energizing draught of crystal springwater. One well versed in the science might be able to charm a whole cycle of life, with its varying intonations, shrillings, resinous—timbres and overtones, from a violin of hate alone. And so it was with love, or fear, or grief. Then what might a beautiful blending together of all of them, a skilled orchestration, be able to accomplish?

VI

The whole world knows sleepless nights; everyone but the individuals who are mere animals, of whom there are not as many as our satirists would have us believe, has experienced those holocaustic hours of chaos when, staring at the ceiling of a darkened bedchamber, crippled ideas, broken desires, incoherent words and phrases, go trampling over us like bodies of disorganized cavalry. Images shatter into images, unbearably real and significant; the storehouse of oblivion containing the locust-swarms of forgotten things is suddenly burst open, and there begins a mad carnival of liberation that lasts half the night.

Such moments are common to everyone; but now recurred to Cummings a strange consciousness that had gripped him supremely perhaps three times in his whole life, though never previ-

ously as strongly as now—a consciousness that may only be termed—"verging."

Quite suddenly a veil was taken from his eyes, and he was made aware, in a brief moment, that all unknown to himself, small, unrecognized forces had been gathering within him for years; the strays and remnants, probably, that his "sanity" had been denying and relegating to obscurity, and that now they stood welded into a mountain of energy, tottering over his ant-like head, perhaps even now beginning the swift downward crash that would crush himself and this bright, shiny little world he had known all his life into shapeless fragments.

"I am going insane," he muttered. "I am surely going insane. Presently. Yes, presently. In a moment I will be screaming, screaming and leaping along the street. So this is how it begins."

He studied himself. He studied the little currents of animal sensations that eddied swiftly through his body, everywhere; he attempted to analyze the odd images that swept in and out of his mind, like elves running across a dark theatre stage, and to grasp the thoughts they trailed after them. He even watched the way he watched himself; detached, he saw himself excitedly noting down the curiosities that darted through his being.

His heart, pounding and pounding, seemed to contract and grow cold. His pulse rapidly increased its velocity. His fear gathered upon him, and through it as through a microscope he saw the labyrinthine archives of his intellect, the tunnels, sub-tunnels, corridors, secret chambers, vaults—saw them melting and crumbling away, a blasted ant-hill.

His fingers clasped and unclasped nervously, until he noticed them, and recollected that he had once seen a victim of agoraphobia do the same thing. At the image a bolt of terror shot through him. He knew, knew positively that presently he would bite and shriek, that his last shreds of coherent will-power would vanish, and his brain would tumble into a thousand dark pieces, slipping away from him utterly.

In an effort to rid himself of the horror that was drinking his strength and "sanity" in enormous draughts, he attempted to concentrate the coils of his mind on something quite sane. A subtle trick of logic, propounded by John Stuart Mill, presented itself. For a moment he ran over the complex details of it, seeing it clearly and wholly; and then, while the pit of his heart burned unendurably, he watched item after item sink from his understanding. One moment he saw ten

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lines of reasoning, connected and symmetrical; then one of them faded as he watched it, vanished into oblivion, and then another, and then another.

Quite casually Cummings inspected his finger-nails. Inspecting his finger-nails. Inspecting, casually, casually inspecting, inspecting his finger-nails. Inspecting quite casually. The import of it surged over him in a wave of terror. So this was the way it came. Delightfully, casually inspecting—quite casually—his finger-nails.

He began to walk rapidly. The fragment of a poem floated through his head, and he repeated it, grasping:

“Where the thistle lifts a purple crown
Six foot out of the turf,
And the harebell shakes on the windy hill—
O breath of the distant surf!”

He could not think it. Then he forced himself to go over it, word by word, and understand it:

“Where the thistle—thistle—lifts a purple—
crown
Six foot out of—above—the turf—ground—”

Four thin lines of a poem between him and destruction; if he took his mind from the words for the fraction of a moment, that other would leap.

“And the harebell—harebell—shakes . . .”

The poem was swept away. There was a brief struggle for mastery, and the hopeless threads of “sanity” broke . . . the mountain had fallen.

Cummings smiled into the city’s diminutive vortex, and saw beyond it.

VII

What happened—in the five hours that Cummings was “looking through the eyes of the orchid” as he afterwards called it, merely for the sake of a vague indication? Frankly, the written language cannot paint “through the eyes of the orchid;” certain very indefinite colours, jagged ends of broken twigs, persuasive mutterings—such things approach the alphabet necessary. But of spoken words there are only six or seven, Cummings discovered, that could be of any service in conveying ideas of his experiences that afternoon. “Byzantine”, “Broom”, “Trianon”, “Mata-dor”, “Ordyx”, and one or two others.

Not much chance of building a great literature through the orchid’s eye? “You’re right,” he told Randall.

“But the ‘orchid’ does not grow in a world of literature, oyster cocktails, music, and madmen,” he added.

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