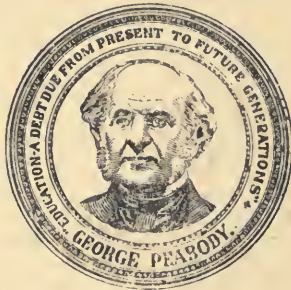




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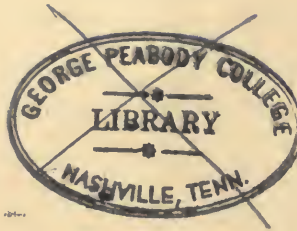
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# THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Magazine Devoted to the  
Enjoyment of the Play and the Theatre

EDITOR—Theodore Ballou Hinckley

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Volume IV — 1914

Published by

The Drama League of America  
Chicago

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A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature

February, 1914

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Editor, THEODORE BALLOU HINCKLEY

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Entered as second-class matter February 25, 1911, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

# THE DRAMA

Number 13

FEBRUARY

1914

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# APPENDIX 2020

The following table shows the results of the 2020 survey. The data is presented in a table format with columns for the different categories and rows for the various items. The table is organized into several sections, each corresponding to a different part of the survey. The first section contains the results for the first set of questions, the second section for the second set, and so on. The data is presented in a clear and concise manner, making it easy to read and understand. The table is organized into several sections, each corresponding to a different part of the survey. The first section contains the results for the first set of questions, the second section for the second set, and so on. The data is presented in a clear and concise manner, making it easy to read and understand.

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LEONID ANDREYEV.



HE rise of Andreyev was unusually rapid even in an age of such precipitate changes as characterized the Russian Revolution. Scarcely more than ten years ago Gorky addressed the following question to the *Moscow Courier*: "Who conceals his identity behind the pseudonym of Leonid Andreyev?" The reply was: "Leonid Andreyev." In 1898 the *Courier* published his first story, *Bragamot and Garaska*. In January, 1902, the *Abyss* appeared, and in August of the same year, *In the Fog*. These two stories forthwith carried Andreyev's fame from one end of Russia to the other. Their instantaneous and sensational success won for the hitherto unknown author almost as much attention and adoration as Gorky himself was then receiving when at the highwater mark of his popularity as a literary hero.

The decade since the publication of the *Abyss* has been marked by important and far-reaching events for Russia. It was in that period that the Russian government suffered defeat at the hands of Japan, and that the Russian people suffered defeat at the hands of their government. After the glowing hopes of victory in the struggle for political freedom

and social betterment, after an actual momentary taste of that freedom, the forces of reaction triumphed, and the best elements of Russian society sank into profound apathy. Many of these who had given themselves up completely to the fight for emancipation, who had sacrificed their careers, homes and all, who, in fact, had entirely effaced their personal selves in that generous enthusiasm and devotion to a cause which is peculiar to the Russian, now, in the bitter reaction of disappointment, converted their zeal for the common good into self-indulgence and extreme individualism. At present there are signs indicating that the Russians are recovering from their lethargic and morbid state. Their natural idealism seems to be returning, and it looks as if they were getting ready to start a new fight for the liberation of their country. But the years of post-revolutionary reaction have cut their marks deep into the life of the people; and not least felt was the effect produced upon the literature of the period.

For in no country is literature so much a part of life as it is in Russia, in no country does it so faithfully reflect the ideas and the spiritual and material conditions of the people, nowhere is literature taken so seriously, and nowhere, therefore, does it wield so great an influence. Hence, the fitful changes that Russian society has undergone in recent years, the confused and chaotic condition of its ideas and ideals are truthfully mirrored in its literature. The bold, defiant note of revolt, the confident trust in the future which Gorky had introduced, and which was the chief characteristic of the literature of the last decade of the nineteenth century no longer suited the mood of the vanquished revolutionists. Gorky ceased to be a hero. New and strange gods

arose whom the Russian *intelligentsia* fervently worshipped, each in turn; Artzybashev with his novel *Sanin*, which, with its glorification of the sexual appetite, as generally interpreted, swept the young Russian generation like a holocaust; Merezhkovsky and his school with their reactionary religious mysticism in the name of culture; Valery Briussov, a wondrously artistic nature, who, when not contemplating the cheerful prospect of the destruction of the universe, takes flight from the misery of this world to a world of his own creating, a sort of realistic-romantic world of marvelous beauty; and Fedor Sologub, another poet of great merit, who sees in death the only good in life. There are whole groups of other writers representing every current in European literature, from that of the most rigid idealism down to the extremest decadence.

With all this chase after new literary heroes, through all these frequent changes in literary fashions, Andreyev has maintained his position as Russia's leading story-writer and dramatist. And just as Gorky's name might stand for the epoch in Russian literature covering the last decade of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century, so Andreyev's gives its character to the literature of the subsequent period down to the present time. As yet there is no evidence of a decline in his popularity, though it was predicted years ago even by competent and favorable critics.

He has himself told the story of his life in a brief sketch of which the following is a translation:

"I was born in 1871 in Orel and studied in the gymnasium there. I was a poor pupil, and in the seventh form was always at the bottom of my class. For conduct I got only four, and sometimes as low

as three. The pleasantest times that I passed when in the gymnasium—I recall them with satisfaction to this very day—were the intervals between the ‘hours,’ the so-called shifts, and also those rare occasions when I was sent out of the class-room. In the long empty corridor there was a sonorous silence playing with the monotonous sound of footsteps. On both sides were doors closing off the class-rooms, full of people; a ray of sunlight, a free ray, would burst through a crack and play with the dust raised during one of the shifts and not yet settled. All this was mysterious, interesting and full of a peculiar, hidden significance.

“When I was still in the gymnasium, my father, a surveyor, died, and left me in poverty. At the university I suffered extreme want. The first year in St. Petersburg I even went hungry, but not so much from real need as from youth, inexperience and ignorance of how to utilize superfluous pieces of clothes. Even now, I am ashamed to think that I could go hungry for two days while I had two or three pairs of trousers, two overcoats, a winter and a spring overcoat, and the like\* I finished my course of study at the Moscow University. Here I was materially better off. The comrades and the ‘committee’ helped me. But in other respects I have retained a pleasant recollection of the St. Petersburg University. The student body there is more differentiated; and among more sharply defined and distinct groups it is easier to find suitable companionship. In January, 1904, I tried to shoot myself, but failed. The consequence of my unsuccessful attempt was penance in church imposed on

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\* I then wrote my first story about the hungry student. I cried when I wrote it. In the editorial office when the manuscript was returned to me they laughed. So the story was never published.



me by the authorities, and heart disease, not dangerous but obdurate and troublesome. At that time I made one or two unsuccessful attempts to write, and I met with some success in painting, from which I derived a great deal of pleasure. I have loved painting ever since I was a child. I painted portraits to order at one dollar and a half and two dollars and a half apiece. When I grew proficient I received five dollars and even as high as six dollars a portrait.

"In 1897 I received my diploma and became a lawyer's assistant. But I got off the track from the very start. I was asked to report court cases for the *Courier*, a newspaper just then beginning publication in Moscow. I had no time to work up a law practice. All in all I had one civil case which I lost at every point, and a few criminal cases which I defended without pay.

"In 1898, at the request of the editor of the *Courier*, E. D. Novik, I wrote my first story, an Easter story, and since then I have given myself up entirely to writing. It has been of a varied enough character. I used to report cases in court and write *feuilletons* under different pen-names. Now I devote myself exclusively to *belles lettres*. It is rarely that I write articles of a general nature. Maxim Gorky helped me a great deal with his advice and instruction, which I have always found excellent."

As a matter of fact the youthful Andreyev tried suicide not once but three times. He had another narrow escape from death in 1907. This time the attempt on his life was made by two assassins.

Andreyev's persistent hold upon the people has often been made a reproach to him. Without the willingness to follow the changing literary fashions, he could not, it is said, have preserved his popularity

undiminished. There is no doubt that the range of his interests is extraordinarily wide, and the themes of his numerous works correspondingly varied. He responds with peculiar sensitiveness to all the momentary ideas, moods and emotions by which educated Russia is affected. In 1904 a war breaks out between Russia and Japan, and Andreyev writes his *Red Laugh*, a ghastly delineation of the horrors of war. The Revolution finds its echo in most of the writings of 1905, particularly in his first drama, *To the Stars*. Then, when the government succeeds in crushing the people with its Black Hundreds, he gives us *Savva* (1906), a drama in which the anarchist hero seeks to annihilate everything, "to lay the earth bare," for the world is so bad that no rehabilitation is possible before the old is entirely cast out of the way. *King Hunger*, written in 1907, describes the uprising and the defeat of the hungry workers and the underworld. In *Anathema* (1909), he turns to the mystical and religious trend that suddenly manifested itself among some of the Russian intellectuals. And his latest works, such as the dramas *Professor Storitzyn* and *Yekaterina Ivanovna*, in which the personal interest of the characters constitutes the leading feature, while the larger problems are either altogether wanting or occupy a secondary position, are but so many proofs that the Russians have grown temporarily weary of the contemplation of the big cosmic problems, and are willing to stay awhile on earth with nothing but human beings for their company. These are but a few of the questions dealt with in Andreyev's writings.

In fact his works are a faithful transcript of the ideologic history of his day. They voice Young Russia's despair, doubts, and tribulations, occasion-

ally, perhaps, its ideals and aspirations, also. But to make this a reproach against Andreyev is indeed reversing ordinary values and making a demerit of what in an author is the highest merit. Nothing is so easy as the charge of catering to the changing public taste. As a matter of fact, Andreyev is a true child of his age. The problems of his age are also his own individual problems. He not only records them, but he feels them in himself, often divines them when they are but vaguely shadowed forth in the public consciousness, and gives them form and substance. That he touches the main-springs of the Russian life of today, appealingly interprets modern Russian society, and stirs it in its vital parts is shown by the remarkably spontaneous response that all his most important works have called forth. The impression they create is without a parallel in the literature of any other country. George Bernard Shaw is not so much a sensation in England as is Andreyev in Russia. The publication of each important story or drama of his has in succession proved an event, the storm-center around which raged fierce oral and written debates. The Russian magazines open their pages to voluminous expository and polemic treatises of the significance or insignificance of the last word spoken by Andreyev.

Strangely enough, the author, who has been accused of constantly turning from one subject to another in order to satisfy the demand of the fickle public, is also described as a writer obsessed by one idea. It is true that with all his resourcefulness, with all his variety of matter and method, there is one note running through almost all of his works. In many this one note grows so loud as to drown all the other sounds. Like a Wagnerian

motif it is iterated and reiterated until it seizes hold of you and never lets you go. This theme is Death. Tolstoy said of Andreyev: "He wants to frighten me, but I am not frightened." The truth is, he does not want to frighten. He is himself frightened, and because he is frightened with good reason, and because this reason applies equally well to you and to me, his dread is easily communicated to every mortal who has not attained the superhuman serenity of Tolstoy when he made that remark.

A humorous writer in *Life* called Andreyev "Grimazdeath," and Riedko, a Russian critic, seriously says of him: "In all the range of our literature, past as well as present, he is the gloomiest of Russian authors." Considering the tragic character of Russian literature in general, and considering further that the heart-wringing, terror-raising Dostoyevsky is one of its main representatives, Andreyev then holds a record.

He devoted two of his best stories, *Lazarus* and *The Seven Who Were Hanged*, entirely to this theme of death. *Lazarus* is written in Andreyev's usual impressionistic style and is full of symbolism. When Lazarus rises from the grave after having lain dead for three days, he becomes the very embodiment of Death. Whosoever meets his gaze feels its "destructive force." But for Andreyev the terror of death lies not merely in its being the cessation of life; still more horrible is its incomprehensibility, its riddlesomeness, the impenetrable darkness stretching beyond it. "None who met Lazarus' gaze were ever able to explain the terror dwelling immobile in the depths of his dark pupils—neither those who were forever broken by it, nor those who found in the original springs of life,

which are as mysterious as death, the will to resist its power. Lazarus looked at a person calmly and simply, with no desire to conceal, yet with no desire to say anything. His look was cold, as of one infinitely indifferent to the living. The sun did not cease to shine when he looked, the fountain did not cease to play, and the native sky remained as pure and blue and cloudless as ever. Yet the man upon whom his enigmatic gaze fell no longer felt the sun, no longer heard the playing of the fountain, no longer recognized his native sky. Some wept bitterly; others tore the hair from their heads and senselessly cried for help. But to most it happened that they began to die quietly and listlessly, and kept dying for many a long year, dying before the eyes of all, withering and fading and gloomy, like a tree silently drying up in stony soil. And the first, those who cried and acted as if they were insane, sometimes returned to life, but the others, never."

Wisdom is powerless against Lazarus' fatal look. " 'I know everything, Lazarus,' says the proud sage. 'What fearful things can you tell me? How will you terrorize me?'

"A short time passed, and already the sage began to feel that the knowledge of the terrible is not the terrible itself, that the sight of death is not death itself. And he began to feel that wisdom and foolishness are alike before the Infinite, for the Infinite knows them not. And the boundary line between the seen and the unseen, between truth and falsehood, between above and below disappeared, and his formless thought hung suspended in emptiness. Then he clutched at his gray head and cried frantically: 'I cannot think! I cannot think!'"

Not all, however, succumb to the look of Death.

In some, life is stronger and triumphs. To such belonged Emperor Augustus.

“‘You have killed me, Lazarus,’” he cries, almost overcome. This cry recalls him to life and he is saved. He remembers the people whose shield and protector he was and who needed him. “‘No, you did not kill me, Lazarus,’ he said, firmly; ‘but I’ll kill you. Go!’”

Here we see that for all our author’s pessimism death is not always the supreme and final power. Certain forces, at the command of the superman, seem to be capable of coping successfully with it. This idea recurs in Andreyev’s works under various forms.


In *The Seven Who Were Hanged*, death is treated in quite a different aspect—not so much in a philosophical presentation of the problem as in a psychology and realistic study. Five of the seven condemned to death are political offenders; two are common criminals. The theme of the story is the way in which each of them receives the death sentence: what their inner experiences and feelings are in the interval between the sentence and the execution, and how they meet death. In the wonderfully realistic pictures of the seven, Andreyev reveals at length that power of which we catch only occasional glimpses in his other writings. Stripped of his impressionism, Andreyev appears as a master, not of abstractions, not of symbols, as in his other works, but of the individual human character, the individual soul and the concrete personality. *The Seven Who Were Hanged* is a human, a fearfully human story. Though we are introduced to the characters only when they are about to die, we learn to know them intimately and follow their remaining fortunes with interest. Here we have, pure and unadulterated,

that Russian realism which finds its highest expression in Tolstoy, and which makes literature so awfully like life. Here the two Russian authors, so different in the quality of their talent and in the methods they pursue, almost meet. Andreyev's *The Seven Who Were Hanged* and Tolstoy's *Three Deaths*, might have come from the pen of the same author.

Another theme which bulks large in Andreyev's books is *Loneliness*. Ever so many of his characters are afflicted with that malady. They are "deathly" lonely. In the city they seek to escape from it in the country; in the country they seek to escape from it in the city. Vain effort! They can't escape it; it is in their constitutions. The crowd, the city, only intensify their agony, merely serve to emphasize their awful loneliness. The intensified loneliness in the city is fully worked out in a short story, *The City*. As the lonely hero, Petrov, sits in his room he feels that each man passing by in the street is "a world by himself with his woman whom he loves, with his own joys and sorrows. Each one is a phantom, appearing for a moment, and disappearing again, unrecognized, unknown. And the more people there are who do not know each other, the more terrible is the loneliness of each. In the dark, noisy nights Petrov often felt like shrieking with terror, like slinking away somewhere in a deep cellar and being altogether alone. Then he could think only of those whom he knew and not feel so infinitely alone in the midst of crowds of strangers." Thus the size of the city and its large population became a source of terror to him. "There was something obstinate, unconquerable and cruelly indifferent in that vast herding together of people, in that bigness."

Another indictment of the city is its levelling effect, its dissolution of individuality, most vigorously depicted in that peculiarly subjective representation of the city, *The Curse of the Beast*. "I am afraid of the city, I love the wild ocean and the forest," so the story begins. At the same time the hero is forcibly attracted to it. The "call of the city" proves too strong, and he hurries thither to drown his loneliness and "become one of its little waves." Yet he soon grows lonely again. The numbers do not relieve his loneliness; they make it only the more oppressive. What are the millions of people but a repetition of one and the same individual? "There are two million human beings here repeating two million times the self-same 'I.'" The city produces "fatal, tragic sameness where there should be difference." All lose their "I's" in it because each is compelled "to crawl into one and the same form." So disgusted does the hero of the story become with this dis-individualizing action of the city that he is pained to think that human beings must have any similar attributes at all. He is pained that everyone "must have a nose, a stomach, and must think and feel according to the same textbooks on logic and psychology."

We have seen that on the one hand Andreyev has command over a wide range of subjects and that on the other he seems to be attracted, nay, obsessed, by one or two ideas which appear and reappear in almost all his works. But that involves no contradiction. Despite the variety of his topics there is one point of view from which his work is done, and it is this point of view which, running like a thread through all his creations, unifies them and gives them meaning and significance. It is this point of view also from which his favorite subjects are





treated so that through it they assume universal importance.

At the conclusion of his *Sebastopol*, Tolstoy speaks of the absence of a hero in his book. "But," he continues, "the hero of my story whom I love with all the powers of my soul, whom I have striven to reproduce in all his beauty, and who always has been, is, and will be beautiful, is truth."

In a modified form Andreyev's hero is the same. "Name me the name!" cries Anathema to Someone guarding the entrance to the Beyond. "Light the path for the Devil and for Man. All in the world want the good and they know not where to find it. All in the world want life and they find only death. The name! The name! Name me the name of goodness, name me the name of eternal life! I am waiting."

Andreyev forever asks this question: How shall we make life livable, how reconcile our feeling of what life ought to be with the evils which fill the world? Andreyev, contrary to the general notion, does not, I think, hate life; he loves it. It is because he loves it that all the misery and wrongs and ills of the world so appall him. He wants to solve the riddle. What does it all mean? Why, after a wretched life, such as the average life is today, such as the life described in his drama *The Life of Man*, comes death? It is not death *per se* then, not a morbid fancy, such as those in which Poe so loved to indulge for their own sake, that preoccupies Andreyev's mind. Andreyev dwells on death because he desires "eternal life," just as he dwells on the horrors of life because he wants "the good." His whole literary activity is an endeavor to solve the conflict between reason which condemns life and feeling which affirms it. Considered in this way

Andreyev's works from the first to the last form an organic unit and show a continuous growth along the line of this central thought.

I shall endeavor, in the remainder of this paper, to trace the development of Andreyev's view of the world; his *Weltanschauung*, from some of his typical plays.

His very first play, *To the Stars* (1905), turns upon this conflict between life as it is and the refusal of reason to accept it. Sergey Ternovsky, a celebrated astronomer, has withdrawn entirely from the world and lives in his astronomical observatory perched somewhere high up in the mountains. Down below on the earth a bloody revolution is going on in which his son Nikolay and other members of his family are fighting. But he remains unconcerned. He has turned his back on the earth with its senseless evils, and lives a cosmic life among the stars. He seeks to find the meaning of life away from the world, away from the "dark shades of the earth, its vain cares—death, injustice, misfortune." "Vain cares?" asks one of the characters, sardonically. "So, if a new Napoleon should arise tomorrow, a new despot, and grip the whole world in his iron fist, would that be a vain care, too?" "Yes, I think so." And when his son is imprisoned, having narrowly escaped being shot to death, he remains just as serene. "How can I cry and despair," he says, "over the death of one man, when in the world a man dies every second, and in the universe probably a whole world is destroyed every second."

Sergey Ternovsky has escaped from life on earth because life on earth is senseless. "Man thinks only about his life and about his death. That's why life is so terrible for him, that's why he feels as

dull and tedious as a flea that has strayed into a marble vault. To fill out the terrible void, he invents with vigorous intellect a lot of beautiful things, but in all his inventions he speaks only about his death, only about his life, and his terror grows. He is like a keeper of a museum with wax figures; yes, like a keeper of a museum with wax figures. By day he talks to his visitors and takes money from them, and at night, all alone, he walks about terrified among the dead, the lifeless and the soulless. If only he knew that life is everywhere."

So he has taken refuge from the museum of waxen figures and found life in the great cosmic whole. He has learned to hear the song of the stars. "They sing, and their song is mysterious as eternity. He who but once hears their voice, coming from the depths of boundless stretches of space, becomes a son of eternity. Yes, 'a son of eternity!' as man will be called some day."

But for a while Ternovsky loses his superman attitude when he learns that his splendid son has turned an idiot through the outrages committed upon him in prison. He yields to almost normal human emotion. Soon, however, he regains his self-composure and again mounts his exalted heights where there is no misfortune, no death. Nikolay didn't die. "He is in you, in me, in all," he says to Marussya, his son's fiancée. "Only the beasts die, those who have no faces. Only those die who kill, not those who are killed. Those who are killed live forever. There is no death for man, no death for the son of eternity."

In contrast to Ternovsky, Marussya surrenders completely to her despair and can find no comfort in the all-embracing, yet extra-human philosophy of the superman. "Accursed life!" she cries. "Where

then is the God of that life? Where is He looking? Accursed life! To melt in tears, to die, to disappear! Why live when the best perish, when the beautiful form [of Nikolay] is broken! Do you understand, father? There is no justification for life! There is no justification for it!"

Yet, despite the evils of the world, she cannot abandon life. She must go back to the earth. "The earth breathes dread and sorrow, but I was born of the earth and I bear her suffering in my blood. The stars are foreign to me. I do not know who dwells there. Like a wounded bird, my soul falls again and again to the earth . . . I'll go. I will keep like a sacred relic what is left of Nikolay, his thought, his love, his gentleness."

And the drama ends this way:

Ternovsky. [*With his arms raised to the stars.*]  
I greet you, my distant, my unknown, friend.

Marussya. [*With her arms extended to the earth.*]  
I greet you, my dear, my suffering brother.

Ternovsky's Wife. Oh, my darling son! My darling son!

*To the Stars*, then, merely puts the question, puts it definitely and squarely, but does not pretend to answer it. It is a broad question, to be sure. What is life? What is its meaning? How make it endurable? How reconcile the evil in the world with faith in life, which is necessary to give it a meaning? But it is a question which constantly preoccupies Andreyev. Ternovsky thinks he has found an answer in a sort of negation of the world, a world of abstraction. But Marussya is a stranger to his world. "The son of eternity" is a mere phrase to her. She does not feel him with her heart. And so, though her reason pulls her away from the earth, her heart attracts her to it, and she obeys the

stronger force. For the mother such a struggle between reason and love does not even exist. She implicitly obeys the all-conquering maternal instinct: "Oh, my darling son!"

The next play, *Savva* (1906), which appeared only four months later, is artistically a far superior piece of work. Technically, *To the Stars* can scarcely be regarded as a play. It is rather a series of conversations, flowing along easily enough and interestingly enough, but not connected by any action or plot even in the modern sense of the word plot. In fact all the action there is happens elsewhere, not on the stage, and is only talked about in the play. One of the leading characters, Nikolay, never appears in person. All he is and all he does are conveyed indirectly. *Savva*, on the other hand, is a play well knit together. It has plenty of action, all bearing naturally and directly upon the central plot, and the interest grows steadily until the strikingly powerful denouement in the last act. The characters also are carefully drawn. Each stands out as a vivid, well-defined personality, the more important ones, Savva, his sister Olympiada, and Kondraty, revealing themselves in all their strength and weakness, the minor ones drawn in a few broad, masterly strokes.

Though not devoid of philosophical import *Savva* may be enjoyed simply and plainly as an ordinary play. Savva is an anarchist and has come to the conclusion that the only way of regenerating the world is by making a clean sweep of everything, by uprooting the entire old fabric, "laying the earth bare," as he says. Killing off obnoxious officials singly, as mere terrorists do, is futile, because no sooner is one tyrant removed than another arises in his place. So the destruction must be undertaken

on a huge scale. As a preliminary to this he starts out with a rather innocent plot to blow up a wonder-working ikon of the Saviour in a famous monastery at a time when large crowds of pilgrims shall have gathered there for a holiday. By a series of explosions of this nature he hopes to destroy the superstitious prejudices of the people, making them see that "dynamite is stronger than their God, and that man is stronger than dynamite." Then they will realize that "the kingdom of their God is at an end, and that the kingdom of man has come." His plan miscarries, its failure giving the monks an opportunity of practicing still further deception upon the people by working on their superstitious gullibility, while Savva, on being discovered as the author of the plot, is killed by a mob of pilgrims. The play is among Andreyev's best works and deserves fuller treatment than is consistent with the scope of this paper. It has been put on the stage in Berlin and Vienna, but its production is prohibited in Russia.

About seven months after the appearance of *Savva*, came *The Life of Man*. Thus, three of the plays upon which Andreyev's reputation as a dramatist in no small degree rests were crowded together in a period of less than one year [November, 1905, to September, 1906]. *The Life of Man* is one of the boldest and, in the opinion of the writer, one of the most successful attempts of its kind in dramatic literature. It is abstraction in art raised to the highest conceivable power. Andreyev set himself no less a task than to write in this one play, consisting of five scenes and a prologue, all that the title signifies: The Life of Man, of Everyman. It is meant to comprise all the essential elements that enter into the average human life. Like an algebraic

formula, it can be applied to every special case. In fact, in external workmanship it strongly suggests a mathematical formula. It is precise, accurate and stiff as a paradigm. Scene I. The Birth of Man and the Mother's Travail. Scene II. Love and Poverty. Scene III. A Ball at Man's. Scene IV. Man's Misfortune. Scene V. The Death of Man. In each scene you find what you expect. There are no surprises. There must be none, for it is the life of the average man. But the throb of life is there as truly as in a character of Shakespeare or Dickens, or any particular individual of your literary or actual acquaintance. Andreyev has the peculiar power of re-embodiment, of making the spiritual tangible, the abstract concrete. He himself calls it the "neo-realistic" drama. What peculiar virtue must reside in a name! The "neo-realist" in the character of Andreyev simply goes ahead and quietly does what the "futurist" so loudly professes, but fails to perform.

"Look and listen, you who have come here to laugh and be amused. There will pass before you the whole life of Man, from his dark beginning to his dark ending." Thus opening the play, Someone in Gray forecasts the Life of Man in one brief paragraph:

"Being born he will take the form and the name of Man, and in all things will become like other men already living. And their hard lot will be his lot, and his hard lot will be the lot of all human beings. Inexorably impelled by time he will with inavertible necessity pass through all the stages of human life, from the bottom to the top, from the top to the bottom. Limited in vision, he will never see the next step which his unsteady foot, poised in the air, is in the very act of taking. Limited in knowledge, he will never know what the coming day will bring,

what the coming hour, the coming minute. In his unseeing blindness, troubled by premonitions, agitated by hope and fear, he will submissively complete the iron-traced circle foreordained."

Man appears on the scene as a young man, poor and starving, but despite his suffering, capable now and then of forgetting his misery, happy in his youth and in the love which he and his wife bear each other. He has lost his father in his early childhood, and has had a hard struggle making his own way through school and college. Now he is an architect, unable to obtain employment. Suddenly his work gains vogue; he grows prominent and rich. The next scene represents a ball given by Man in his sumptuous house of fifteen rooms. The cold, formal atmosphere in the medium of wealth and luxury contrasts sharply with the genial warmth of poverty in the former picture. In the next scene he has grown poor again; his home is neglected, only a couple of rooms being occupied, the rest remaining empty and being infested with rats. And as the last crushing blow his "good" son is treacherously wounded by a "bad" man, and dies.

The reader will have noted the autobiographical character of the first part. Like Man, Andreyev, through the early loss of his parents, had a hard struggle with poverty from his boyhood on, and then jumped into fame as suddenly as Man.

The play is as compact in structure as it is rich in symbolic meaning. Very curious, as contrasting with the impression of the extreme modernity of the drama, are the crude and primitive methods which Andreyev uses without the least scruple. In the second scene Man's wife indulges in a long monologue to tell the audience the past history of the hero; and in the fourth scene an old servant is con-



veniently made to talk to herself and blab out all that has happened since the Ball at Man's. But these crudities, far from jarring, seem to fall in quite harmoniously with the general atmosphere of the play, which is all in the region of the primitive.

*The Life of Man* again puts the emphasis on the question of the meaning of life. The riddling nature of it is here personified in the figure of Someone in Gray. Though Man's "constant companion," nothing definite is known about him—hence the indefiniteness of his name. "I don't know who you are, God, Devil, Fate or Life!" Though Man's "constant companion," he stands by, looking on with cold indifference, no matter what happens, and every appeal to him falls upon deaf ears. It will be remembered how Andreyev speaks of the "cruel indifference" of the city. It is but one of the aspects of the cruel indifference of life in general, which he pictures in various forms. Here it is summed up and concentrated in Someone. Someone becomes the symbol, the incarnation of this indifference. The mystery of life and death, and the indifference of nature, is the wall against which human reason has been knocking in vain, which it has never succeeded in penetrating. Again and again the "mystery" is dwelt upon. What does it all mean? How take life? It is the thirst for a *Weltanschauung* that so characterizes the moderns. "Hitherto non-existent," says Someone, "mysteriously hidden in the infinity of time, neither feeling nor thinking, and known to no one, Man will mysteriously break through the prison of non-being and with a cry announce the beginning of his brief life. In the night of non-existence a light will go up, kindled by an unseen hand. It is the life of Man. Behold the flame—it is the life of Man. . . . Coming from the night he will return

to the night and go out leaving no trace behind. He will go into the infinity of time, neither thinking nor feeling and known to no one."

The indifference of fate to men's desires running parallel to this mystery is brought out with equal force and insistence. It is not in answer to the prayer of Man's wife that he was relieved of his poverty and given affluence. His fate had been decided independently beforehand. "She knows not," says Someone, immediately after her prayer, "that her wish has already been fulfilled. She knows not that this morning two men in a rich house were bending over a sketch by Man and were delighted with it."

And when Man, swallowing his pride, goes down on his knees for the first time in his life and prays that his son may be spared, again no heed is paid to his heaven-stirring appeal. Events take their inexorable course regardless of human wishes. "Man has fallen into a sound, sweet sleep, deceived by hope. . . . He knows not that in a few moments his son will die. In mysterious dream-fancies a picture of impossible happiness arises before him."

The pessimism of the *Life of Man* is even more pronounced than that of *To the Stars*. The meaninglessness of existence is the more accentuated in that it is exemplified in a life by no means below the average in its share of happiness. And yet what does it all amount to? Man departs, "leaving no trace." The fashion has changed; his work is no longer wanted. He seems to be entirely forgotten even before his death. With what eagerness he clutches at a mere straw of hope that his work will continue to live.

WIFE. I saw a young artist near that house [a

house built by Man]. He studied it carefully and made a sketch of it in his sketch book.

MAN. Ah, why didn't you tell me that? It's highly significant, highly significant. It means that my ideas are accepted and handed down by others, and even if I am forgotten my ideas will live. It is tremendously significant.

And again he recurs to it. At the moment it seems to him so significant. "It has sent a ray of brightness into my heart." But what is the net result? What kind of showing does Man's life make when the balance is struck and the final accounting turned in? Defeat. He withdraws from the battlefield vanquished, and slinks away to die in "loneliness" in the cellar of a saloon. Here is the summing up of it in Man's Curse:

"I curse everything that you have given. I curse the day on which I was born. I curse the day on which I shall die. I curse the whole of my life. I fling everything back at your cruel face, senseless Fate! Be accursed, be forever accursed! With my curses I conquer you. What else can you do to me? . . . With my last thought I will shout into your asinine ears: Be accursed, be accursed!"

The curse is an acknowledgment of material defeat. But it also signifies spiritual victory. The spirit of Man remains unbroken. "With my curses I conquer you."

Spiritual victory! The all-conquering human spirit is to atone for the ills of outer existence. It alone vindicates life and gives it that meaning which is not to be found in the external world of the senses and without which it is intolerable. Some such faith Andreyev must have always had. Traces of it, rather faint, to be sure, are discoverable here and

there. It could not have been very strong. It was not a dominating note, but a timid voice of weakly protest in an overpowering chorus of condemnation. For a long time Andreyev seems not to have been able to arrive at a direct affirmative answer to the question of the worth-whileness of life. Apparently he vacillated between his faith and its awful alternative, sometimes leaning to the bright side, sometimes to the gloomy side, though never completely losing hope in the possibility of some favorable solution. In *The Life of Man* the dismal note predominates, and the saving faith scarcely shows itself. In *To the Stars*, on the other hand, despite the scepticism, the other side is given a fair hearing. The justification of life is found in the superman's power to rise superior to the evils of the outer world, just as in *Lazarus*, Augustus, by his superman strength, is able to subdue the influence of the look of death. Moreover, some day all will be children of eternity, as the astronomer says—that is, all will be supermen—and life will be vindicated for all. But the first time Andreyev meets the question, Is life worth while? with an emphatic and unequivocal Yes, is in his drama *Anathema*. Gradually, by painful struggling and searching, Andreyev appears to have worked his way to this position, and *Anathema* therefore represents the highest and most positive stage in the development of his thought.

Though in a religious garb, *Anathema* is but a variation of that theme which, as we have seen, forms the kernel of Andreyev's works. Anathema, who is none other than the Devil, appears before Someone watching at the gate that divides off the world accessible to reason from the region in which dwells The Origin of all being, the Great Universal

Intelligence, and asks him to open the gate for an instant that he may take a look at Eternity. "I'll become a God," he says, "I'll become a God. I have been wanting to become a God ever so long." He crawls on his belly imploring Someone. Even if he has no heart he has reason which is seeking the truth. "Here am I at your feet; open your face to me. Open your face to me but for an instant as brief as a flash of lightning. . . . You refuse? Then name me the name of Him who is behind the gate. . . . Does it not consist of seven letters? Of six? Of one? Name me but one letter and you will save me from eternal torture."

Failing to get a satisfactory answer, Anathema descends to the earth, declaring that to prove the injustice and the meaninglessness of life he will give David Leizer, a poor, unfortunate Jew, wealth, power and fame. He will make him a great man, living a life such as by all the rules of reason should result only in the general good and in the highest good of David himself, but which, as he knows from the way of the world, will lead to David's destruction and to much evil. He will show by David's career the nothingness of human existence; he will "proclaim through David's mouth the truth about the destiny of man."

The six scenes following the prologue are taken up with David's life—how Anathema made him the heir of millions, and how instead of using the money for himself he gave it to the poor and to the children. And David Leizer's name spread far and wide, and he was honored and revered above all, and the report went abroad that he could even perform wonders, and people came to him from the ends of the earth to worship him and to be healed. But when he had

given away all his money and had no more to give, the people turned against him, crying that he had betrayed them, and stoned him to death.

Armed with this evidence from the life of David, who because of his material limitations is unable to help the people in the way they want to be helped and need to be helped, and is therefore killed by them, Anathema again ascends to the confines of the rational world, and demands:

“Give me the name of him who brought about the destruction of David and of thousands of people. I am Anathema and I have no heart. My eyes have been dried by the fires of hell and there are no tears in them. But had I any tears I would give them all to David. I have no heart, but there were moments when something living stirred in my bosom, and I was frightened. Can a heart be born? I saw how David was killed and with him thousands of people. I saw how his spirit, black and pitifully shrivelled, like a worm dried in the sun, was hurled down into the source of non-existence, into my abode of gloom and death. Say, was it not you that killed David?”

In Someone's answer to this question lies the whole significance of the drama. It is the most direct and the most definite expression of Andreyev's religion.

“David has achieved immortality, and he *lives immortal* in the deathlessness of fire. David has achieved immortality, and he *lives immortal* in the deathlessness of light which is life.”

Still Anathema continues to press his questions.

“Did not David love? Answer. Did not David give away his soul? Answer. And did they not stone David who had given away his soul? Answer. . . . Not having satisfied the hunger of the hungry, not having restored sight to the blind and life to

those who died innocently, and having produced dissensions and disputes and cruel shedding of blood, for the people have already arisen against one another and commit violence, murder and robbery in the name of David—all this being so, did not David proclaim the impotence of love, and did he not cause great harm which can be counted in numbers and measured with measures?"

"Yes," Someone answers, "David did what you say he did, and the people did what you accuse them of having done. And the numbers do not lie, and the scales are true, and every measure is that which it is. . . . But not with measures are measured, nor with numbers are counted, nor with scales are weighed the things that you, Anathema, do not know. There are no limits to light, and no definite bounds to the fire's flame. There is a red fire, there is a yellow fire, there is a white fire in which the sun would burn away like straw. And there is still another, an unseen fire, the name of which no one knows, for no bounds are set to the fire's flame. Killed in numbers, dead in measures and in scales, David has achieved immortality in the deathlessness of fire."

Anathema is hardly recognizable as the devil. He bears but slight resemblance to the conventional Spirit of Evil. He is not the tempter in Goethe's Mephistophelian sense, nor in that same sense is he the "Spirit that denies." He is a new creation in literature, an original conception of Satan. He is the spirit of investigation, the scientist. He wants proofs; he wants to be shown; he cannot believe without observation. He is *reason without feeling*; he has no heart and he therefore cannot "feel" his way to faith. He cannot feel that human life justifies itself and is founded upon a rational basis. But

he burns with a desire to find out; he is consumed with a passion for truth. Oh, for one peep into eternity! And if he tempts to evil, he does so to gratify this ruling passion, not out of original sin, not out of a desire to destroy. And if he is a skeptic it is also because of his passion for truth, and not from a desire to deny. Andreyev's devil is the passion for truth. "Who loves truth more than Anathema? Wise Anathema grieving for the truth? . . . I am weary of searching. I am tired of living and being tortured in a vain chase for that which eternally eludes. Give me death, but do not afflict me with blindness." All who strive for truth, who hold reason in esteem, are his friends. He constantly appeals to them as those who "love the devil." But because he can see only with reason he is destined never to know the truth!

ANATHEMA. Tell me, will Anathema ever see the gate open? Will I ever behold your face?

SOMEONE. No, never. My face is open, but you do not see it. My speech is loud, but you do not hear it. My precepts are clear, but you do not know them, Anathema. And you will never see, and you will never hear, and you will never know, Anathema, unhappy spirit, deathless in numbers, eternally living in measures and in scales, but not yet born for life.

For a picture of the world as a vale of tears there is in the whole of literature scarcely the like of *Anathema*. And when one tries to analyze one hardly knows how the effect is produced. Surely not by the ordinary means of the drama, for it can scarcely be called a drama. It is a succession of pictures, and for the general impression it would make little difference if, with the exception of the prologue and the last scene, their order were re-



versed. So it is futile to judge the play by ordinary standards. If we did, the verdict of absolute condemnation would be easy and unmistakable. But Andreyev wrings pity from our hearts and touches us with wonderfully warm emotions in behalf of poor humanity. Let not critics step in where angels fear to tread. The pathos of the drama proper is as great as the extraordinary grandeur of the prologue and the finale.

The little play here given is one of those humorous bits that Andreyev now and then throws off in his happy moments. They come to him so rarely that when they do come they seem to burst upon him like uninvited but welcome guests.

*The Pretty Sabine Women* needs no commentary. It is as clear as a story by Mark Twain, and equally pure fun. Of course it is not without its lesson, and not without satire. How can a Russian writer ever quite forget himself to that extent? The lesson is direct action. And what political actionist, however extreme, would not vote with Andreyev, if, as a Russian, he decides in favor of direct action against legalism?

THOMAS SELTZER.

# THE PRETTY SABINE WOMEN

A Play in Three Acts, by Leonid Andreyev.

Translated from the Russian by Thomas Seltzer.

## ACT I.

*A wild, disorderly place. The day is breaking. Armed Romans appear from behind a mountain dragging along the pretty, half-naked Sabine women, who resist, screaming and scratching, with the exception of one, who lies perfectly quiet in the arms of her abductor. Each time they are scratched, the Romans yelp with pain. They quickly throw the women down in a heap, then instantly jump away and relax, panting for breath. The screams die away. The women also relax, suspiciously following the movements of the men and whispering and chattering in low tones.*

### *Conversation of the Romans.*

By Hercules, I'm wet as a water rat with perspiration.

Who told you to go for the biggest woman in the crowd? I took a little skinny one, and—

You did, did you? How about your face? Was it the little skinny one that did that?

Whew! She scratched like a cat.

They all scratched like cats. I've been in a hundred engagements; I've been struck by swords and

clubs and stones; walls and gates have come crashing down on me, but I have never been in such a plight as this. I've never been so done up before. I'm afraid my Roman nose has been put out of commission. For the present, at least, it's no good.

If I were not shaved clean, like all the ancient Romans, not a hair would have remained on my face. You know they have very dainty slim fingers with remarkably thin nails. Cats, you say! Bah! Cats aren't in it. My lady managed to pull out even the down from my skin and was so diligently absorbed in that occupation all the way here that she forgot even to scream.

A TALL, FAT ROMAN [*speaking in a bass voice*]. Mine managed to get underneath my shield and kept tickling me under my arms the whole way. I nearly split my sides laughing. [*Low, venomous laughter among the Sabines.*]

Hush, they hear us. Calm yourselves, gentlemen, and stop complaining. It isn't well that they should lose their respect for us the very first day. Look at Paulus Emilius. There's a man knows how to comport himself with dignity.

He shines resplendent like the aurora borealis.

By Hercules, he hasn't a single scratch on him. How did you manage it, Paulus?

PAULUS [*with mock modesty*]. Right from the start she clung to me as to a husband. I am surprised at you, gentlemen. Why, it's so simple: I lifted her up, and she immediately put her arms around my neck. If I feared anything it was that she would choke me in her tight embrace. Her arms are thin but strong.

Lucky dog.

PAULUS. But it's so simple, I say. Her innocent, trusting heart told her I love her dearly and respect

her. You won't believe it, but it's true. She slept the sleep of the dead half the way.

FAT ROMAN. Now, Romans, how are we going to tell who is whose? We ravished them in the dark like chickens from a coop.

[*Indignant outcry from the heap of Sabine women:*]  
What a vile comparison!

THE ROMANS.

Hush, they hear us!

FAT ROMAN [*lowering his voice by an octave*]. How shall we tell now? Mine was a jolly, good-humored girl, and I won't give her up to anyone. I won't let anyone step on my toes.

Oh, nonsense!

I'll recognize mine by her voice. I shall never forget her screams till the birth of Christ.

I'll recognize mine by her nails.

I, mine, by the wonderful scent of her hair.

PAULUS. And I, mine, by the tender beauty of her soul. Oh, Romans, we are now on the threshold of a new life. Farewell the torments of bachelorhood! Farewell endless nights with their confounded nightingales. Let what nightingale pleases sing now, or any other bird whatsoever, I am prepared.

FAT ROMAN. Yes, it's time we entered the matrimonial state.

THE WOMEN.

Yes, go ahead! Try it! Let's see how you'll do it!

THE ROMANS.

Hush, they hear us.

It's time; it's time.

Romans, who'll be the first?

[*Silence. All remain standing motionless. Low, venomous laughter among the women.*]

FAT ROMAN. I have laughed enough. Let others do the laughing now. I won't let anybody step on my toes. Hey, Paulus, you go forth.

PAULUS. Monster! Don't you see mine is still asleep? You see that little dark bundle there under the rock? That's she. Oh, innocent heart!

SCIPIO. Romans, I see by your irresolution and state of excitement, fully justified in the present circumstances, that none of you will have the courage to approach those cruel, relentless creatures singly. My plan, therefore, O gentlemen of ancient Rome, is this—

FAT ROMAN. He has a head on him, Scipio has.

SCIPIO. This is my plan. Let's all advance upon them together, slowly, without haste, each hiding behind the other. Seeing that we weren't afraid of their husbands—

FAT ROMAN. Oh, their husbands, that was easy.

[*Loud groans among the women and outbursts of weeping.*]

Hush, they hear us.

There you are again, Mark Antony, with your stentorian lungs! Anyway we must try to avoid the mention of that unfortunate word "husband." You see what a dreadful effect it has upon the poor things. Now, then, gentlemen, do you agree to my plan?

We do, we do.

SCIPIO. Now, then, gentlemen!

[*The Romans prepare for the attack, the women for the defense. In place of the charming faces only sharp nails are seen ready to plunge into face and hair. A low hissing like a snake's. The Romans*

*advance in accordance with the plan, that is, hiding behind one another; this leads to their all drawing backward and disappearing behind the scenes. Laughter among the women. The Romans re-enter, puzzled.]*

There seems to be some weak point in your plan, Scipio. Having wanted to advance, we retreated, as Socrates would have said.

FAT ROMAN. I don't understand.

PAULUS. Romans, let us be brave. What matter if we do get a scratch or two? By the extra-terrestrial deity, forward march, Roman gentlemen! Set to!

*[The Romans, advancing in disorder and all except Paulus with their eyes raised dreamily toward the sky, throw themselves upon the women, but after a moment's silent struggle quickly draw back, all holding their hands to their noses.]*

SCIPIO *[through his nose]*. Did you notice, gentlemen, they didn't even scream? It's a bad omen when women don't scream. I prefer that they do.

What's to be done?

I want matrimony.

I want a domestic hearth. What is life without a domestic hearth? We have been laying the foundations of Rome long enough, the devil take it! It's time for us to enjoy a vacation.

FAT ROMAN. Unfortunately, ancient Romans, these isn't one man among us who knows the psychology of women. Being so long engaged in wars and in the founding of Rome, we have grown coarse, lost all refinement, and forgotten what sort of creature a woman is.

PAULUS *[modestly]*. Not all.

SCIPIO. But these women already had husbands,

the fellows we beat yesterday. This leads me to the conclusion that there must be some way, some hidden, mysterious way, of approaching a woman which we do not know. How are we to find out?

FAT ROMAN. We must ask the women themselves.

They won't tell.

[*Venomous laughter among the women.*]

Hush, they hear us.

SCIPIO. Here, I have a scheme.

FAT ROMAN. My, but that Scipio has a head on him!

SCIPIO. Our charming ravished women—doesn't it seem to you, gentlemen, as if they had ravished us, not we them?—our charming women, I say, pre-occupied with scratching our faces, pulling the down out of our skins, and tickling us under our arms, could not possibly have heard us. And not having been able to hear us, how could we have persuaded them? And we not having been able to persuade them, how can they be persuaded? That's a fact.

ROMANS [*repeating*]. That's a fact. [*They sink into an attitude of despondency. The women listen.*]

SCIPIO. This, then, is my plan. To elect a delegate from among us in accordance with the rules of war and propose to our charming enemies to do the same. I trust that the representatives of both warring camps, enjoying, as they will, perfect security under the protection of the white flag [*He feels his nose*], will be able to arrive at a definite *modus vivendi*, as they say in Latin. And then—

[*The Romans interrupt his brilliant speech with shouts of "Hurrah!" They unanimously elect him delegate.*]

SCIPIO [*cautiously approaching the women, speaking as he walks, with his head turned backward*]. Now don't go off far, boys. [*Coaxingly*.] Pretty Sabines, please, please don't move from the spot. You see, I am under the protection of the white flag. The white flag is sacred, and my person, too, is inviolable—I assure you it's the honest truth, upon my word! Pretty Sabines, it's only yesterday that we had the pleasure of ravishing you, and today dissensions, squabbles and strange misunderstandings have already arisen between us.

CLEOPATRA. What impudence! If you think because you put that white rag on a stick you can make all sorts of insulting remarks, you are very much mistaken.

SCIPIO [*ingratiatingly*]. I beg your pardon—what insulting remarks? On the contrary, I am very glad—that is to say, to tell the truth, we are all very unhappy, and—[*with desperate resolution*] we are consumed with love. I swear to you, by Hercules, we are burning away! Lady, I see you sympathize with us, and I therefore make bold to ask a slight favor of you, to elect, as we have done, a del—

CLEOPATRA. We know; we heard all about it. You needn't repeat.

SCIPIO. Why, we talked very low. .

WOMEN. But we heard you all the same.

CLEOPATRA. Go away with your rag now and wait in your place. We'll consult with each other. No, no, not here—farther off, please. We don't want anybody to hear us. And who is that stripling standing there with his mouth open? [*She points to the dreamy PAULUS*.] Take him away, please.

ROMANS [*walking off on tiptoe, whispering*]. Now we're beginning to get order into this business. [*Some conscientiously stop their ears*.]



THE WOMEN.

I swear I'd rather scratch a thousand eyes out than betray my unhappy husband in the least little thing. Sleep in peace, dear friend. Your honor is safe. I will watch over it.

I, too, swear.

I, too.

CLEOPATRA. Ah, my dear friends, we all swear, but what sense is there in our swearing? What good are our oaths? These people are so uneducated and coarse that they can't appreciate them. I chewed up my man's nose.

Can you tell yours apart?

CLEOPATRA [*with hatred*]. I shall never forget him to my dying day. He smelt so of shield and sword and altogether of the coarse soldier and squeezed me so unceremoniously. My poor, dear husband!

They all smelt of the soldier.

And they all squeezed so dreadfully! Maybe it's a custom among them.

When I was still quite a girl, a soldier came to our house and said he was from that distant country where—

CLEOPATRA. Ladies, this is not the time for reminiscences.

But this soldier—

CLEOPATRA. My dear little Juno, I swear by Venus that we are not in the least interested in your soldier when we have our own about our necks. What shall we do now, my friends? This is what I should propose.

VERONICA [*risen from her sleep, her eyes blinking, approaches*]. Where are they? Why are they so far away? I want them to come nearer. I feel

ashamed when they are so far off. I was in a faint the whole time, and now I can't find the boy who carried me. He smelt of the soldier.

CLEOPATRA. There he is standing with his mouth gaping wide.

VERONICA. I'll go to him. I'm ashamed.

CLEOPATRA. Hold her. Now, Veronica, is it possible you have forgotten your unhappy husband?

VERONICA. I swear I shall love him forever. But why aren't we going there? Are you doing something? What is it? The fact is, I am not altogether willing to go. Let them come here. The moment you show a man that you're not angry with him, he begins to think an awful deal of himself without any justification whatever.

CLEOPATRA. Now, then, my friends, the first thing I propose is that we swear we shall never betray our dear unhappy husbands. Let them do with us what they please, we will remain as true and firm as the Terpaeian Rock. When I think of how lonesome he is without me now, and how he is crying in vain to the empty couch: "Cleopatra! Oh, where are you, Cleopatra!" When I think of how he loved me—

[*All cry.*]

CLEOPATRA. Let us swear, then, dear friends, for they are waiting.

We swear, we swear! Whatever they do with us, we'll remain true.

CLEOPATRA. Now I am at peace as regards our husbands. Sleep in peace, dear husband! The next thing to do is to select a delegate in pursuance to their request, and let her—

Scratch out his eyes.

CLEOPATRA. No, let her tell the scoundrel the whole truth. They think all we can do is scratch. We'll show them how we can talk.

VERONICA [*shrugging her skinny shoulders*]. Ah, what's the use of talking when they have the power on their side?

CLEOPATRA. Hold her. Veronica, power does not constitute right, as it says in the Roman law. Let me go, and I'll show them that they have no right to keep us here, that they are obliged to let us go, that by the law of both God and man, and in general—how shall I say—they acted like downright pigs.

WOMEN.

Go, go, Cleopatra.

Hold Veronica.

CLEOPATRA. Say, you delegate there with the white rag, come here—I want to speak to you.

SCIPIO. Would you have me remove my sword?

CLEOPATRA. No. What for? Do you think we're afraid of your swords? Come. Please don't be afraid. I won't eat you. You weren't so cowardly last night when you broke into our peaceful home and roughly tore me away from my unhappy husband's embrace. Why are you so afraid now? Come, come!

[*SCIPIO approaches cautiously. The Romans and Sabines arrange themselves in two symmetrical groups, one on each side, and listen attentively.*]

SCIPIO. I am so happy, lady.

CLEOPATRA. You're happy, are you? Then let me tell you: you're a scoundrel, you're stark mad, you're a thief, a burglar, a robber, a murderer, a monster! It's ungodly, contemptible, disgusting, repulsive, unheard of!

SCIPIO. Lady!

CLEOPATRA. I despise you; you disgust me; I can't bear the sight of you; you smell of the soldier. If your nose weren't so scratched, I'd—

SCIPIO. Excuse me, it was you who scratched it.

CLEOPATRA. I? Then it was you who—[*She eyes him contemptuously*]. Pardon me, I didn't recognize you.

SCIPIO [*rejoicing*]. I recognized you at once. Doesn't your hair smell of olive oil?

CLEOPATRA. What business is it of yours what it smells of? Olive oil is no worse than other perfumes.

SCIPIO. Why, I didn't say—

CLEOPATRA. I don't care what you said. I didn't tell you what you smell of. Anyway, it's a funny conversation, about smells and perfumes and things. What I ask of you, dear sir, is to tell me candidly and openly, like an honest man, "What do you want of us?"

[*SCIPIO lowers his eyes shamefacedly, but unable to restrain himself, bursts into a guffaw, holding his hand to his mouth. All the Romans burst out laughing. It makes the women angry.*]

CLEOPATRA [*blushing*]. Guffawing is no answer. It's a disgrace. I ask you, what do you expect to get out of us? I hope you're aware that we are all married.

SCIPIO. How shall I express it to you, lady? We on our part are also prepared to offer you our hands and hearts.

CLEOPATRA. Aha! So you mean it seriously? But have you gone out of your minds?

SCIPIO. Lady, look at us. We are not any and everybody. We are no rough Pinkerton thugs. We have just founded Rome and are burning with a desire to eternalize it. Enter into our position, lady, and have pity on us! Wouldn't you, for example, have pitied your husbands if one fine day they had been left entirely without women? We are lonely, lady.

FAT ROMAN. So lonely.

VERONICA [*wiping her eyes*]. I'm sorry for them.

SCIPIO. In the turmoil and tempest of war, busy and preoccupied with the founding of Rome, we allowed the moment to slip by, so to speak, when—lady, we pity your husbands from the depths of our hearts.

CLEOPATRA [*with dignity*]. I am very glad to hear it.

SCIPIO. But why the devil did they let you go? Why did they give you up?

ROMANS [*expressing approval*]. That's right, that's right, Scipio.

WOMEN [*bursting out indignantly*]. Disgraceful! They're insulting our husbands. A vile insinuation!

CLEOPATRA [*drily*]. If you wish to continue the negotiations, I must ask you to speak of our husbands with respect.

SCIPIO. Delighted! But, lady, however much we may respect them, we cannot help recognizing the fact that they are unworthy of you. While you are here breaking your hearts with your deep grief; while your hot tears, wrung from you by your loss, flow like a tempestuous mountain torrent in the spring; when even the rocks, quaking with pity, murmur and groan; when your dainty, charming noses, losing their exquisite form, swell up with your piteous tears—

CLEOPATRA. That isn't true.

SCIPIO. When all nature, and so forth—at such a time as this, I say, where are your husbands? I don't see them. They are not here. They are absent. They have abandoned you. At the risk of rousing your anger, I will say it—they have basely betrayed you!

[*The Romans strike an attitude of pride, with*

*their arms akimbo. Excitement and tears among the women.]*

PROSERPINE. Really, why don't they come here for us? It's time they did.

CLEOPATRA. That sounds very high and mighty, dear sir, and I cannot deny a certain degree of beauty in your posture. But how would you have acted if men had broken in on you at night to ravish us?

SCIPIO. We would have kept watch the whole night.

CLEOPATRA. And by day?

SCIPIO. And in the daytime you yourselves wouldn't have gone away.

VERONICA [*in her weary voice*]. Why are they so far away? I'm ashamed when they are so far away. I want them to be nearer.

WOMEN [*whispering*]. Hold her!

CLEOPATRA. What self-confidence! But I'm sorry for you, sir. It's true I cannot deny I have a feeling of respect and reverence for your suffering. But your youth misleads you. I will immediately adduce an argument which will at once destroy your wonderful dream, and I hope it will make you blush. How about the children, sir?

SCIPIO. What children?

CLEOPATRA. The children we left behind.

SCIPIO. I admit, lady, that's a serious problem. Permit me to withdraw an instant in order to consult my comrades.

[*CLEOPATRA retires to her group, SCIPIO to his. They consult in whispers.*]

SCIPIO [*returning*]. Lady!

CLEOPATRA. I'm listening.

SCIPIO. After prolonged and due deliberation, my

comrades, the ancient Romans, bid me tell you, you will have new children.

CLEOPATRA [*startled*]. Aha! You think so?

SCIPIO. We swear. Gentlemen, swear.

[*The Romans swear in a confused chorus.*]

CLEOPATRA. But it's very ugly here in this place of yours.

SCIPIO [*offended*]. Our place?

CLEOPATRA. Yes, it's a horrible spot—mountains, gullies, altogether so weird. What's this rock lying here for? Please remove it.

SCIPIO. Lady—[*removing the rock with great effort*].

CLEOPATRA. What sort of trees are those? God knows what they can be. I'll stifle here. Please tell me what sort of a silly tree that is? Are you embarrassed, sir? Anyway, permit me to depart. You want me to give you an answer, don't you?

SCIPIO. An answer to what?

CLEOPATRA. You asked me a question, didn't you?

SCIPIO. I? Excuse me, lady. I seem to be somewhat dull. What did I ask you about?

CLEOPATRA. There you are! Now you're insulting me.

SCIPIO. I?

CLEOPATRA. Yes, of course. You say you've turned dull.

SCIPIO. I?

CLEOPATRA. Yes, of course. Not I. You've lost your memory, sir.

SCIPIO. I?

CLEOPATRA. Well, I'll withdraw. Leave us, sir, until we have taken counsel together. You are a pitiful sight. Have you a handkerchief? Wipe your face. It's dripping with perspiration, as if you had been hauling rocks all day. [*She starts to go.*]

SCIPIO. No, lady, excuse me. I think I really did carry a rock, but you made me do it—

CLEOPATRA. I? I never had the faintest idea of such a thing.

SCIPIO. Pardon me, lady. What's the matter?

CLEOPATRA. How do I know? It's your matter, not mine.

SCIPIO. It seems to me, you are making fun of me.

CLEOPATRA. Have you really noticed it?

SCIPIO. I won't permit you to make fun of me.

CLEOPATRA. How will you prevent me?

SCIPIO. I'm not a husband yet, thank God!

CLEOPATRA. Aha! Now you say "Thank God." Not bad, sir. We'd be fine fools if we believed your oaths. [*To the women.*] Do you hear? Now they're glad already we're not their wives.

SCIPIO. No, that's impossible. Either you stop making fun of us—

CLEOPATRA. Or?

SCIPIO. Or go home! Yes, yes, go home, ladies. Enough! By Hercules! That's not what we founded Rome for, to get tangled up in your crazy notions like flies in jelly.

CLEOPATRA. Crazy?

SCIPIO. Yes, yes, idiotic!

CLEOPATRA [*crying*]. You're insulting me.

SCIPIO. O Jupiter, now she's crying. Lady, what do you want? Why have you got hold of me and why are you sticking like glue? Although I am an ancient Roman, by heaven I'll go insane on the spot. Do, please, stop crying. I don't understand what you're grumbling about.

CLEOPATRA [*crying*]. So you'll let us go?

SCIPIO. Yes, yes. [*Turning toward the Romans.*] Comrades, men of ancient Rome, do you hear? I haven't any strength left.



FAT ROMAN. Let them go. We'll ravish the wives of the Etruscans.

SCIPIO. These are not women, but—

CLEOPATRA [*crying*]. Really?

SCIPIO. Really what?

CLEOPATRA. Really, you're going to let us go? Maybe you're just saying so, and the moment we start you'll snatch us back.

SCIPIO. No—upon my word, go. The way she sticks!

CLEOPATRA [*crying*]. And will you take us back home?

SCIPIO. What!

CLEOPATRA. Well, why not? You brought us here; then you should return us. It's a very great distance.

[*A venomous laugh from the women. SCIPIO, panting with anger, throws them fierce glances and wants to say something, but merely stamps his foot and retires to the Romans. All the Romans demonstratively turn their backs on the women and remain sitting thus until nearly the end of the act. The women calmly consult together.*]

CLEOPATRA. Did you hear, friends? They'll let us go back.

VERONICA. Yes, it's terrible.

#### THE WOMEN.

No, say, rather, they're chasing us away. It's outrageous. To ravish innocent women for nothing at all, break into their homes in the middle of the night, turn their furniture topsy-turvy, wake their children—and now they don't want us! What do you think of that?

And our poor husbands! Consider what they have had to endure. All for nothing.

Why, I declare! Think of it! At night, when everybody's asleep.

Do you know the way back home?

Do you suppose I studied the road while I was being carried here? Of course I don't know the way. All I know is that it's tremendously far.

But they won't see us back.

[*Low laughter from the Romans.*]

VERONICA [*groaning*]. Look, they have made him sit down with his back to us, too. I'll go to him.

Wait, Veronica, your boy won't run away from you. We've got to talk matters over.

PROSERPINE. My opinion is—what difference does it make what husbands we have, these here, or those there? These are all right and those are all right and others are all right, too. I know the first thing they'll ask me to do is to cook soup for them. I rather fancy the idea of having a new husband. My first husband has already got tired of my menu, and this chump here will be delighted.

CLEOPATRA. Proserpine, that's cynical. You must remember, history will judge us.

PROSERPINE. Ah, a lot history knows about the affairs of us women. It's not so bad here, either.

CLEOPATRA. You're terrible, Proserpine. Suppose they heard us. This is what I propose, dear friends. Of course, we'll go home without delay to our dear peaceful husbands. But the way is long and we're so tired—

My nerves have all gone to pieces.

Nobody's strong enough to stand all that—all of a sudden to have your house turned upside down in the middle of the night.

CLEOPATRA. Let's remain here for a couple of days. That won't bind us to anything, will it? And they'll be so glad. And seeing how jolly and gentle

we are, they won't feel so bad to part with us. I'll admit I was a little sorry for my man. His nose is in a terrible state.

But only for two days.

I think one's enough. We'll just get rested up a bit and walk around a little. Quick, Cleopatra. I think they've fallen asleep already.

CLEOPATRA. Sir.

SCIPIO [*without turning around*]. What is it?

CLEOPATRA. Come here a minute.

SCIPIO. At your service.

CLEOPATRA. We have resolved to take advantage of your generous offer and go away at once. You're not angry, are you?

SCIPIO. No.

CLEOPATRA. But first we should like to rest a little. Will you permit us to remain here a day or two, until we get back our strength? This is a very nice place of yours.

[*The Romans as one body turn around and jump to their feet.*]

SCIPIO [*ecstatically*]. Dear lady, what matters the place! What matters—O Jupiter! Lady, I swear by Hercules! I swear by Venus! I swear by Bacchus! Lady, I'll be twice and thrice damned, if—By Aphrodite! Gentlemen of ancient Rome, on to the attack!

CLEOPATRA. Shall we take a little walk, yes?

SCIPIO. Lady!—Ancient Romans, forward march! Fall in line. Right, left—two rows. [*He takes CLEOPATRA'S arm and draws her to the mountain. The rest, at his command, seize the Sabine women, each his own, and proudly march after him.*]

SCIPIO. Right, left! Right, left! One, two! One, two!

PAULUS [*remaining behind, flings himself around,*

*crying piteously*]. Where is she? Where is she? Men of ancient Rome; wait. I've lost her. Where is she?

[VERONICA stands with drooping lids, like a bride. PAULUS accidentally bumps against her.]

PAULUS. I beg your pardon. Did you see her, lady?

VERONICA. Stupid!

PAULUS. I?

VERONICA. Yes, you. You're stupid.

PAULUS. Why are you scolding me?

VERONICA. Scolding you? Oh, you stupid! Don't you see? My darling boy, I have waited for you thirty years. Here, take me.

PAULUS. What!

VERONICA. Me. It's I—she. Oh, you stupid.

PAULUS. You? No, not you.

VERONICA. No, it's I.

PAULUS. No, it's not you. [*He sits on the ground, crying.*]

VERONICA. Listen—we're alone here. I'm ashamed. Let's go.

PAULUS [*crying*]. It's not you.

VERONICA. I tell you—it's I. Hang it! What do you think of this? That one kept declaring for thirty years it isn't I, and this boy here says the same thing. Give me your hand.

PAULUS [*rising in terror*]. It's not you. Oh, oh, oh! Help! She's ravishing me.

[*Curtain.*]

## ACT II.

*A woefully dismal scene. It may be raining. The wind is howling; black clouds overcast the sky. But it may be that all this only appears to be so. It is terrible. The Sabine husbands feel like crying with grief.*

*The Sabines are arranged in two symmetrical groups, one on each side, some taking gymnastic exercises and zealously mumbling this accompaniment to their movements: "Fifteen minutes' exercise every day and you'll be perfectly strong."*

*In the middle on a long bench sit the husbands that have children, each with a baby in his arms. Their heads hang despondently, their whole attitude expressing utter despair. It is terrible. For a long time all that is heard is the ominous muttering, "Fifteen minutes' exercise every day, and you'll—"*

*Enter ANCUS MARTIUS, displaying a letter.*

ANCUS MARTIUS. Sabine gentlemen, we have our wives' address. The address, gentlemen! The address!

SABINES [*in low voices*]. Hear, hear! The address! We've got the address.

[ANCUS MARTIUS *whips a bell out of his pocket and rings.*]

SABINES. Sh! Sh!

ANCUS MARTIUS. Sabine gentlemen, history will charge us neither with dilatoriness nor with irresolution. Neither dilatoriness nor irresolution will attach to the character of the Sabines whose fierce impetuosity is scarcely to be restrained by the barriers of reason and experience. Do you remember,

O ye robbed Sabine husbands, where you plunged yourselves that memorable morning following upon that memorable night? Do you remember, Sabines, whither our fleet feet, obliterating distance and annihilating all obstacles, carried us? You remember, gentlemen, do you not? [*The Sabines maintain meek silence.*] Well? Remember, gentlemen.

A TIMID VOICE. O Proserpine, Serpy darling, where are you? Woe, woe!

[*The Sabines remain silent and look in suspense at the orator's mouth.*]

ANCUS MARTIUS [*Unable to await an answer, he exclaims pathetically*]. To the Intelligence Bureau, that's where we went. Remember our grief, gentlemen, when we found that the Intelligence Bureau, that superannuated department, knew nothing as yet and gave us the former address, and for a whole week continued to give us that ironical address, until finally it imparted this bitter bit of information. [*Reads.*] "They decamped. Where to not known." Well, what did we do, Sabines? Did we rest satisfied? Recall. [*The Sabines are silent.*] No, we did not rest satisfied. Here is a dry but eloquent epitome of what we did during the brief period of a year and a half. We placed advertisements in the honest papers offering a reward to anyone who would discover the address. We invited all the famous astrologers and got them to read the stars every night in order to guess the address of our unhappy wives.

A VOICE. Serpy, darling! Oh!

ANCUS MARTIUS. We destroyed thousands of chickens, ducks and geese, and cut out the insides of all the cats, trying to find the fateful address by the entrails of birds and animals. But, alas, it was the will of the gods that our superhuman efforts should not be crowned with success. Recall, Sabine gentle-

men—well, you needn't. I'll put it this way—neither the knowledge of experience nor the knowledge of inexperience gave us an answer. The very luminaries of the heavens to whom our star-gazers addressed themselves with grief and questions agreed to reply, but gave no more than the Intelligence Bureau: "They decamped; where to not known."

[*The Sabines weep to themselves.*]

TIMID VOICE. Serpy, dear! Oh!

ANCUS MARTIUS. Yes, gentlemen, a strange answer on the part of the luminaries of heaven, if you take into consideration that everything is seen from up there. Well, I will continue with pride to read the tale of our deeds. Do you remember, gentlemen, what our learned jurists occupied themselves with while the astrologers read the stars—well, well?

[*The Sabines are silent.*] But, gentlemen, remember. It's so difficult to talk to you. You stand there like statues, by God. I'm sure you remember. Only you're ashamed to speak. Now, then, gentlemen—well, well? Recall. What did our jurists do while—

VOICE. Serpy, darling! Oh!

ANCUS MARTIUS. Stop that! Don't interrupt with your "Serpy darling." Well, I'll help you, gentlemen. Remember why you have been taking gymnastic exercises. Well?

A TIMID VOICE [*from the back row*]. To develop our muscle.

ANCUS MARTIUS. Yes, of course. Fine! But what do we want our muscle developed for? Well? Gentlemen, you are enough to deprive anybody of his patience. Remember what we Sabines need muscle for.

HESITATING VOICE. To fight.

ANCUS MARTIUS [*shrugging his shoulders and rais-*

*ing his hands in despair*]. Oh heavens! To fight! And these are the words of a Sabine, the friend of law and order, the pillar of peace, the only genuine, Simon-pure model of right and conscience. To fight! I'm ashamed of this lapse into hooliganism, worthy of the robber Romans, the base, shameful ravishers of our lawful wives.

VOICE. Serpy, darling! Oh!

ANCUS MARTIUS. Shut up! We are occupied with a question of principle. We can't be bothered with "Serpy darlings." I see, gentlemen, that the loss you have suffered has somewhat beclouded your shining memories, and I repeat in brief: the reason we need muscle is that when we march upon the Romans—after finding out the address—you understand?—we shall carry a heavy code of laws the whole way, also a collection of the decisions of the highest court, and also—do you now understand?—those four hundred volumes of researches which our jurists compiled in investigating the legality of our marriages—do you understand me?—and the illegality of rape. Our weapons, gentlemen Sabines, are our rights and our clear consciences. To the shameful ravishers we shall prove that they are ravishers; to our wives we shall prove that they have indeed been ravished. And the heavens will tremble, for we have the address and the matter is settled. There! [*He waves the letter. The Sabines stand on tiptoe to see it.*] A registered letter with the signature, "A Repentant Ravisher!" In it an unknown friend expresses regret for the thoughtless act he committed, assures us that never again will he do such a thing and begs the fates to deal mercifully with him. The name is indistinguishable, a large blotch, apparently, from his tears. That's conscience for you. Furthermore, he states that our wives' hearts are broken.



VOICE. Serp—

ANCUS MARTIUS. See here, you with your “Serp” don’t give me a chance to say a word. Please understand that yours is an individual case. When all of us are so enthusiastically discussing a general question and working up a plan—I’ll tell you about it right away—are preparing either for victory or death, you are whining about your own particular woman. In the name of the assembly I censure you. Now then, gentlemen, prepare to march. Listen to the command. Fall in line. Hurry. It’s awful—you still can’t distinguish right from left. Where are you going? Halt. [*He takes hold of a Sabine who has fallen out of line and instructs him.*] To find out what is right, stand—look at me!—stand with your face to the north—no, with your face to the south, and your back to the east—well, where is your face? That’s not your face; that’s your back. Here—this is your face. Do you understand? I can’t spend any more time giving you lessons. Look at your neighbor and see what he is doing and what your right is. Now, gentlemen, who of you are carrying penknives? Turn your pockets inside out. So. And who of you are carrying toothpicks? Leave them here. We’ll not have the least suspicion of violence, gentlemen. Nothing that cuts or pricks. Our weapons—they are our rights and our clear consciences. Now let each one take a volume of the laws and researches—so—I should have had them bound, but we’ll do that later—that’s the meaning of muscle. You see? So—so. Trumpeters to the front. Do you remember the march of the robbed husbands? To the fr—. Oh, yes, do you remember how to march? [*The Sabines are silent.*] No? I’ll remind you. Two steps forward, one step backward; two steps forward, one step backward. By the first two

steps, Sabines, we express the inextinguishable fire of our fierce souls, the firm will, the indomitable spirit and determination to go ahead. The step backward is the step of reason, the step of experience and the mature mind. While making it we reflect upon the next step to be taken; by making it we hold on to the great cord that binds us to tradition and connects us with our ancestors, our great past. History makes no leaps; and we, Sabines, are on this momentous occasion making history. Trumpeters, trumpet.

*The trumpeters blow a dismal note, move forward convulsively, then draw back smoothly, the army of robbed husbands following them. Making two steps forward and one step backward, the company slowly passes across the stage.\* The curtain drops, the trumpets blow dismally, and the second act passes into the third.*

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\* The St. Petersburg theatre, the Wry Mirror, made a very successful adaptation of the *Marseillaise* for this. The first two notes sounded triumphant and bold, then dropped into a dismal note, as if from a shock of pain.—THE AUTHOR.

### ACT III.

*The wild place in Act I shows the beginnings of order. At one hut stands a Roman in an indolent attitude, beatifically picking his nose. From behind the left wing appears the army of Sabine husbands painstakingly marching in the same step and tempo as that in which they started—two steps forward, one step backward. At the sight of them some animation comes into the Roman. He even stops the explorations into his nose and looks on with good-natured curiosity. But the slow movement of the march apparently has a soporific effect upon him, and he resumes his indolent attitude, yawning, stretching himself wearily, and quietly sliding down on a rock. At a sign from ANCUS MARTIUS the trumpeters stop playing.*

ANCUS MARTIUS [*shouting desperately*]. Halt, gentlemen Sabines! Please halt! Please! O Jupiter, what power can stay a falling precipice? What power can stay it? [*The Sabines come to an abrupt halt and stand as if nailed to the spot.*] Thank God, they have halted. Listen to my commands. Trumpeters to the rear, professors to the front. The rest remain as they are. [*The trumpeters fall behind, the professors advance to the front and the rest remain perfectly immobile.*] Professors, prepare yourselves.

[*The professors quickly drop to their knees, unfold small tables, put thick volumes upon them, and throw the covers of the books open with a bang. This gives the appearance of a battery. The Roman*

—SCIPIO—rousing himself, apparently becomes interested.]

SCIPIO. What is it, gentlemen? Can I do anything for you? If it is a circus, I might as well tell you the Coliseum is not quite ready yet.

ANCUS MARTIUS [*indifferently*]. Silence, you base ravisher. [*To the Sabines.*] So now we are arrived at our goal, gentlemen Sabines. Behind us stretches a long road of deprivation, hunger, loneliness, and bottle-fed infants; before us an historical event such as has never before been heard of. Breathe courage into your hearts, gentlemen Sabines. Hold yourselves under control. Be calm. Harbor a sense of wrong, and quietly await the unravelling of the fateful drama. Remember, Sabines—what did you come here for? [*The Sabines are silent.*] Now, remember, gentlemen. It wasn't for a pleasure promenade that we came here with these books. Now remember, gentlemen—why did we come here?

SCIPIO. Well, well, now remember, gentlemen.

ANCUS MARTIUS [*to SCIPIO*]. Just think of it—that's the way it's been the whole time.

SCIPIO. You don't say so.

ANCUS MARTIUS. Honestly, upon my word, they stand there like blocks of wood, their eyes staring—that's all. Tell me, now, is it possible to make a good speech without once resorting to the exclamation "remember!"

SCIPIO [*amiably shaking his head*]. I scarcely think so. What sort of speech could one possibly make?

ANCUS MARTIUS. You see, even you understand. And these men here—

A QUAVERING VOICE FROM AMONG THE SABINES. Serpy, dear, where are you? Oh!

SCIPIO [*hesitatingly*]. It seems he does remember.

ANCUS MARTIUS [*contemptuously*]. Bah, he always remembers that. [*To the Sabines.*] Order! Soon we'll demand to have our wives returned. Woe to the ravishers, if their consciences have not yet awakened. We will compel them to yield to the law. Hey, you base ravisher, summon your vile comrades and prepare for the terrible answer.

SCIPIO. I'll go call my wife instantly. [*He walks into the hut, calling.*] Cleopatra! Patsy, dear! Come here. There are some people here to see you.

PAULUS [*Looking from around the corner, he recognizes the Sabines and bellows with joy*]. The husbands have come! The husbands have come! Gentlemen of ancient Rome, awake, the husbands have come.

[*He rushes out and flings himself on ANCUS MARTIUS' neck with tears in his eyes. ANCUS MARTIUS looks astonished. PAULUS rushes on, still joyfully shouting, "The husbands have come!" The Romans come sauntering in, sleepy, and occupy the right side of the stage. ANCUS MARTIUS, with his arms at his side, in military fashion, proudly waits until they file in.*]

FAT ROMAN. By Hercules, I was as sound asleep as on the first day of the founding of Rome. What's this mob here?

A ROMAN. Hush! It's the husbands.

FAT ROMAN. Oh. My, I'm thirsty. Serpy, dear, please bring me a glass of cider.

TIMID VOICE FROM AMONG THE SABINES. Serpy, dear! Ow-w-w!

FAT ROMAN. What does that fellow want? He's calling my wife, too.

ROMAN. Hush! It's her husband.

FAT ROMAN. Oh. I forgot. Oh my, I'm so thirsty. After that hot soup and that sound sleep

I could drink up a whole river. My, Proserpine is a fine cook! Really, gentlemen of ancient Rome, it's a gift from the gods.

A ROMAN. Hush!

FAT ROMAN. Oh, I forgot. I had a very peculiar dream just now. I dreamt I was sleeping and suddenly I saw Rome beginning to decline, decline, decline, and then fall.

A ROMAN. What's the matter with our wives? Some gentlemen are here calling on them and they don't come out. It's extremely impolite of them.

A ROMAN. I suppose they're dressing.

A ROMAN. My, that everlasting vanity! You might have thought they wouldn't care when these men are nothing but their former husbands. But even so they must display the eternal feminine.

FAT ROMAN. Oh, my, I'm so thirsty. Are these wooden images going to stand here forever? I wish they'd play, at least. They have trumpets. Look, look, they're stirring.

ANCUS MARTIUS. Romans, now that we are standing face to face, I hope you will no longer attempt to conceal anything and give us a straight, direct, honest answer. Do you remember, Romans, what happened on the night of the twentieth and twenty-first of April? [*The Romans eye each other, bewildered, and are silent.*] Now, remember. Is it possible that you don't understand? Try to remember, gentlemen. Know that I cannot budge until you remember.

FAT ROMAN [*whispering to another in fright*]. Maybe you remember, Agrippa. It must be something very important, eh?

AGRIPPA. No, I don't.

FAT ROMAN. My memory must have grown weak from sleep.

AGRIPPA. I think I'd better go away. You'll tell me about it later.

FAT ROMAN. Yes. What does he want?

ANCUS MARTIUS [*in a loud voice*]. Then I will remind you, Romans. On the night of the twentieth and the twenty-first of April there occurred the greatest outrage that history has to record. On that night, I will say, our wives, the fair Sabines, were outrageously ravished.

THE ROMANS [*Recollecting, they wink and smile*]. Yes, yes, yes! So that's what it's about? Quite true, quite true. It really was the twentieth of April.

FAT ROMAN [*respectfully*]. My, they have heads on them, these Sabines.

ANCUS MARTIUS. And those who committed this rape, they are no other than you, Romans. Oh, I know you'll begin to justify yourselves, to deny the truth, to basely misinterpret the law, using that vile casuistic subterfuge which is the invariable resort of all perpetrators of crime. But we are prepared. Professors, begin.

FIRST PROFESSOR [*beginning in a monotonous voice*]. Concerning crimes against property, Vol. I, Book I, Sec. I, Chapter I, Page I, Paragraph I, Line I. Concerning theft in general. In the most ancient times, more ancient even than the present time, when the birds and insects and beetles fluttered about free and unhindered in the rays of the sun and the idea of crime against property never entered the consciousness of anyone, for consciousness itself was as yet non-existent—in those remote days—

ANCUS MARTIUS. Hear, hear!

SCIPIO. Can't you cut it short?

ANCUS MARTIUS. Impossible!

SCIPIO. But they'll fall asleep.

ANCUS MARTIUS. Do you think so?

SCIPIO. Look, they've dozed off already, and dozing they can't hear. Can't your man begin at the end? Please just do us the favor to tell us straight out what you want.

ANCUS MARTIUS. In truth, this is a strange dispute. Be it so, then. I will yield to your weakness and tell you straight out—what we have come for is to prove to you that you were not right in snatching our wives away, that you are ravishers—you Romans are—and that by no artifice, cunning, or sophistry can you justify your base crime. And the heavens will tremble!

SCIPIO. Please, please, honored sir, we don't dispute it.

ANCUS MARTIUS. No? Then what have we come here for?

SCIPIO. I don't know. Maybe you wanted to take a walk in the country.

ANCUS MARTIUS. No, the reason we have come here is just to prove it to you. Very strange! So you admit you are ravishers?

SCIPIO. Absolutely. I find the word very appropriate—"ravishers."

ANCUS MARTIUS. But perhaps you are not quite convinced. If so, the professor will be glad—isn't it so, professor?—you'll be glad to—

SCIPIO. Don't, don't. Absolutely unnecessary—We are perfectly convinced. Romans, back me up, or else he'll begin again.

ROMANS. We admit it—we admit it.

ANCUS MARTIUS. Then what's the point?

SCIPIO. I don't know.

ANCUS MARTIUS. What a strange misunderstanding! Gentlemen Sabines, celebrate a victory. The mere sight of our terror-striking preparations awakened the voice of conscience, the voice of right; and



the heavens tremble. The only thing that remains for us to do is to return with the consciousness of having fulfilled our duty, and—

A QUAVERING VOICE. And how about Serpy?

ANCUS MARTIUS. Yes, yes. Though the expression is not quite happy, the sentiment is perfectly correct. You are right, comrades! Gentlemen of Rome, here is a complete, accurate inventory of our wives. Be kind enough to return the goods. For any loss, injury and—what do you call it, professor?

PROFESSOR. Leakage, shortage—

ANCUS MARTIUS. No, no—damages, that's it. Yes, you are responsible for all damages. Read the law on this point, professor. [*Enter the wives.*] Ah, there are our wives themselves. Attention, Sabine gentlemen. Don't lose your self-control, I beg you. Restrain your love, your passion, until the question of law is settled—two steps forward, one step backward. Welcome, Sabine women! Good morning, Cleopatra!

[*The women take the center of the stage, their eyes lowered, their bearing modest, dignified and submissive.*]

CLEOPATRA [*without raising her eyes*]. If you have come to rebuke us, Ancus Martius, I want to tell you we don't deserve your lectures. We have put up a long, valiant fight, and if at last we yielded, it was only to force. I swear to you, Martius, dear, I haven't stopped crying over you a minute. [*She cries. All the women follow suit.*]

ANCUS MARTIUS. Calm yourself, Cleopatra. They have already confessed they are ravishers. Come, let us return to our Penates.

CLEOPATRA [*without raising her eyes*]. I'm afraid you'll scold us. We have already grown accus-

tomed to this place. Don't you like the mountains here, Martius?

ANCUS MARTIUS. I don't understand you, Cleopatra. What have the mountains to do with the case?

CLEOPATRA. I'm afraid it'll make you angry. But really it isn't our fault. I have already wept over you, Martius. What do you want now? I don't begin to understand. More tears, is that it? As many as you please. Dear friends, they think we haven't cried for them enough. Let us prove the opposite. Cry, cry, dear friends! Oh, Martius, I loved you so!

*[The women all melt in tears.]*

SCIPIO. Patsy, dear, calm yourself. It's not good for you in your present condition to excite yourself that way. My dear sir, did you hear? Now turn your horses round and go. *[To CLEOPATRA.]* Go, Patsy, dear, lie down and rest. I'll look to the soup myself.

ANCUS MARTIUS. Excuse me. What's the soup got to do with it? Calm yourself, Cleopatra. There's some misunderstanding. You evidently don't understand that you have been ravished.

CLEOPATRA *[crying]*. I said you were going to scold us. Scippy, dear, have you my handkerchief?

SCIPIO. Here it is, sweetheart.

ANCUS MARTIUS. But I beg your pardon, what's a handkerchief got to do with it?

CLEOPATRA *[crying]*. To create such a scene all over a handkerchief! How can I get along without a handkerchief when I am crying? And it's your fault, too, that I am crying. It's terrible. You're a monster, Ancus Martius!

*[By this time all are crying, both the Sabine*

women and the Sabines, and even some of the Romans.]

A QUAVERING VOICE. Serpy, dear! Ow-w-w!

MARTIUS [*loudly*]. Calm yourselves, gentlemen Sabines; control yourselves. Don't budge from the spot. I'll settle matters at once. There is evidently a misunderstanding here of a legal nature. The poor woman thinks we are accusing her of the rape of a handkerchief. She doesn't understand that she herself has been the victim of a rape. I'll prove it to her at once. Professors, prepare yourselves.

[*The professors prepare. The Romans are terrified.*]

SCIPIO [*seizing Cleopatra's hand*]. Confess Cleopatra! Quick! Oh, heavens! He'll soon begin again!

CLEOPATRA [*crying*]. I have nothing to confess. It's slander.

ANCUS MARTIUS. Professor, we are waiting.

SCIPIO. Quick, Patsy, dear. Confess, do please. Oh, Jupiter, he's starting to open his mouth. Soon it will open. Gentlemen Sabines, halt! She has confessed. Close your mouth, professor—she has confessed.

CLEOPATRA. All right. I have confessed. [*To the women.*] Dear friends, do you confess, too?

SCIPIO [*hastily*]. All, all have confessed. The matter is settled.

ANCUS MARTIUS [*puzzled*]. I beg your pardon. Cleopatra, you confess that you and the other women were ravished on the night of the twentieth and twenty-first of April? You do, do you?

CLEOPATRA [*with caustic sarcasm*]. No, we ran away of ourselves.

ANCUS MARTIUS. There, you see, she doesn't understand. Prof—

CLEOPATRA. It's an outrage, Martius. You slept while we were being abducted. You didn't put up the least fight to keep us. You left us, forgot us, abandoned us, and now you charge us with having escaped. We were ravished, Martius, outrageously ravished. You can read about it in any textbook on history, not to speak [*cries*], not to speak of encyclopedias.

SCIPIO [*crying*]. Close your mouth, professor—for Jupiter's sake, close your mouth.

[*But the professor's mouth remains open. The Romans are in a panic, some of them running away.*]

ANCUS MARTIUS. Gentlemen of Rome, gentlemen Sabines, order! I shall soon settle the whole case. There is a misunderstanding here of a mechanical nature. Let me examine you, professor. Certainly—of course—I knew it. The hinges are out of order and he can't shut his mouth. Well, that's a mere trifle. We'll adjust it at home. Now I have heard it with my own ears. They have confessed that they were ravished. We have won our case, our aim has been achieved, and the heavens have trembled. Come, Cleopatra, let's return to our Penates.

CLEOPATRA. I don't want to return to our Penates.

SABINE WOMEN. We don't want to return to our Penates. Down with the Penates! We will remain here. They are insulting us. They are preparing to ravish us. Help! Help! Defend us!

[*The Romans, rattling their arms, place themselves between the women and the Sabines, gradually pushing the women to the rear of the stage. They throw fierce glances at the Sabines, and voices are heard calling.*]

Romans, to arms! Defend your wives! To arms, Romans!

ANCUS MARTIUS [*ringing his bell*]. What's the matter? There will be a fight soon. My head is in a whirl. Gentlemen Sabines, my head is in a whirl!

PROSERPINE [*coming forward and speaking in a slow, calm voice*]. Calm yourselves, Romans. I'll speak to Martius.

A QUAVERING VOICE [*from the Sabines, a dismal ejaculation of love*]. Serpy dear! My darling—  
ow-w-w.

PROSERPINE [*in a matter of fact tone*]. Ow-w-w! Friend, how's your health? Come here, Ancus Martius. Don't be afraid—your army won't run away. Don't you realize this, that none of us, neither your wife, Cleopatra, nor I, nor any of us women wants to go back? Do you understand?

ANCUS MARTIUS. My head is in a whirl. What shall I do without Cleopatra? I can't live without Cleopatra. She is my wife, married to me according to due process of law. Do you think her mind is positively made up? Is there no way of inducing her to go?

PROSERPINE. None whatever.

ANCUS MARTIUS. Then, what am I to do? I love her. I can't live without her. [*He cries.*]

PROSERPINE. Calm yourself, Martius. [*In a whisper.*] I'm sorry for you. So I'll tell you in secret—there is still one way, but only one—to ravish her.

ANCUS MARTIUS. And will she come?

PROSERPINE [*shrugging her shoulders*]. How can she help it if you ravish her?

ANCUS MARTIUS. Why, that's an outrage. Do you mean to intimate that I should commit violence? What will I do with my legal conscience? Or do

you women hold that where there is might there is right? Oh, women, women!

PROSERPINE. We have heard that before—"oh women, women." I tell you, Martius, it was in an unhappy moment that the gods conceived you. You're awfully stupid. Yes, I want a strong man, the very strongest. The reason is, I want to be true to my husband. You think it's pleasant for us to be ravished, to be stolen, to be asked back, to be returned, to be lost, to be found—

A QUAVERING VOICE. Serpy, dear! My darling! Ow-w-w!

PROSERPINE. Ow-w-w, friend, how's your health! —to be handled like a piece of goods. No sooner do you get used to one than another comes along—having got used to him, the old one returns and insists upon having you back. Ah, Martius, if you want a woman to belong to you, a woman to the possession of whom you lay such high and mighty claim, be yourself strong, don't surrender her to anybody; fight for her, tooth and nail, and, if necessary, die defending her. Believe me, Martius, there is no greater joy for a woman than to die on the grave of a husband who fell defending her. And know, Martius, a woman betrays only when her husband has betrayed her.

ANCUS MARTIUS. They have swords, and we are unarmed.

PROSERPINE. Arm yourselves.

ANCUS MARTIUS. They have powerful muscles, and we haven't.

PROSERPINE. Make yourselves strong—Altogether, Martius, you're a hopeless fool.

ANCUS MARTIUS [*jumping back*]. And you are a silly, vain woman. Long live the law! Let savage force take my wife away from me; let it destroy

my home; let it extinguish the fire of my hearth, I will not betray the law! Let the whole world laugh at the unhappy Sabines, they shall not betray the law. The righteous man is honored even in rags. Sabines, go back. And weep, Sabines, weep bitter tears; raise a loud lamentation; beat your breasts, and be not ashamed to shed tears. Let them throw stones at you; let them laugh at you. Weep, Sabines, for you are weeping over the contempt of the law. Forward, Sabines! Order! Trumpeters, trumpet! Two steps forward, one step backward! Two steps forward, one step backward!

[*The women begin to cry.*]

CLEOPATRA. Martius, wait!

ANCUS MARTIUS. Hence, woman! I know you not. Forward, march!

*The trumpets blow a dismal sound. The women in tears and with loud cries try to rush to their former husbands. The Romans restrain them by force. Laughter of the victors. Paying no attention to either the tears of the women or the laughter of the Romans, bending under the weight of the law, the Sabines slowly march off, two steps forward, one step backward.*

## SHAKESPEARE AS A PLAYWRIGHT

SHAKSPERE AS A PLAYWRIGHT, BY BRANDER MATTHEWS.  
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS, NEW YORK.



**N** a measure, at least, Professor Brander Matthews' new book on Shakespeare supplies a need that has existed a good deal longer than it has been felt. Only in the last few years has criticism of the older drama seemed conscious that its plays were written to be acted on a particular stage by particular actors; and since that consciousness has dawned, few dramatic critics have done more than give it a more or less furtive look. Philosophy has proved more attractive than stage exigencies.

That the relation of Shakespeare to his stage would bulk large in this book goes without saying. Professor Matthews was one of the first to emphasize the importance of the material environments of drama, and he has done more perhaps than any one else in America to force this upon the attention of dramatic students. In this, the present book finds much of its distinctive purpose. Yet the need of this sort of discussion is only partly met. In the chapter on The Theater only one point is emphasized, its distinctively medieval character—indeed the fundamental consideration—and the consequences even of this are discussed only so far as they concern the literary as distinguished from the theatrical problems of Shakespeare. For every dramatist has two sets of difficulties: one—questions of plot, of characteriza-



tion, of theme—is inseparable from the drama as a form of narration; the other arises from the peculiar construction and equipment of his stage, and concern, for example, the location of his scenes, or the entrances and exits of his characters. The dramatic problems have been considered in one way or another by almost every critic since Aristotle; the theatrical problems have for Shakespeare scarcely been considered at all. Perhaps because they are less clearly defined, it may be well to cite one example, even though space forbids its full discussion. A few years ago Robert Prölsz formulated a law for Elizabethan plays, and more recently Neuendorff has reiterated it with certain modifications. Stated generally, without taking account of some simple but interesting exceptions, it requires that on a stage like Shakespeare's, a character, having made an exit, could not immediately reenter, if in the meantime the scene was supposed to have changed. Neuendorff calls this the most important principle of Elizabethan playwriting; if it is true, it explains many characteristic features of the plays and, different from many so-called dramatic laws, it must have been consciously in the mind of every dramatist writing for the stage to which it is said to have applied. Yet this and many similar points Professor Matthews does not consider at all, though it is just such details that he, with his insistence on the close connection of theater and drama, would be expected to make much of. Indeed, he accepts the results of recent research concerning Shakespeare's theater, but adds little to it, where addition is necessary before a thoroughly complete book on Shakespeare as a playwright can be written.

But, with these limitations, Professor Matthews' book is admirable. It is a serious and careful study

of Shakespeare, viewed always as the practical playwright. In contents as well as in format it is fitted to stand beside the author's fine biography of Molière. It begins with a brief account of Shakespeare's life, his temperament, and his reputation, presenting only the ascertained facts. Indeed, not all the facts are given—some readers will miss references to the discoveries of Wallace; though perhaps they are omitted rather as gossip than facts of literary significance. After the chapter already mentioned on Shakespeare's theater, there follows careful discussion of the individual plays, grouped conveniently together in fourteen chapters. Other interpolated chapters treat of Shakespeare as an Actor, Shakespeare's Actors, and Shakespeare and his Audience. There is, finally, an interesting concluding chapter on Shakespeare's general qualities as a dramatist, his ethics, his religion, his tastes, and his opinions—in short, on Shakespeare himself. Pictures of Ward's Shakespeare, and of Godfrey's restoration of the Fortune Theater are included, and in an appendix two maps of London, one in the sixteenth century and one in the twentieth, both being marked to show "the position of every place in London with which Shakespeare's name can be connected historically or traditionally." Mr. E. Hamilton Bell, who prepared them, finds Wallace's locations "so confused and out of harmony with the indications of the great sixty-inch ordinance map" that he is unable to coordinate them. The maps as printed are interesting and valuable, giving in easily accessible form information otherwise rather difficult to obtain.

Perhaps the chapters to which every reader will turn most gladly are those dealing with the more general subjects. The one on Shakespeare's The-

ater is of course of fundamental importance. It does not present the subject as fully as might be wished; it does not make it possible for the reader to imagine exactly the staging of any particular play and to arrive at a clear understanding of it—but in its general lines the chapter is sound and reliable. Professor Matthews insists that any consideration of the Elizabethan stage must look forward from the thirteenth and fourteenth century methods of staging rather than backward from the eighteenth century; he points out how most modern editions of Shakespeare pervert and destroy the evidence of the stage directions by dividing the play into a succession of short scenes when in reality no change of stage setting was even dreamt of; he emphasizes the essentially medieval character of Shakespeare's stagecraft and equally emphasizes the use of a large number of more or less elaborate properties. He thus provides perhaps the most nearly correct account of the Elizabethan stage which is easily accessible to the general reader.

The chapter on Shakespeare the Actor makes the best of a bad situation. As a matter of fact, we know nothing definitely about the subject; but Professor Matthews, by combining with his own knowledge of the theater the method used with such conspicuous success by Miss Eleanor Hammond concerning Shakespeare's *Fools* (*Atlantic* 106, 90-100—it is strange that Professor Matthews does not allude to this article, but only to a much less suggestive passage from Spedding), arrives at new and stimulating conclusions. The Lord Chamberlain's company was a stock company and its dramatists—so runs the argument—had to supply each actor with parts more or less fitted to him. Moreover, no playwright would be likely to write parts which could

not be rendered with fair adequacy. We may thus look through the plays and select the parts best fitted for a known member of the company, or build up from the plays a conception of actors otherwise unknown to us. Applied to Shakespeare himself, the results of this method are not perhaps unusual. Briefly they are as follows: Shakespeare, though not a great actor, played, according to tradition, "old man" parts—the Ghost in *Hamlet* and Adam in *As You Like It*; perhaps therefore Ageon in *The Comedy of Errors*, Leonato in *Much Ado about Nothing*, Friar Lawrence in *Romeo and Juliet*, and the Dukes in *Othello*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Measure for Measure*. This would seem to imply that he acted with the dignity, the courtly bearing, the air of authority, and the elocutionary skill that these parts demand. It was because he was an actor that he acquired his dramatic technique, that he speedily made his way as a playwright, and that he became a shareholder in the Globe.

The same method of inference, employed in the chapter on Shakespeare's actors, leads, however, to some stimulating and, so far as I am aware, new results. We can scarcely suppose, when the matter is thus forced upon us, that the lad who played Portia and Beatrice, Rosalind and Viola lacked in real dramatic ability and charm of manner. By the same reasoning we become a little better acquainted with Burbadge when we note the parts written for him—Hamlet, Othello—so much is certain; Macbeth, Lear, Richard II, Romeo, Brutus—these are altogether likely. Some of Professor Matthews' castings are especially suggestive: Rosalind and Hero—both it is interesting to observe were short in stature; Mrs. Quickly and Juliet's Nurse; Nerissa, Maria in *Twelfth Night*; Aubrey in *As You Like It*;

Margaret in *Richard III* and Kate the Curst. Thus the Lord Chamberlain's company begins to be a group of real folk, not a mere list of names in the Folio or on the records of the Revels Office. Though the results of this sort of supposition are admittedly uncertain, the effect as a whole is to bring us nearer to Shakespeare and the really important factors of his environment, and to make us feel more keenly that he was a flesh and blood playwright and not a sort of semi-divine philosophic providence grinding a moral axe in every comic scene.

Similarly valuable is the chapter on the audience, pointing out its peculiar tastes, its expectations, its prejudices. "They were eager to be entertained," says the author, "but they were sluggish of mind and often inattentive. They were unwilling to take trouble and they preferred signpost directions, and therefore we see the villain setting forth his evil designs frankly in a soliloquy, so that not even the most careless among the audience could mistake him. Violently passionate themselves, they demanded lofty emotion and broad humor. Avid of swift sensation hot and immediate in its reaction, they wanted strong waters undiluted and to be gulped down without winking. They did not object to sanguinary brutality or to ferocious cruelty which responded to their need for constant excitement. They found pleasure in striking contrasts, in unforeseen changes of mood, and even in the transformation of character in the twinkling of an eye. They were glad to have their ears filled with the roar of cannon and to have their eyes entertained by processions and by battles, by haggard witches and by sheeted ghosts with gory throats." Shakespeare, we are warned, was his own contemporary, and in meeting the taste of his audience can scarcely be thought of as patron-

izingly condescending to what may seem to us shocking or in bad taste. To the further elucidation of these points most of the chapter is devoted. One interesting observation concerns the misfortune to Shakespeare and the Elizabethan dramatists generally in the absence of the Puritans and the class of citizens which they represented, and the lack of any vital criticism; both would have supplied a steady influence for which the need was great.

One point, often brought up against Shakespeare and again in this chapter, is his fondness for puns. His audience was fond of puns, it is true, but Shakespeare is very fond of them. When he descends to such quibbling in Antony's speech over the dead body of Caesar it can be charged, says Professor Matthews, only to his own bad taste. This of course is no new view; Professor Matthews introduces it, I think, mainly as a chance for one of the delicate thrusts he delights in at the liking of present-day Englishmen for this form of wit. However much we may appreciate such a remark at Briticisms, is it quite fair so to assail Shakespeare's state? I intend no defense of puns, but is it not certain that such an interpretation mistakes Shakespeare's intention? To us a pun is an attempt at being funny, and introduced into a lament over a dead friend it is execrable. But may not the Elizabethans have thought of it simply as such a means of emphasis as we consider alliteration? Professor Matthews elsewhere praises these lines of Tennyson:

(the babe)—began

A blind and babbling laughter and to dance  
Its body.

Is it not possible, nay even likely, that later years may cite this also as a mere verbal quibble, perhaps

semi-humorous also, and think such passages a proof of our own vicious taste in paying attention to manner where matter alone should count?

To undertake any detailed examination of the chapters dealing with the separate plays is of course impossible. It may suffice to consider rather the half dozen dominant ideas on which the discussion is based. One of the most helpful is Professor Matthews' grouping of the plays into three periods—that of devoted experiment, that of assured mastery, and that of relaxed effort. These almost correspond with Shakespeare's poetic periods: a period of deliberate cleverness of expression but relative poverty of thought; a period in which form and thought are in perfect balance; and a period in which the meaning overcharges and clogs the verse. Such a division fixes the attention of the student on the art of the dramatist and avoids the sentimental associations which have proved so alluring for some persons in "out of the depths" and "on the heights."

In considering the first period, Professor Matthews, as all readers of his former books would expect, emphasizes Shakespeare's frank imitation, and modest imitation too, of his contemporaries. "We fail to find in these plays any effort for originality, any striving for individuality, or any desire for self-expression." Thus we are assured that we have not to do with a Shakespeare idolater. More evidence follows: *Love's Labor's Lost* is "thin and devoid of the persuasive humor of true comedy"; *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* "is loosely put together and casual in plotting"; "*King John* is a mere medley," etc. Similarly in regard to the plays of "relaxed effort": *Cymbeline* is an imitation of Beaumont and Fletcher, "a laboriously complicated story abounding in surprises and barren of reality";

the characters, except Imogen, "have no independent life"; the exposition is "pitiably ineffective"; the psychology of the seducer is "childish." Here is a falling off indeed from German adulation, but I think a welcome one. The book will prove salutary for many amateur students of the drama in school and elsewhere, who have distorted all their critical values in a vain attempt to deny all spots to the sun. But there is no lack of discriminating praise, for instance, concerning *Romeo and Juliet* or *The Merchant of Venice*, which last Professor Matthews is especially successful in restoring to its Elizabethan value as a beautiful and light-hearted comedy, rather than the semi-tragedy nineteenth century ideas have made it.

Professor Matthews' sanity of outlook appears in another way—his emphasis on the practical theatrical qualities of the plays. This is one of the bases of the book. It suggests the discussion concerning actors which has already been spoken of; perhaps an equally good illustration occurs in the chapter concerning *Richard III* or in the remark on *The Taming of the Shrew*. Both are deficient in reality—Richard's opening soliloquy, his sudden throwing over of Buckingham, his successful wooing of Anne, lack plausibility; *The Taming of the Shrew* is external in its action, flimsy in its character drawing, the most completely farcical of Shakespeare's plays—yet none of these points, Professor Matthews notes, spoils the theatrical effectiveness. In thus calling attention to the plays as plays, this book may be of considerable value to many students of Shakespeare who continue to treat his work exclusively as psychological textbooks or poetic exemplars.

In some of his opinions Professor Matthews is more conventional. Throughout the book a basis of



judgment is the dogma that a drama must present a conflict. It appears, for instance, in the discussion of Richard II—"drama can interest us only when it sets before us the conflict of wilful personalities." William Archer has in *Playmaking* put into words what many students of drama must have felt: the attempt to find such a conflict fails in many of the greatest plays. There is no conflict in *Agamemnon*; there is no real conflict in *Oedipus*. The attempt to force all plays into the formula of a conflict—or worse, into Freytag's formula of a conflict, which we may note in passing Professor Matthews does not do—is one of the deadening influences of dramatic instruction. In the hands of a critic as skilful as Professor Matthews it seldom has this effect, but the average student is likely to find it more of a clog than a staff. He finds himself driven into condemnation of many new plays written on a different plan, *The Riders to the Sea*, for example, distinctly dramatic, but lacking in protagonist, antagonist, and clearly marked crisis.

A welcome characteristic of this book is the continually recurring comparison of Shakespeare with Molière. The index lists fifty-three such passages, some of course of no particular consequence; some the most illuminating in the book. The author uses this comparison in discussing the facts of their lives, and with especial success concerning their relations with their actors. He remarks interestingly how Shakespeare fails to achieve the formula for high comedy which Molière arrived at; he points out the advantage it was to Molière to have the stimulating and interpretative criticism of Boileau, while Shakespeare enjoyed no such contemporary assistance; he notes the unexpected ripening of genius which came to both men—to Molière in *Tartuffe*, to Shakespeare

in Hamlet. Thus the author's study of the one great dramatist has materially enriched his study of the other.

But perhaps the greatest contribution this book makes to the library of the student is that it does present Shakespeare as the great medieval dramatist. He was the last of the medievalists, as Molière was the first of the moderns. Permeated as he was with the tastes and sentiments of the Renaissance, as a playwright writing for a medieval stage, Shakespeare was in the very nature of things medieval in his art. This view pervades the book, but perhaps it is most concisely stated in the concluding chapter: "Regularly he conforms to the traditions and the conventions which the Tudor theater had inherited from the medieval stage. The conventions of the mysteries permitted several distant places to be set in view simultaneously, and therefore Shakespeare puts the tent of Richard III by the side of that of Richmond. The tradition of the moralities authorized formal disputations, and Shakespeare permits one character to state a case with eloquent amplitude, to be answered with ample eloquence by his opponent, hanging up the action, it may be, but providing the actors with the opportunity for oratory and gratifying the spectators with the vicissitude of debate. And as on the medieval stage the action was presented on a neutral ground, which might be anywhere and which was identified as a specific place only when there was a necessity for localizing it; so Shakespeare lets his story ramble through space, pausing for description only whenever there was need for letting us know where his characters are supposed to be. This was proper enough on the platform stage of the Tudor theater; but it is not a little awkward upon the picture-frame

stage of our modern play-house." Add to this the observation previously made that Elizabethan drama had inherited from the medieval plays the habit of commingling with lofty characters a group of rude fellows of the baser sort, and we have noted perhaps the chief medieval elements which Professor Matthews considers. None of these is perhaps unusual, but the point of view is so consistently maintained that it gives this book a new and distinctive flavor.

It is of course unnecessary to add what every student of the drama already would know, that the book is interestingly written, clear, suggestive, and eminently readable. It is one of Professor Matthews' most important contributions to American letters.

GEORGE FULLMER REYNOLDS.

## THE LITTLEST THEATRE



LAS, there is no incandescent glowing sign-post to light the way, no flamboyant posters to tempt the imagination. The exterior is as chill as a prison rising out of the slime of Whitechapel; 73 Hoxton street, London, is the exact locality. Drab brick walls huddle closely against it, crowding selfishly alongside and abaft the sacred spot. The granite flagging is no colder than the tightly barred, forbidding windows across the narrow way. Jealous, envious, old, old eyes for fifty years have watched the long, endless, happy, sly procession stepping stealthily through the doorway and have wondered what strange, tempting thing 73 Hoxton street might hold for the supermen and superwomen whose eager feet have fairly danced across the threshold.

The secret must be revealed. Youth in the heart of genius was once the only audience at the littlest theater, the laughter of young minds in old bodies the only applause, the music of countless footfalls in a gas-lit street the only orchestra. Macready was the first worshipper at this humble shrine. He whispered his secret to the younger Dumas, who in turn related it to Sarah Bernhardt. Hand in hand they sought out the spot. Here they found that J. Redington, bookbinder, tobacconist, and theatrical printer, had set up a miniature stage not three feet wide, yet complete in every detail of mechanical device necessary for a performance. It stood upon a shelf breast-high in a kind of booth draped with

purple cloth which revealed only the proscenium arch and the miniature stage itself like a tiny world swung aloft in a velvet, starless sky. The painted curtain rolled up smoothly as if by magic; the scenery moved easily on grooves; and the actors, fashioned with elaborate care in both facial expression and costume, were pasteboard dolls that likewise glided across the stage on grooves and were pulled this way or that way by strings lying unseen in the depths of the friendly runways.

But this was not all. It was small accomplishment merely to devise a correct replica in painted cardboard of a real theater. Redington had done more; he had fashioned amiable puppets that responded to his every wish, and he had become playwright, stage manager and protean actor as well. He had constructed a play called *Charles III*, an historical pageant in four acts and many scenes; and standing inside the booth behind the purple draperies he read the various parts in a changing voice, now feminine, now masculine, now comic, now tragic, as he pulled his puppets through the action of his plays. It was a wonderful little show that fairly thrilled the quick emotions of Bernhardt. Dumas went away to ponder. Later he returned to suggest that others might wish to share Redington's joy in his new invention, that others might wish to own a tiny theater wherein to enact such dramas as the harsh world and unfeeling managers had spurned. Young Redington took the hint and founded a warehouse in miniature where toy theaters were built every day, where unprotesting actors were decked out in appropriate paraphernalia, where plays were written and where a complete theater might be had at any moment, stage, actors, play and scenery, in exchange for a yellow half sovereign.

Thus the shrine sprang into being. Impresario Redington had now reached middle age. His warehouse had become well established. Row on row of toy theaters reposed on the shelves. The shop had become like some marvelous secret chamber of a genie of the stage who understood the hunger of the human soul for play acting and who was bent on presenting every man with an outlet and an excuse for the exhibition of his own emotions. Redington had become the mundane agent of that genie. No longer need one pine for a theater royal in Drury Lane or even a band-box in Kensington. A half-guinea invested and one owned his own theater!

Later Robert Louis Stevenson found his way to Hoxton street. He, too, had joined the amiable procession. He became more than enthusiastic; the eternal youth in the heart of the brilliant Scot leaped to the possibilities in the miniature stage as it had leaped with gentle joy to the hearty, profitable fun to be extracted from tin soldiers. As Stevenson had played scientifically with miniature warriors for the edification and education of his young step-son, so now he seized upon the toy theater as a means of developing dramatic and literary imagination in the boy's mind, of arousing possible latent instincts toward all the arts. For did not each toy theater in action represent the very essence of concentrated refinement in aesthetics!

Then Redington died. A faithful apprentice and disciple, by name Benjamin Pollock, had married the printer's daughter. It was only natural that he should step into the master's shoes. Nothing was changed, except the lettering on the shingle which still hangs over the door. The master had gone, but his spirit remained building, building—smiling be-

nignly over the heads of his awed and reverential followers.

Ellen Terry had joined the procession. She came often, sometimes to hear a new play produced, sometimes to buy another theater all her own in which to play out the action of many classics too noble, perhaps, for the commercial boards, in which to rehearse carefully and quietly such plays as she deemed practical, in which to build up character with bits of new stage business as a mathematician works out a problem on a drafting board or an architect rears a temple stone by stone. Sir Henry Irving found simple joy in Hoxton street; he, too, owned a miniature theater. Mrs. Kendal, Mrs. Humphrey Ward, the late John Oliver Hobbes, W. B. Yeats, Gordon Craig, Gilbert K. Chesterton, the late Clyde Fitch, William Gillette and Augustus Thomas joined the sacred band, became disciples of Redington and joint owners in this gentle Arcadia of histrionism.

“The sublime Chesterton finally writes a play!” So read the heading of a recent cable dispatch. To the public at large it was the occasion of the satirist’s debut as a playwright. Amongst those in the know, however, a titter must have escaped to echo all the way from Chelsea to the Baltic Sea. For Chesterton has been a playwright these many years. Only his works have been secret masterpieces in miniature, too subtle for the great boards, too daring and too pungent for public consumption, too poetic at times for common understanding. Each play, whether a satire, or a poetic tragedy, or a delicious cobwebby pantomime, has been enacted on the boards of Chesterton’s own toy theater, set up in the library of his own London home, and there alone. Regular performances are given, perhaps once in every fortnight. The satirist’s friends even bribe his servants

to get a look in. Farce is his favorite vehicle. Chesterton loves to plant two grotesque paper puppets representing two troublesome notorieties—like Lloyd George and Mrs. Pankhurst—in the middle of his stage and to permit them to flagellate one another with such impertinent wit and stinging satire as to put even a Bernard Shaw to rout. In this manner he adroitly plunges into the foibles of the day and lays bare the weaknesses of all Parliament.

Chesterton paints his own scenery. Frequently it is very grotesque—mere daubs of color subjecting symbolism to the sublimest ridicule. He cuts out and paints his own actors; and his cartoons of famous living Britons are skilful and unsparing to the last degree. Again, when he becomes poetic in his satire, as he did recently in his so-called maiden effort, *Magic*, his work becomes too craftily fine for the uncompromising candor of the big theater. He writes and produces sometimes a pantomime in miniature as exquisite as if some Whistler etching had sprung to life. One of these, called *St. George and the Dragon* and presented before an audience of young persons, became so celebrated in the intimate social circle in which Chesterton moves that all Mayfair caught the fever and there was scarcely a literary hostess with dramatic aspirations in the West End who did not presently acquire and begin to operate a miniature theater for the purpose of staging her own compositions.

London society was becoming more and more democratic, mixed and difficult. The miniature playhouse helped to solve a painful problem. It was unique enough to catch the attention of the most garrulous rattler, to win the interest of the most bored. And so Hoxton street rang again with the music of hurrying feet and Benjamin Pollock found



himself—famous! The polite world had taken him up.

The master Redington and his chief disciple have been the authors of hundreds of plays designed especially for the miniature theater. Noteworthy examples are *The Waterman*, *Cinderella*, *The Corsican Brothers*, *Don Quixote*, *Children in the Wood*, *King Henry*, *The Miller and His Men*, *The Blind Boy*, and *The Maid and the Magpie*. With the manuscripts of these printed plays, in which complete stage directions are incorporated, are sold sets of cardboard plates printed in colors consisting of six plates of characters, seven plates of scenery and five plates of stage wings. The plates are required to be cut out and pasted on cardboard, and when completed they constitute the company of actors, the stage setting and the properties.

Early in their respective careers William Gillette, Augustus Thomas and the late Clyde Fitch employed miniature theatres in the building up of plays for the professional stage. Each one has expressed himself as indebted to the toy theatre as a helpful tool in planning stage business. Thomas employed a miniature stage without wings and moved his tiny puppets like pawns on a chessboard. The building of each play became for him a kind of strategic game in which he, as generalissimo, waged an artistic battle. There is little doubt that an actual miniature stage and a group of practical puppets constructed like pawns is of inestimable value to the novice in learning the value of action, in correctly setting a scene, and in acquiring a knack for adroit and opportune stage business. A young playwright eager to learn the practical details of writing for the professional stage once accosted Clyde Fitch and begged his advice. "If you cannot actually attend the the-

atre seven nights in the week," observed the playwright, "then build a private miniature stage of your own and live on it!"

When the management of a little theatre may become a fascinating game for such remarkable minds as Stevenson, Chesterton and Gillette, consider how wonderfully alluring it may become to real children who have reached the age of adolescence when the imagination is ripest for adventure and when the artistic inclinations have begun to develop. In puberty no game is more wonderful, more absorbing than the mock game of life, no instinct more dominant than the impulse of latent power to control others, even in make believe. Again, dramatic literature loses all its literary terrors when the mystery of its meaning is cleared up through action and the spoken sentence.

To train the young mind to stage its own fairy tales, to live in imagination its own adventures was the first intention of the quaint impresario-in-little, J. Redington. It remained for a young American artist, Frances Delehanty, to receive a definite call and to bring much of the spirit of Hoxton street into her own atelier in Washington square. She had returned to New York from a pilgrimage to the little print shop; she had set up a miniature playhouse of her own when the inspiration came. Why not build plays and paint scenery and sketch characters for children at home? If English children found delight in the artistic toy theatre, why should not American children profit in the same way?

At once the young artist formed a working alliance with Pamela Colman Smith and Catherine Van Dyke. These two writers began to fashion well-known tales of adventure and current folk-lore into dramatic form,—naïve little plays, yet technically

correct in manner, aptly comic, fanciful, or serious and instructive. Miss Delehanty then sketched in color and had printed plates of characters, scenery and properties necessary for the proper staging of these dramatized fairy stories and other tales. Furthermore, she supplied complete directions for the construction of the stage of an actual toy theatre which might be simply a wooden box with the front and the ends knocked out.

Copies of the little plays, with the necessary plates for actual production, were distributed in various graded schools. The result was like magic. No greater joy had ever been brought to the attention of these growing children than the game of playing "theatre," of giving a real show, of enacting plays so cleverly fashioned that they became poetic reality, unimpeachable and irrefutable. Folklore became genuine and convincing and the mental satisfaction of the child was boundless.

At once the little artist and her collaborators found themselves as happy over the outcome as the children were to whom they had given so much genuine delight. And, presto! to their own delight they found themselves famous. Magazines, newspapers, print dealers began to bombard them with orders. The printed plays and the colored plates alone were essential for publication. The toy theatre any intelligent child could construct for himself. Today the artist is confronted with much the same dilemma in which J. Redington found himself when on a chill October day Dumas braved the east wind which tore through Hoxton alley and accosted the gentle print maker in his lair, roaring out to him the need of all young minds for just such pocket editions of the temple of Thespis as he was secretly devising. Miss Delehanty is bewildered; her fingers

cannot fly swiftly enough to meet the demand. Brain reels from overwork. Yet she laughs and plods on. There is a strange prophetic light in her eyes. Like Redington over-seas she has tasted the joy at home of laying the foundation of the littlest and the most innocent theatre.

LUCY FRANCE PIERCE.

## ILLUMINATION AND THE DRAMA



HE elder Dumas vaunted, rather vainly, perhaps, but none the less truthfully, that to make a play all he needed was four boards, two actors and a passion. That was a significant assertion. Aeschylus might well have made it; Augustus Thomas could truthfully echo it to-day. For implied in that brief statement may be discovered the universal truth that the backbone of the drama is man's ambitions. That remains always the same. But simple and fundamentally unchanging as the drama in its essence is, it has, throughout the centuries of its recorded history, met with various mutations of outward form. Innumerable influences have been at work in its evolution. The lack or the plethora of facilities for presentation, the form and nature of the theatre, have conditioned the plan and substance of the dramatic product; the theatre has influenced the playwright, the performer, and the play. It has dictated to the author what to write, to the actor how to act. It makes the playwright a Procrustes and the performer a puppet. And of all the many circumstances that have been effective in the gradual adjustment of the theatre, and hence have wrought changes in the texture of the dramatic fabric, the factor of lighting may, perhaps, be picked out as the most potent.

The sun was the first illuminant and would ever be the best were it always practicable. From nature's bare but no less beautiful illumination, light-

ing in the drama has progressed to the present stage of purely theatrical artifice. In the Attic theatre actors and chorus grouped themselves about the orchestra, their flowing draperies falling in picturesque folds about their fitting forms or flying in the breeze from the sea, while the soft warm light of the southern sun poured plentifully down upon them. There was pictorial beauty then, more simple but no less admirable than the simulated effects of nature to-day. No "illusion" was necessary. It was so, too, in the time of the Romans. Though they had a stage, their dramas were still presented in daylight. Throughout the middle ages also, which saw the rebirth of the drama, the sun alone sufficed. The first inn-theatres were open to the sky, and Shakespeare's only light "effects" were gained by the use of a lively imagination which had its outlet in incomparable pictorial imagery.

Artificial light made its appearance in the theatre during the Restoration, when the popularity of the play, stimulating a desire for winter performances, occasioned the use of candles. The Elizabethan stage had been darkened at the back by the shadow of the overhanging "hut," and the actors were forced out into the brighter light that fell upon the spectators at the front of the platform. The introduction of artificial lighting did not change this. Even in the roofed tennis-court theater of Molière, whose low-hung chandeliers gave evidence of Italian influence, the distribution of light was but little better. The stage had, therefore, still to remain a platform, forced inevitably into the form of a bow-shape proscenium by the feeble candle footlights with which it was soon fitted; and the impotent candle's flicker afforded but a bashful light, luring the players ever forward to the front where the illumination

was sufficient to make only the most exaggerated facial play significant. For almost two hundred years after the Restoration there was not in the theatre artificial light of a power and plasticity great enough to change this form of stage. When it did come, its value long remained unnoted.

Even after M. Argand's important invention, in 1783, of lamps with tubular wicks, conditions were but little improved. The fitful glimmer of the hundreds of oil lamps that were necessary to spread light over the vast stage was, even on the rare occasions when they burned brightly, no more than enough to make the actors recognizable; properties and scenery remained still but silhouettes. Lamp-light was, therefore, but a weak and ineffectual aid to illusion. Those were indeed dim and dingy theatres, by their lack of light helping to keep the drama rhetorical and the actors exaggerated in expression.

However, slight as it was, the advance in lighting facilities nourished a proportionate increase in the use of elaborate illusory scenery. But it was still impracticable to light the stage from any point other than the front, and rarely were variations from this method attempted. The only way that changes from night to day could be produced was by the crude expedient of setting screens before the footlights.

Scenic innovations from Italy had by this time entirely freed the drama from the old conventional designations of place. The spectator had no longer to imagine what he did not see, though what he saw was but dimly outlined. Everything was now put before him and his imagination forever put aside. The drama had begun to be a "show," which has culminated to-day in theatrical concoctions like *The Daughter of Heaven*. In other words, the stage had lost its rigidity, had become plastic. Ever since this

freeing of the drama it has, it might almost be said, struggled less successfully against its freedom than ever it did against its limitations.

With the introduction of gas (several London theatres were using it as early as 1817), came the elaborate scenic effects which its brighter and more manageable light made possible. Meyerbeer (who was in charge of the repertory at the Paris Opera) immediately made use of this new lighting medium and with it raised stage settings to an unprecedented pitch of effectiveness. Gas brought with it, also, a great revolution in stage mechanism and management; or rather, the introduction of complicated theatrical machinery, for the theatrical engineer came in with the "gas-man." Many splendid spectacles soon celebrated the arrival of an adequate lighting means, and the craze (for that is what it was at first) spread. It was at this time that Wagner's powerful, though not always salutary, influence was being felt in all things theatrical.

The advent of a plastic illuminant now made incongruous the platform-stage and the extravagant, wild and whirling type of histrionism it fostered; but it was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that this was realized and the possibilities of the picture stage perceived.

Irving's contribution to stage illusion soon followed. Of the progress he made in the art of lighting, his associate, Mr. Bram Stoker, has made record.\* He put lighting to more legitimate and dignified use by employing it for emotional and atmospheric effect. That is, in his hands lighting acquired a psychological significance. When in 1878 he undertook the management of the Lyceum Theatre, gas—augmented by the oxy-hydrogen limelight,

\* *Nineteenth Century and After*, Vol. 69, p. 903.



which had by that time been introduced and was the only practicable contrivance for localizing light—was still the sole mode of illumination. He first improved the methods of lighting with this, so arranging his gas pipes and light connections that all the lights, in the auditorium as well as behind the scenes, could be regulated and controlled from the “gas-table”—the prototype of the switchboard. This was a great advance. Such control made it possible, as it never before had been, to have the “house” lights extinguished as the curtain rose, and the auditorium kept in darkness throughout the progress of the play. Hitherto the stage-director had always striven to keep the house as brilliantly lighted as his limited facilities allowed. This innovation now revealed to Irving several unique sources of effect. It put in his possession a new lighting element, simple but impressive—darkness itself; and he made immediate use of it. It also proved a means toward more expeditious scene-shifting. For by its aid he might now keep the curtain up between scenes, and, under cover of a darkened stage, “strike” the old scene and set the new before the eyes of his audience but invisible from where they sat. By this device—which seems rather odd when Mr. Kellerd employs it in *Hamlet* to-day—he was able to change the setting with less break in the continuity of the play—the same effect Wagner strove to obtain by obscuring his scene-shifting by steam clouds.

By 1882 electricity had reached the realm behind the footlights. In 1891 Irving was lighting his stage with it and by wise and careful experimenting making it do his will. Such simple control of lighting means as is necessary to give to the stage the appearance of night and day, gloom or joyousness,

seems now very elemental; but at this time it was still a problem to be solved. It proved, too, a problem rather difficult of solution. When he turned down his lights he found that, though the stage became dark, the darkness was not that of either night-fall or gloom, for these physical and psychological effects nature acquires, not by the yellowish red of an incandescent lamp, but by blue tints; and a decrease in the intensity of electric light adds even more cheeriness and warmth to its glow. To gain the desired effect of evening or dreariness he had, therefore, to resort for a time to the crude but only possible expedient of covering the bulbs with blue paper bags when such effects were wanted.

This dilemma had, happily, brought up the problem of color in lighting (color effects had up to that time been but hesitatingly attempted) and he found before him the whole fruitful field of the psychological use of color and light and shade gradation. The progress he made in this direction constitutes his most significant contribution to theatrical illumination. When he took up the problem the only means by which color gradation could be accomplished was with the use of "mediums." These were finely woven, dyed fabrics, so extended over the stage as to intercept the light from the flies or the wings, and color it before it reached the portions of the stage in which the particular color of light was wanted. This means was effective only to the extent of shedding a vague light in a few simple colors, thereby bringing the scene to one general color tone.

This much was possible while gas-light remained the only available lighting means. But the electric lamp, when it replaced gas, was found to permit of a nicer refinement of tone; for it was possible now

to apply colored stains to the incandescent bulbs and spotlight glasses, in this way obtaining finer and more exact gradations of tint and, in consequence, subtle tones of greater psychological effectiveness. Crude hues being thus replaced by tints, all the nuances of light and shade and color soon became possible, and color began to have a value on the stage as a medium for the interpretation of emotion.

Irving completed his pioneering work by employing these colored bulbs in the footlights also, and dividing the latter into sections across the stage, so that any desired portion of it might be illuminated at the proper moment by any required color of light. This opened to him the field of color mixture by light combination, and henceforth the switchboard became a palette and each bulb a pigment.

Irving worked out his lighting very thoroughly before presenting a play, like *Belasco*, his successor in the use of light, insisting upon painstaking light rehearsals and detailed light plots in order that every feature of the lighting might be faultless.

The devices for light distribution were much the same then as now, though they have, of course, been vastly improved upon and supplemented by clever new illuminating mechanism. But few changes other than the installation of more powerful lights and the acquiring of better control of them, have taken place in the footlights since Irving's time. Whereas he rarely used above sixty-candle-power lamps, we now employ as high as one hundred-candle-power. The divisions into colors and sections still survive. In most modern theatres the footlights are composed of four sets of colored bulbs arranged in four sections from side to side of the proscenium. These are so wired that from the switchboard each color

in each section can be controlled as a unit; that is, separately from the other colors of its own section and from the other three sections; or it may be blocked with the remaining colors and controlled with them as a section independent of the other three sections. Thus light of any of the four colors or their combinations may be thrown upon the stage at any spot or time desired. The colors found most serviceable in the "foots" are red, blue, amber—practically the three primary colors—and white. By the skillful mixing of these primary colors—blue with red to make violet, and so forth, following the laws of color mixture—with the help of white, all the various colors of nature may be reproduced. Pure white light it is seldom safe to use alone because of its tendency to produce extreme pallor. Light with a bluish tinge also gives a ghastly effect even to the ruddiest complexion. This makes it necessary—in the body of the theatre as well as on the stage; for the appearance of the patrons must be considered—to use color combinations. But the white light is of great service for thinning out the color made from the mixture of the other three. When very great refinement of representation is wanted for "effects," however, the electrician can secure a greater nicety of tint—at the same time obviating all chance of error in operation—by dipping the bulbs in stain the color of which has been decided upon after much thought and experiment, and acquired by mixing colors with pains as well as brains. The colors in the "foots" are also of advantage where strong light from the front is needed; in which case the proper strength of light often brings with it grotesque shadows; these shadows, color-regulation must eliminate.

The footlights, however, once so indispensable—

for light came first from the front, then, by degrees, from sides and top, since which time we have been trying to do away with foot-lights—are now but a small part of the lighting system. It is often possible and desirable to dispense with them altogether, for they are an unnatural—if such a term may be used when all artificial light is such—means of illumination. It is probable that, with Craig, Reinhardt, Belasco, the Irish Players, and so many others experimenting to dispose of them, they will soon go entirely out of use. As now employed, however, they are an important means of giving to the scene an appearance of bas relief by adding a semblance of natural perspective—a thing that, because of the shallowness of the stage (another defect for which the thoughtful producer is now seeking a remedy), must be greatly exaggerated in order to gain the effect of nature.

Without the footlights the means of illumination are innumerable. There are two kinds of lighting apparatus: what may be called controlled lights, such as foots, borders, strips, and bunchlights, all of which are operated from the switchboard; and independent lights or movable mechanism requiring an individual operator, a class which includes the great variety of localizing apparatus that the arc and lime or calcium lights make possible, such, for instance as the flood-lamp, the searchlight, and other kinds of lens-lamp, all of which may be grouped under the general name of spotlight.

In the modern theatre the borders are long troughs of bright metal in which from sixty to eighty incandescent bulbs, usually of sixteen-candle-power, are set side by side. The stage, since the time when grooves were used for scene-shifting, has been divided into sections from front to back. For

each of these there is a border light hung high in the flies. There are seldom less than five borders; sometimes as many as eight. They can be raised or lowered to any height, and in some theatres they are suspended from bridges, which can also be used as a support for spotlights and their operators. The same four-color scheme is carried out in the borders and strips as in the "foots;" and, the arrangement being similar, the colors and sections can be separately dimmed and controlled. This makes possible any strength and color of light or gradation from darkness to brilliancy, not only from side to side of the stage but from back to front, or vice versa.

The borders are hung so that their light is directed toward the rear of the stage and away from the audience in order that there may be no direct light in the eyes of the spectator.

In addition to these there are standards or bunch-lights, movable clusters of bulbs grouped together with a reflector, which can be set at any height or in any advantageous position. Lengths or strips are rows of connected lights set up wherever desired—most commonly they are arranged like ladders in the wings. Besides these there are special lighting devices designed to meet the exigencies of particular cases. Often when elaborate "built" scenery is in use, awkward shadows are cast and must by some means be obliterated, for the men of the theatre have—until the last few years, when Reinhardt and the Irish Players have reassured them—been afraid of shadows on the stage. The elimination of these dark patches is accomplished by hanging strips—of the necessary number of lights to kill the shadow—upon the back of a piece of scenery which, though built for that sole purpose, is made to seem to the spectator in front nevertheless necessary to the

scene. Lights can be thus hung at any time and in any place, so long as the audience is kept unaware of their presence.

The spotlights are numerous. These—for use when concentrated light is wanted on a portion only of the stage, on particular sections of scenery, or upon certain characters—are set up on the border bridges, in wing galleries, and at other elevated or remote points from which they may be made to cast their light at any angle down upon the stage; and even, when occasion requires, they illuminate the scene with rays from underneath the floor. This localizing apparatus consists of numerous independent lamps, most of them variations of the arc and lime light, which have lenses of different size, and some of them delicate iris shutters that permit their being focussed for fine work into one subtile rift of light directed at a certain small point, or broadened into a blanket of color. The flood-lamp, for instance, may be “stopped down” so as to emit but a slender beam for illuminating a very small spot, or, as most commonly used, adjusted to envelop the whole or a large part of the stage with a flood of light to represent, as occasion demands, the dazzling sunlight of noon, the soft, warm, reddish yellow of sunset, the silver, misty gray of a Corot dawn, the cold, uncanny light of the moon, or any of the countless other light “effects” of which nature is so prodigal and which the producer strives so sedulously to ape. There are searchlights similar to those designed for marine use, which are invaluable when exceptionally strong directed light is required.

Each spotlight must be manipulated by a well trained and watchful operator upon whom—so important has illumination in the modern drama be-

come—much of the success of the play depends. For the work of the spotlight operator is to the proscenium picture what the artist's brush work is in the easel painting. He must work with his lens-lamp as deftly and delicately for light and shade or color as the artist does with his brush. But, unlike the artist, he cannot paint out what does not at first please him; he must, night after night, produce instantly the exact effect his light plot calls for. His cues are almost as important as are the lines of the actor who depends upon him for the proper light. He has it often in his power to make or mar the entire play.

That this is true is a rather pertinent commentary on the condition of the modern drama. The spotlight seems to be a symbol of the *tour de force*.

All the lights in the "foots," borders, strips, and often even in the electric spotlamps, are controlled by one man at the switchboard. This is a complicated piece of mechanism so important in the production of theatrical effects that Mr. Belasco, at least, considers it necessary to send one on the road with every play whose success depends on lighting features—as most of his dramas do. It is a board of "marbelized" slate in which are set often as many as two hundred switches. These levers control all the lamps, not only on the stage, but in the audience. With the aid of the dimmer—a comparatively recent invention which consists of a number of resistance plates—all lights may be gradually brought to any desired degree of intensity, at a speed, it is stated, of from two seconds to sixteen minutes, or by a quick change that is practically instantaneous. This switchboard is the color mixer. Here, with the tiers of levers before him, one individual can produce the light of dawn or sundown;



he can illuminate the stage with any color or tint he cares to, or bring it to whatever degree of light or dark seems suitable. All gradations are possible to him. He can dim the lamps of one color while at the same time he brings to full brilliancy the bulbs of another color that had before been but a glow. More than this, since the switchboard controls the house lamps also, he may enhance the effect of the stage light by grading the illumination of the auditorium to harmonize or contrast with it.

To effect a diffusion of light as nearly as possible like that of nature has been the ambition of the theatrical engineer since he has had at his disposal sufficient light to diffuse. But to acquire by artificial means nature's even distribution is rarely possible. The method of Mariano Fortuny, the Venetian artist, produces the best natural effects yet obtained. His illumination is by arc lamp alone—for its light most nearly reproduces daylight—and all light, before reaching the stage, is twice reflected. The first reflection is from surfaces made up of innumerable strips of cloth of various hues. From some of these, the colored ones, the light takes its tints; others modify the quality of the reflected light by mingling with it somewhat in the manner of nature, bits of black and white. Tinted glasses are sometimes placed before the arc lights in order that the light, passing first through them, may be colored before it is reflected. This is found to add to the resultant light something of the variety found in sunlight's rays. Even then it is not ready for the stage but must first be thrown upon a dull white, vaulted dome which encompasses the whole area back of the proscenium arch. By this process almost perfect diffusion is obtained; all violent contrasts are toned down,

unnatural shadows avoided, and an appearance of aerial perspective produced. All the lights are controlled by switches at the rear of the auditorium, thus permitting the operator to get the spectator's point of view.

Color, of course, now plays an enormous part in the theatre, though its history as a means for illusion is more brief than is often supposed. One of the first attempts to use color effectively in the drama was made by Offenbach in the presentation of his *Orphée aux Enfers* at the Théâtre de la Gaîté. From that time decoration in the drama has been governed, to a large extent, by the same laws of composition, color harmony, and distribution of light masses that obtain in the easel picture. Today color has come to be as important a consideration to the producer as it has been to the painter since the time of Giorgione. The man who stages the modern play must, in theory at least, be something of a colorist, a luminarist, tonalist and a chiaroscurist. He finds that color is not only essential in his efforts to hold the mirror up to nature, but, since it plays so important a part in man's environment and is so potent an influence upon his mental and emotional states, that it is also a factor in the interpretation of life. Much that is impressive in the theatre to-day is a result, not only of the actor's actions and his lines, but of the color tone of the light that encompasses him. Just as Watteau used color tones as well as sprightly action to give to his pictures an air of gayety and vivacity, so the stage director can supplement the work of the author by presenting his scenes in general tones of warm red or cheery yellow, or make them cold and dismal with blues and greens and purples, or masses of shadow. For instance, rollicking farce, he finds,

is impossible in black. Red and yellow, the colors of mirth, hilarity and happiness, are indispensable in comedy; the colder colors are the fit accompaniment of drab tragedy. Color expresses, too, tempo as well as tone. But it must be remembered that tragedy is often to be found in cheery places. Though people are prone to take their moods from their surroundings, the converse is not always true; it is not sensible to suppose that the surroundings are equally open to suggestion and take their color from the moods of the characters, though many stage-directors, not caring to recognize this, manipulate their lights with much the same melodramatic result that the old-fashioned music motif once produced. Mr. Belasco has so much faith in the emotional quality of color that he gives each of the important personages in his play a particular color or shade suited to the person of the performer and to the personality of the character he is representing.

Color is again useful when the effect of aerial perspective is desired, for blues and grays are suggestive of distance.

A great deal may be done, too, with simple blacks and whites. While lack of light was once a drawback to the drama, we have cause now to complain of too much of it. In striving to light the stage as thoroughly as nature illumines the drama of life, the producers are prone to go too far. In aiming to be naturalistic they forget, for instance, that in nature there is shadow as well as light. They are unaware that many details might well be omitted; Sentimental Tommy could teach them the artist's duty of doing without some things. And it is only lately that there have come to the theatre men who are brave enough not only to be not afraid of the

shadow but to use it with decorative effect. The Irish Players are showing what can be done by its imaginative use. Light, they realize, may suggest as well as reveal; so in *The Rising of the Moon* they boldly emphasize what needs emphasis by leaving the rest out; and lighting the stage from one point only, they make a background of deep, transparent black, pregnant with suggestion. Again, in *Birthright*, they use shadows with a distinctly decorative effect. But the commonplace, "realistic" stage-director dreads the light-thrown shadow. He must do away with it at all cost; and to do so he makes his light come from all directions, builds supererogated scenery for the sole purpose of supporting shade-eliminating lights, and places spot-lights in the flies to pick the smaller shadows out. But, while doing all he can to eliminate real shadows (and there is nothing real about light without shadow), he commissions his scene-painter to give him elaborate painted ones to make the scene seem "real." Then realizing that the stage, when evenly lighted, is wearying to the eye, and that a certain amount of directed cross-light is necessary to make physiognomical play significant, he ignores his stationary, painted shadows and lets his light cast others contradicting them. And the result of all his fussing is a stultifying realism that libels nature.

To be considered an accomplished producer to-day a man must make use of light and shade with the daring mastery of Rembrandt and much of the quiet confidence of Pieter de Hoogh; he must have something of Velasquez's sense of values. He must know how artistically to distribute masses of lights and darks as well as color, how to compose in black and white. It is absolutely necessary that he realize the reflecting powers of different textures, surfaces, and

tints, that he understand the effect of colored light upon colored objects. He must be, in a word, an artist.

Illumination is responsible for a great deal in the drama, both good and bad; it permits the actor to be "natural." But to-day it also covers a multitude of dramatic sins. Nevertheless, there lies in lighting the solution of many of the present problems of dramatic presentation.

ARTHUR POLLOCK.

## BJÖRNSSON'S *BEYOND HUMAN POWER*

Plays by Björnstjerne Björnsson: *The Gauntlet*, *Beyond Our Power*, *The New System*. Translated from the Norwegian by Edwin Björkman. New York; Charles Scribner's Sons.



IN these days when we seem to see a return even in the life of every day to a consideration of those moral principles which in other times constituted the elements of vital religion, and when the speculations of such scientists as Sir Oliver Lodge are leading them to the verge of a new and mysterious faith, it is particularly interesting to take up for study a play which a generation ago considered these questions with a large philosophical grasp and literary vigor. I refer to Björnsson's crowning contribution to dramatic literature, *Over Aevne*—a title which may be roughly translated as *Beyond Human Power* or *Beyond His Strength*. To understand this play it will be necessary to study it in the light of Björnsson's own history.

The son of a clergyman of the Lutheran state religion of Norway, Björnsson (1832-1910) inherited his father's rather liberal faith. This he stoutly maintained into mature manhood, vigorously defending a religious attitude which, as middle life approached, inclined toward the strictly apostolic, national, and "cheerful" Christianity of the Danish poet and seer, Grundtvig. There followed, however, in the seventies, another and final readjustment of his views in this respect. Although he was to hold out longer than any one among his eminent con-

temporaries in the North, he, no more than they, was to be spared the formidable wrench and the distress of soul that come with the losing of the faith of one's youth. Despite his struggles, the ever-growing challenge of the experimental and historical sciences finally proved irresistible to a mind in which love of truth was no less firmly embedded than loyalty to traditions. After protracted wrestling with himself, he emerged practically an agnostic. From now on, Positivism, instead of Christianity, is his working hypothesis of life—and he constitutes himself its high-priest.

To be won over to a cause always meant for Björnson to transform his new convictions unhesitatingly into action. Sure of his bearings through an intense study of theologic, historic, and scientific works, he threw himself, with all the force of his genius and the zeal of the convert, into a campaign for the spreading of his views—instituting a unique, though not always well-considered, war on orthodox Christianity, especially on what he considered its excrescences: the belief in a devil and the pains of hell, a personal deity, and the future life. He scandalized his former friends among the conservatives by rendering accessible to his countrymen the essential arguments in Waite's *Christian Religion in the First Two Centuries*; and, after his visit to America in 1882, he even went so far as to translate, with an introduction, the articles of the "infidel" Ingersoll in the *North American Review* of 1881, on *The Christian Religion*.

George Brandes, the banner-bearer of the radical forces in Scandinavian literature, had raised the battle-cry that it was the task of poetry to be useful and to discuss the problems of the times; in other words, that the poet was to be seer and prophet as

well, rebuking and forewarning as well as delighting. The pedagogical element in Björnson's genius hardly needed the stimulus of Brandes' influence to urge him to seize with eagerness the possibilities opened up by modern conditions of life. The specialists have scoffed at his knowledge of theology, medicine, sociology, psychology. It remains true, however, that at that time few of the delvers into the secrets of nature and the human mind saw the broader bearings of their own discoveries as keenly as did Björnson. Thus Björnson antedated them in the composition of "the problem play." Beginning with *The Editor* (1874), three years before *The Pillars of Society*, dealing with the ethics of journalism, there follow a number of plays that fall like bombs into the camp of the conservatives: *A Bankruptcy* and *The New System*, treating of business morality; *The King*, based on the opposed theories of the Republic and Monarchy; and *Leonarda* and *A Glove*, dealing with questions of sex morality. Next in point of time (1883) there comes the drama here translated, bearing the title of *Over Aevne* (Beyond Human Power). As the subtitle of the first part indicates this was to be the first of a series of plays independent of each other and each to deal with some aspect of what was "over aevne" in modern society. Only one other play bearing this title came to be written (1895), this was concerned with the struggle between Capital and Labor.

The force of the Dano-Norwegian idiom "over aevne" is only incompletely rendered by "beyond human power." Something is said to be "over aevne" when it so far exceeds our strength, potential and real, as to be unobtainable; or if attainable at all, only by over-reaching, over-straining one's self. Again, to live "over aevne" is to live beyond



one's means, whether of resources or strength, at the risk of ruin.

The subject of *Beyond Human Power* is the problem of Faith; that is, for us, of Christianity. Björnson's thesis is that, both in its demands upon human power *and* human faith, Christianity is "over aevne;" that the consistent carrying out of Christian theories would, and does, land us in the impossible and unnatural; and that the essence of Christianity lies in the words: To faith, all things are possible.

Kierkegaard, the great poet-theologian of Denmark, who, for a generation, had helped the best spirits of young Scandinavia at the parting of the ways—whether to become sincerely Christian or confirmed disbeliever—says in one place that the miracle in the minds of the Greeks was "something abnormal, stunted, incomplete . . . that we, however, by Christianity, have become—or ought to have become—used to regard the miracle as the something extraordinary which is *higher* than the normal, the accustomed, the general . . . " Björnson, like the Greeks, regards the miracle as something sickly, uncanny—a monstrosity. Just as deformities and monstrosities are miscarriages of nature in the physical sphere, likewise "miracles" are a symptom of disordered mental nature. They are, in other words, not normal, but pathological, indicating sick nerves and deranged minds.

From another point of view, the miraculous certainly is destructive of the whole fabric of society, setting "a man at variance with his father, and the daughter against the mother," and so causing it that "a man's foes shall be they of his own household." For what is the essence of the miraculous, what does it teach? The drama is a case in point.

Its essence is that whensoever a personal will may break through the lawful order of nature, that will is bound to work havoc in all orderly thought and life. All is bowled over by an inexplicable intercession. Men are tempted to think and to attempt to believe irrational things, to ignore normal development and causation. Education becomes spasmodic, social relations chaotic. In this sense, the miracle is explosive, revolutionary.

In itself, to ask for things "over aevne" and to expect them is dangerous. Once we go beyond the lawful order of things, the unexpected, the inexplicable may happen. As the keen, loving mind of Rachel foresees: "The miracle is no blessing; it is a thing terrifying. . . . *it will kill us finally!*" Because it leads "beyond the bounds" of reality, because, as Sang himself surmises, "it lifts things off their hinges," it heightens man's powers for a brief time—as fever-frenzy at times gives men supernatural strength—only to court a terrible relapse. The poet's reference to medical works on nervous diseases at the end of the play, which, at first blush, may seem pedantic, thus assumes the aspect of a warning not to rouse the occult and sinister forces that slumber in the depths of human consciousness.

With a stroke of true genius, Björnson has made the miracle synonymous with the miraculous personality and powers of one man. The eyes of all are devoutly fastened upon him—in love, admiration, despair. And on him the poet has lavished all the bright and beautiful traits in human character, so as to make him even as a god among men. He is perfect. Only, and fatally, he is not of this world. "He lacks a whole sense, the sense of reality." He is like as a child, fit to enter into the Kingdom of

Heaven. In the remarkable, long gallery of priests in Scandinavian literature—the frauds, hypocrites, cowards, politicians, breadwinners, fanatics, fools—Pastor Sang shines like a bright Cherub. His motives are altogether beyond suspicion. He is of one piece. His devotion and belief are implicit; not a vestige of doubt enters his soul. His absolute certainty of being in harmony with the deity invest his personality with an irresistible hypnotic power over others. By force of this quality, he performs miracles, he heals the sick and raises up the dead, aye, seems to extend his sway over inanimate nature as well. Yet he does not vaunt his power; for he knows it is God-given, and, far from deriving advantage from it, he gives away all he has, to the good and the bad alike. Surely, if anybody, he deserves to be called a Christian. And to perfect the illusion, this man, of all men, appears in a land bleak and fantastic, and in its way as unusual as the Holy Land itself! If the miracle is not here, it does not exist.

To faith all things are possible. This is Sang's grand and fatal assumption. Raising himself beyond his strength, he essays to break through the lawful order of things to heal his wife, who is beyond his power—and destroys both himself and her. When it appears that his prayer really has subverted the laws of the universe, and that the supposed crowning miracle with his wife is but a deadly nervous crisis, which he himself has brought on, he collapses utterly. There is immense tragic force in his despairing cry of “—or else—?” It marks the pin-hole entrance of doubt. With it has fled the faith which was the breath of his life. Just as a slight shock suffices to shatter the glass of a St. Rupertus' drop into atoms, his heart breaks alto-

gether, once it is no longer whole. In dry medical language, he dies of a violent psychosis. Here again the reference to works on "La grande hystérie" is like the lifting of a warning finger.

Beside Sang, all other characters of the drama sink into insignificance. They are but a foil to his glory. In all their actions and speeches we see but him reflected. And yet, what a wealth of magnificently visualized characters, and how tenderly delineated! There is the profoundly conceived union with his poor devoted wife, the born sceptic, with her unshakable faith in the supernatural powers of Sang, who is being crushed between the absolute demands of Faith and the practical demands of life; then there are the children, torn between doubt and faith, with half their father's, half their mother's nature, and with the loyalty of both; also the touching figure of the pastor's widow, like Simeon departing from the temple in peace after seeing her salvation, or like Anna, and finally Bratt, the ardent and impatient sceptic, yearning for a faith. It is noteworthy that in this whole piece, aimed as it is at the very vitals of Christianity, there is no professed free-thinker. The one who comes nearest to that description—delicate irony!—a state-church priest of the rationalist wing! Indeed, so great is the poet's fair-mindedness that, especially in the second act, his sympathies (and with him the reader's) seem to incline altogether to the side of Faith, or at least of those ampler natures who long for Faith, the ridicule falling rather on the official quasi-Christians—until they, too, are caught up into the mighty chorus of hallelujahs.

As to the poet's main thesis, to be sure the miracle is "not proved." Quite another matter it is whether or no the confutation of Christianity necessarily

follows from the miracle thus being shown to be beyond human power in the most favorable circumstances thinkable. With Cardinal Newman, the believer may seek refuge in the thought that miracles were indispensable only at the inception of the Faith. Again many Christians would hardly grant that Christianity must stand or fall with the miracle; just as, conversely, the miracle is no argument to one who is deliberately an agnostic.

The play ends tragically; but, as in a Greek tragedy, the spectator is not dismissed with horror and dismay, but with the uplifting feeling that, error being avoided, man's is a blessed estate. Here in particular, if no supernatural aid can be prayed down from the blue, yet, and precisely because of that, man may hope to work out his salvation, not beyond, but in accordance with, the laws of nature.

LEE M. HOLLANDER.

## THE INDEPENDENCE DAY PAGEANT AT WASHINGTON

Nearly all the writings that have inspired or accompanied the revival of pageantry in America have urged especially that this be the form of celebration of the Fourth of July.

The National Birthday has been, indeed, the most neglected holiday of the year so far as adequate, appropriate expression of its meaning is concerned. The era of the "sane Fourth," though welcome for the sake of life and limb, has unfortunately taken away from the occasion the spirit of celebration, of festivity and enthusiasm, and hitherto has made no recompense. Pageantry offers itself as a wonderful medium for the expression of national thanksgiving, capable of just that element of rejoicing so necessary to youth and patriotic fervor.

It is, therefore, a fact of special interest that in at least one city symbolism and patriotic spectacle at last have taken the place of noise and fire and casualty on Independence Day. And of very special interest is it that the city which has set this example is the capital city of the nation.

Appropriately, too, the undertaking was initiated by the Washington branch of a national organization whose aim it is to restore the drama as a national art.

It was Percy MacKaye who, in a lecture for the Drama League emphasizing at just the favorable moment the value of pageantry, gave the most direct local inspiration for the Independence Day pageant

held in Washington last summer. For a number of years Mr. and Mrs. J. P. S. Neligh, at Neighborhood House Settlement, had been organizing an annual spring festival for the southwest section of the city. This unpretentious piece of work now took on new significance to many minds, and became an appreciated object lesson as to what the whole city might do.

The idea once conceived as a Drama League project, its chances of success were tested by calling a meeting of Drama League members and other people presumably interested in such work. There was a program of addresses on the value of pageantry from several view-points. The response was such that the leaders in the movement felt no more hesitation about launching the plans.

There were difficulties and discouragements enough, to be sure. The Washington climate, with its uncertainty of everything except unbearable heat, held many possibilities of disaster. Success depended also upon making the idea popular with the children, and holding them to some degree organized in spite of the fact that the schools would have been dismissed and the children scattered for three weeks before the Fourth. It depended also upon enlisting a sufficient support, both moral and financial, from the general public, to whom the folk festival idea was new. That public, moreover, in Washington is a changing thing, largely with homes and interests in other cities, and even more largely disappearing to cooler climes in summer.

These difficulties, however, were made to face about into arguments for the undertaking. The remaining children, and the grown-ups, too, for that matter, would be seeking some sort of amusement on the Fourth, no matter how hot the weather. The chil-

dren would certainly welcome something of which they could be a part, instead of having merely to look on while their elders shot off fireworks and had all the fun. A canvass for participants could be made before the close of school, and the newspapers would keep the interest alive after school had closed. As for the public that felt no community interest, or that went out of town for the summer, it was not that public which was most to be considered. The people who could not escape to the mountains or the seashore were far more to be thought of, and were, in fact, a far more numerous host.

For directors of the pageant, the Drama League was fortunate in having two officers whose talents and experience would insure the artistic success of the project—namely Mrs. Glenna Smith Tinnin and Miss Hazel MacKaye. An executive committee enlisted the coöperation of a business men's committee, representing the organization which had established the "sane Fourth" in the District of Columbia. This committee undertook to collect funds from the public to finance the celebration. The pageant committee then set to work upon its designs.

With but three months in which to work—for this was April—it was necessary to adopt a design which would be comparatively simple of execution and inexpensive. It must also, of course, above all express the spirit of national thanksgiving in such form as would appeal to all ages and also permit the poorest child to take part. To meet these requirements Miss MacKaye and Mrs. Tinnin devised a pantomime play representing *Uncle Sam's 137th Birthday Party*, which was carried out as a reception by Uncle Sam and Columbia to all the states and territories, in geographical groups, each bringing gifts.



The children of the city were invited to come as special guests in costume suggesting important periods of the country's history since the great Fourth of July in 1776.

As a simple practical design for this procession of children, it was decided to offer a choice of characters in such groups as these: For colonial days, little George and little Martha Washingtons; for 1812, little James and little Dolly Madisons; for 1860, little men and little women, as portrayed by Louisa M. Alcott, and then, for present times, a variety of typical groups, such as midddy boys and midddy girls, Indian boys and Indian girls, Camp-fire Girls, cowboys, baseball boys, story-book folks, flower girls, and flag boys. Naturally the largest number of children registered for the modern groups, since to costume them required no expense. And this resulted altogether to the advantage of the spectacle, for it made neat uniformed ranks which were quite as impressive as the more individually striking costumes.

The faith of those who believed in pageantry as the greatest art of the people was amply justified by the response of the community to this festival from beginning to end. Although it is true there was so much work that the workers seemed always too few, it is also true that the workers were numerous and eager. Downtown headquarters were placed at the disposal of the pageant committee by the public-spirited owner of a well-located building, and here one large room was used not only as wardrobe but as sewing room, where costumes were made and properties devised. Women of wealth and women who had nothing but their services to give worked alike for hours of the day at sewing machines or with scissors and thimble. Young men and young

women searched out and assembled special costumes, ran errands, or undertook willingly the most uninspiring chores. And the cordial interest of the public was maintained constantly by the newspapers, all four of which published almost daily reports of progress and any announcements the committee asked in aid of the work.

The children were interested from the first moment. The pledges to march came in singly by mail as well as in packages from the schools. Children of the American Revolution, the Thomas Welles Society, spoke for the privilege of constituting the colonial group. Small tots with their parents came to the committee headquarters to consult regarding their choice of characters, or, later, to show off their costumes, a small cowboy startling the tired workers almost to death one evening by landing on the threshold with a yell and a flourish of his pistols (cartridgeless, under the rules, but realistic in appearance). His accoutrement was complete to the last detail of cowhide shoes, bandana, and lariat. To one indignant youth, the committee had to make humble apology. "I signed to be an Indian, and I got a card to be a midddy!" he protested, said card held contemptuously in his outstretched hand. "Why, I've got warpaint and feathers and a tomahawk—*me* a midddy?" He was told, of course, that he might be an Indian. But the insult could not be wiped out.

There was one group of girls for which the committee, desiring to secure uniformity, provided the costumes outright and intended to select wearers of a special type in order to have a special effect in the procession. It soon became evident, however, that the true spirit of this celebration required the sacrifice of such a point as that. The possibility

of playing even so simple a part, and wearing a "costoom" meant so much to some girlish hearts whose pleasures were obviously limited and whose ideals were cramped, that they were not to be denied their wish, however pathetically unsuited they were for the character of their choice.

For the pantomime play which was to be the climax of the celebration, a cast of one hundred and thirty people was required, and as many of the effects were to be produced by rhythmic ceremonial and interpretative dance, the task of rehearsal was no light one. Mrs. Dudley Hawley, Miss Lotta Linthicum, and Mr. Graham Velsey, professional actors in one of the local stock companies, contributed their services in three of the principal parts—namely, Columbia, Liberty, and the Herald. Otherwise, not many of the cast had had more than slight amateur experience, and the dances were all designed and taught to the different groups by Miss MacKaye during the last three weeks before the Fourth. The weather was at its hottest, but desire for the success of the undertaking outweighed all considerations of personal comfort, and held the performers to their tasks, even to rehearsals at mid-afternoon in the blazing sun on the Monument Lot. There came to be, in fact, a waiting list for parts in the play.

Washington has exceptional advantages for any sort of out-of-door festivity so far as beauty of setting is concerned, and fortunately one of the most beautiful stretches of its park system is easily accessible from the most crowded sections of the city. The spot chosen for the Birthday Party was the level green between two little groves at the foot of the slope south of the Washington Monument. The whole of this level was roped off as the stage, the

spectators occupying the hillside as a great amphitheatre. In the center of the stage was erected a white dais, upon which were seats for Columbia and Uncle Sam and a pedestal for Liberty. This simple piece was the only "scenery" except that of the natural surroundings; and the groves served admirably to conceal the performers until their entrances, and also to conceal the musicians. The children in the procession, special guests at the party, could come not by way of scorching, ugly Pennsylvania avenue, but from the shady lanes of the Mall lying east of the Monument.

When the Fourth arrived, there were four thousand children who had registered for the pageant procession, and they had been duly notified individually to join their respective divisions along the Seventh and B street boundaries of the Smithsonian Institute grounds. Long before the leaders and marshals appeared on the scene the police were busy with the throng of excited youngsters and almost equally excited parents, bent on securing places of vantage from which to view their offspring when the march began. To bring order out of this chaos of color and eagerness which overran street and sidewalk seemed next to impossible. The standard-bearers were literally almost swept off their feet sometimes, and every wearer of a badge was besieged with questions as one and another fond parent proudly presented Jimmy and Tommy or Dorothy and Janet in full regalia for the day. The procession was officered and marshaled, however, by teachers and high school cadets; and Boy Scouts, whose regulations did not permit them to march in parade, lent valiant aid in assembling the groups. In an amazingly short time a most gorgeous and striking procession was formed in orderly array

about two sides of the great square, and at just five minutes after five o'clock the signal was given to march. Almost like race horses, the children bounded forward when the check was removed.

Immediately following the band was one of the interesting impromptu features of the day, a tiny Uncle Sam, who had appeared nobody knew whence, and was promptly given this prominent place. Then came a hundred Liberty Girls, fourteen to sixteen years old, some in red, some in white, some in blue classic slips, all grouped in alternating ranks according to their colors. Next appeared the Colonials, the 1812's and the 1860's, the first group composed of members of the Thomas Welles Society of Children of the American Revolution, the second and third partly of children from settlement clubs, partly from everywhere. Of flower girls there were hundreds (seven hundred and fifty sent in their names), all in white muslin and white shoes and stockings, with wreaths of white daisies and carrying bunches of daisies tied, in the first section, with red, in the second with white, and in the third with blue tarlatan bows. These were nearly all very little girls. Next came very little Indian warriors, living up to their character by giving forth frequent yells. The middy girls were the largest division of all (one thousand enrolled), and they subdivided most effectively in red, white, and blue sections, the colors appearing in a binding on their white duck hats and in their ties, and still further in red and blue balloons and, since no white balloons were to be had, white tissue plumes which they carried. Over five hundred boys registered for the cowboy group, and nearly as many for the baseball group. Smaller but highly effective groups were the little Indian girls and the Camp Fire Girls, the flag boys from the

Industrial Home School, in their neat gray military uniforms, and the Story Book Folks in their more fantastic garb.

Through the beautiful winding drives of the Smithsonian grounds, across the grounds of the Agricultural Department, thence into the Monument grounds and encircling the base of the great shaft, the procession was then led down the hillside and into a reserved space in front of all the rest of the audience to see the Birthday Party.

By this time the light was mild and beautiful, and the setting most impressive. Not less impressive, on the other hand—indeed, most inspiring—was the throng of ten thousand people which occupied the hillside. Never before, the police records say, except at the inauguration of a president of the United States, has so large a crowd assembled in Washington.

A helmeted, booted Herald, gorgeous in red and blue, stepped out from the trees and blew a loud blast on his trumpet. Then, to the gay music of *Yankee Doodle*, two of Uncle Sam's Minute Men marched out of the grove in soldierly fashion, preceding Uncle Sam himself, who bowed and smiled his welcome to the throng as he swung across the green to the white dais in the center. The Herald stepped forth again, and another loud blast announced a resplendent figure who came with stately step from the opposite grove. She was welcomed with the inspiring strains of *Hail, Columbia!* and all the people could but in their hearts do reverence to her beauty as she took her place beside Uncle Sam as mistress of the day. Her head with its glistening helmet was proudly poised, her white-robed figure with its blue bodice was outlined against the brilliant red and white lining of a rich mantle of royal

blue, which fell from her shoulders and lay in heavy folds about her feet. She stood with outstretched arm holding her spear, making a noble picture.

And now the distinguished guests began to arrive. The *Marseillaise* was heard and thirteen tall white figures, with golden shields, advanced toward the dais, surrounding a fourteenth figure even more goddess-like than they. The great gift of the first thirteen states of the Union was Liberty, and it was she they now escorted, to be led by Uncle Sam to the pedestal which had been awaiting her. In this lofty place, her torch held high, Liberty stood throughout the ceremony, the most imposing symbol of the day.

More rapidly now came the younger states. First, six gay "Dixie Girls," in wide hoopskirts and rosebud bonnets, tripping in to the tune of *Dixie* and bringing with them a long train of gifts, each gift personified by young girls or young men, who danced in character to the gay measures of *Turkey in the Straw*. There were little cotton girls in green boll-trimmed kirtles, with a charming little bobbing dance, and there were the longer, slimmer, paler green figures of sugar-cane, with stiffer movements. Then there were six tobacco boys, in tunics made of brown and green tobacco leaves, and great cigars for hats, while a plumed and prancing ostrich lady, escorted by a grotesque and ungainly alligator, concluded the array of gifts from the Sunny South.

Maine, in prim poke bonnet, to the tune of the *Irishman's Chantey*, led in a great lobster, and Vermont followed with a block of granite. Then came the states of the Middle West, strong farmer lads in brown, wearing wide field hats and carrying scythes. They entered to the vigorous rhythm of *Pop Goes the Weasel*, and brought with them

gifts of corn and wheat, represented by slender, graceful girls in a garb of the colors of ripened grain, who, to the strains of *A Farmer He Went Out to Sow*, danced in rhythms suggesting the waving fields.

Graceful figures in soft, flowing greens and blues, dull gray, and gold and copper and silver, glided in and danced in sweeping movements with the music of *I Am a Child of the Forest Wild*. These were the States of the North, symbolized by their trees, their rivers and lakes, and the mineraled earth which yields such rich lustrous treasures. But soon a vigorous change in the music announced the States of the Far West, and picturesque ranch girls, in khaki and sombreros, came on in a galloping dance, driving a steer. Then, as the music softened into *La Paloma*, young girls in flowing draperies of rose and crimson brought in cornucopias of fruit and baskets and garlands of flowers.

Then came Alaska, carrying a totem-pole and wearing a heavy chain of gold nuggets, which she presented to Columbia. And last came Hawaii, with an immense tray of pineapples, which he deposited before the dais while he gave, with wonderful grace, the characteristic "hula" dance to the music of *Aloha*.

The whole assemblage of States and Territories with their gifts now formed in a great processional to *My Country, 'Tis of Thee*, and Uncle Sam and Columbia proudly reviewed this final ceremony of the most memorable anniversary of the Nation's birth ever known in the District of Columbia.

The celebration had been successful beyond the highest hopes of its organizers. To say that all the original plans were put through would of course be too much. The design had to be modified again and



again, as this or that physical limitation appeared. In review, also, as always, it was possible to see where improvements could have been made. But it is still true that this first undertaking of its kind in Washington, representing an expenditure of less than \$1,400, was an achievement of impressive beauty and lasting inspiration. Those to whose labor it was due felt repaid a hundred times over.

From other than artistic standpoints, also, there was occasion for satisfaction. There had not been wanting those to predict failure or some sort of trouble before the day was over. Practical features of organization were difficult, of course. People said there would be prostrations from the heat. Police authorities declared there would be at least a hundred lost children.

Precautions were taken by the committee, however, as well as by the municipal authorities. Ambulances and nurses, and Boy Scouts with their first-aid equipment, were stationed at points near the line of march. To insure the meeting of children and parents, the postal card notices containing instructions for forming the parade contained also instructions to parents to meet the procession along a given street as it left the grounds after the play. The children, used to keeping lines at school, and being now marshaled by teachers and high school cadets, with Boy Scouts on the lookout everywhere along the street for possible misadventures, kept together admirably until, almost imperceptibly, child after child was plucked out of line by its parents and the procession had completely dissolved. Three little girls were left unclaimed on a marshal's hands. But they knew where they lived and were easily sent home.

The pageant committee, feeling its responsibility,

kept in close touch with police headquarters all evening. There was not, however, a single casualty of any kind, and there was not a lost child on the docket. It had been a noiseless Fourth, without so much as a firecracker or a single skyrocket. It had been entirely safe, sane, and beautiful.

But had the children enjoyed it?

On the morning of the 5th, riding down Seventh street on the car, one might have seen a group of three little boys whose playground was the pavement in front of their father's shop. One wore the dress of an Indian, one was a cowboy, the third was just a plain American citizen. A ceremony was in progress, and on closer observation it proved that the Indian was being taught to salute the flag.

When the committee headquarters were opened that same morning, for the afterwork of the celebration, two eight-year-old youngsters were waiting on the step. They had come, they said, to register "to be in it" next year.

ETHEL M. SMITH.

## OSCAR WILDE AGAIN

*Oscar Wilde, A Critical Study*, by Arthur Ransome. New York, Mitchell Kennerley, 1913. Second edition.



SECOND edition of Dr. Ransome's appreciative criticism of the most discussed man in the literary '90s recalls—unintentionally, it must be added—a phase of Wilde's character which in this, as in previous biographies like that by Robert Harborough Sherard, has been left unstressed: the *outré*. No one who saw Wilde as, in 1881-82, he walked the streets of Philadelphia with his velvet knickerbockers and white lily, will deny this quality in his appearance. No one who has followed his critical dicta will deny it in his aesthetics. Few theater-goers or play-readers will fail to recognize it in his dramas. On a certain afternoon in May, 1895, at the Old Bailey, the audacity which it begat proved his undoing.

Doctor Ransome gives Wilde credit for originating one principle of art criticism. In *The Decay of Lying*, that scintillating colloquy, Vivian says, "External Nature also imitates Art. The only effects that she can show us are effects that we have already seen through poetry or in painting." This, with its preceding theorem that Life follows Art, is Oscar Wilde's contribution to aesthetic theory. Now it is no small achievement to break into the rarefied atmosphere of original thought. Yet this is what Wilde did when he pointed out that a painting of a sunset or a poem about a sunset has taught us to appreciate the sunset itself. The only trouble is

that the theory, though unhackneyed and invigorating, is false. The author of *Intentions* neglected the artist's reception of external impressions and his transformation of them in his imagination. It is surprising that Dr. Ransome should not point out this all too elementary fallacy.

To Wilde the dramatist, the critic gives deserved praise. Here the work of *Punch's* "Aesthete of Aesthetes" is freest from the *outré*. And yet the quality at once strikes him who knows the rest of Wilde's work. In the brilliancy which emanates from Mr. Shaw we are apt to forget that he had a predecessor in the art of dialogue, just as we forget Wilde's preparing of the way for Mr. Chesterton in the essay. Yet it was Wilde who put the paradox on the English stage: When *Lady Windermere's Fan* appeared in 1892, it was a new thing to find an act made up of twenty minutes of such wit and ten minutes of intense dramatic interest. The arrows of social satire had never been so brilliantly tipped. The London theater-goers of 1893 flocked to *A Woman of No Importance* not, it is safe to say, that they might weep over Mrs. Arbuthnot and rejoice in her final epigrammatic reversal of the title, but that they might laugh to see Wilde's shafts flicker neatly to their targets. *A Woman of No Importance* is melodramatic in situation; surely Lord Illingsworth's desertion and its results are insufficiently motivated even in baseness of character. And yet the play goes, for Wilde is always behind it and in it. *An Ideal Husband* is made up for the most part of small talk, which resembles Mrs. Cheveley herself in being "rather like an orchid." For a person who has "genuine dramatic instinct," it may be permissible to waste the precious moments of a performance on those whipped-cream speeches of which

Wilde was so fond, but it is a sign that the complementary theatrical instinct is lacking.

Doctor Ransome calls *The Importance of Being Earnest* Wilde's best play. Here the dialogue is the natural outgrowth of plot and situation. Even the priceless Bunbury is indigenous. Yet the play is all Wilde. It is he who puts the fun into the mouths of Worthing and Moncrieff, Cicily Cardew and Miss Prism. There is never a moment when he is off-stage. Hidden beneath his Fortunatus cap he darts hither and thither, now framing a speech for Moncrieff as he hands the Honorable Gwendoline Fairfax tea, now supplying the Reverend Canon Chasuble with an inanity to captivate Miss Prism. No play is so typically Wilde; no play gives him so legitimate a chance to show himself.

It is to be doubted if the great dramatist is never content to let his characters go their ways *personis propriis*. One hardly feels Sheridan in Sir Lucius or Goldsmith in Hardcastle, or even Jonson in Tribulation Wholesome or Shakespeare in Dogberry. Indeed, it has been the critical custom to regard as the great dramatist him who can create a character and then allow him to act and speak as he must. On the other hand, the man who said that a certain popular novelist "writes at the top of his voice. He is so loud that one cannot hear what he says," is a giant of epigram. Great talkers before Wilde have been very minor dramatists; Dr. Johnson's *Irene* got precisely the welcome it deserved. Wilde's claim to fame might far better be rested on his wit.

Dr. Ransome's book has been widely praised and it should be widely read. It is not the work of a tyro; it is contained, it is appreciative of both merits and defects, and, best of all, it holds no briefs. In-

stead of combatting opinions, Dr. Ransome states his and allows them to stand on their face value. Grace and perspicuity are in his manner, and in his matter there is more than enough to place his book at the head of really critical opinion on Oscar Wilde.

JAMES S. HOWARD.

## THE DRAMA LEAGUE OF AMERICA, 1914.



IT IS scarcely three years since the laugh went around the New York papers at the new organization forming in Evanston with members only in Chicago and assuming to call itself The Drama League of America. Three years is a short time for any new organization to prove itself and yet in that time, with no endowment, no salaried workers, only the modest membership dues of one dollar and an occasional five dollar supporting membership, this earnest band of workers has not only held its own with real accomplishment, but has spread its influence into every state of our union, to thirty important cities, to four of the largest cities of Canada and now at last to England, where the same work is to be taken up in a co-operative spirit. It has met ridicule with earnest effort, has repaid faith with deeds and accomplishments, and it has established itself in the minds of the managers as an influential group of nation-wide activity anxious to do everything possible constructively in support of better plays. It does not claim as yet to be able to make or mar a play—to dictate arbitrarily as to production; but it does hope as its influence grows in Night Stands to be able to support a League play so strongly in advance as to bring to many of the small towns better plays than they could otherwise get. It aims to discover for the manager the audience that will enjoy a given play and bring the manager, the play and the special audience together.

In its short term the movement has even outlived the "ignominy" of being a woman's movement—it was started by the women's clubs of Chicago—and now has men as presidents in nearly half of the established centers; there are more men than women on its National Board of Directors, men representing all parts of the country and all types of interest.

In fact, one of the most striking and impressive characteristics of Drama League work is the fact that it is able through its many varied interests to attract and hold many and varied groups of people, claiming among its members, workers and adherents almost every branch of interest from the college and university, library, and social service worker to the man of business, the club woman and the society leader. At some point the League has been able to meet and interest each of these. It is this element of broad activity and universal appeal which has contributed so largely to its success.

Starting out in its career very simply, with no special backing except the faith and enthusiasm of its founders, it has met instant response in every direction; it has found the nation at large eager and ready to adopt the suggestion that the people must be roused to a realization of responsibility for national amusements, that it is only as the theatre-going public asserts itself that we can have better plays.

So much has been said about the decadence of the drama and the pitiable condition of our stage to-day that the League founders felt that more should be said about the other side of the footlights. They realized acutely that it was in large part the decadence of the audience which was to blame for the conditions in the theatre world to-day, and that we should never have clean, wholesome, clever, worth-



while drama until we secured an educated, awakened audience which should support and demand it. Since the theatre must remain a commercial proposition, since the manager must be guided by the box office returns, since the sale of seats after all is his only guide to the wishes of the public, it plainly remains with the public to say what the plays of the future shall be.

Given a receptive theatre-going public definitely announcing its interest in good plays, the managers will quickly put on such plays; the dramatists will respond to the call, and the theatre will be transformed. But first of all an organized audience must be created.

The nation has arrived at that stage of its material prosperity where it is ready for art development. It is beginning to assert its intelligence and its tastes, and to demand the right of judging drama for itself, refusing to accept it just because it is in the playhouse. An element of the public is rapidly arising which desires to use its brains in the theatre and is not content to "check them in the cloak room." Working on this theory, The Drama League is attempting to gather together into a nation-wide body all present lovers of good drama, to keep them informed in advance of good plays on the stage, to rally them to the support of the worthier dramatic performances, and to offer the managers, if they will present worthy plays, the support of these members all over the country.

It is easy to see what a tremendous force for effective advertising these League centers make for the deserving play, and what it might mean to the manager to keep in touch with these groups of earnest intelligent playgoers desiring to support good drama. Eventually the League expects to bring to

the one-night stand special attractions by means of pledging to the manager the support of its members in that town in actual theatre tickets, thus enabling the manager to feel sure of his audience in advance, and the towns to see better drama through League influence.

As the work becomes more and more established, a chain of support can be placed at the command of a worthy play, which will carry it from coast to coast under Drama League endorsement, with hearty assistance in hundreds of towns. More than that, the League will be developing a new dramatic taste for the country, which will come to the support of the manager desiring to do worth-while drama.

It is easy also to see what the League membership can mean to the member. He will be kept informed of the very best plays which come to his city, he will keep in touch with the drama of to-day, and he will be saved the annoyance of experimenting for himself on unknown and often worthless plays. Last year in Chicago there were 150 plays—100 of these were musical comedies, and, therefore, not noticed by the League. Of the other fifty, sixteen were approved by the League as worthy and bulletined: This will show a saving of attendance on thirty-four worthless plays, or more than two-thirds of all productions.

From the very beginning, the League has aimed to avoid the stigma of being "high-brow"; it does not try to uplift the theatre over the audience, but merely to create an audience—an actual ticket buying audience—for good, clean, well-written drama, well produced. It does not demand thesis plays or problem dramas, but is glad to support all forms of tragedy, comedy, farce, even melodrama, so long as they are thoroughly good of their kind.

Through its education department, the League is reaching universities, libraries, normal schools, high schools and large groups of children, arousing in them dramatic instinct and a knowledge of good drama which will result in the support of the good play. The women's clubs all over the country have endorsed the movement, and are adopting play-going days, when they attend in a body a League play. League endorsement is already an acknowledged factor in the theatre world as it well may be, since it works only in support, never against, and is utterly altruistic and uncommercial. The manager has everything to gain by this new movement, which is aiming to bring him an audience for his worthy play. He has nothing to lose by it, as it never censors his unworthy efforts. By keeping in touch with the national officers, a bulletined play on the road can have the benefit of advance support and advance advertising of a very special character.

New Centers are being formed with the circuit work in mind, aiming to bring into line for actual theatre support towns which are easily accessible by railroad. In such towns the League secures a definite following of several hundred who pledge themselves to take tickets for from three to five special plays to be brought to them during the year. With several weeks of this guaranteed attendance and simple railroading the League officers would be in a position to approach the commercial manager and offer its circuit of guaranteed support for the use of a chosen bulletined play; almost any manager would prefer a town where he was assured of advance support to a town where he must take his chances; thus it would become possible to substitute the League town with its guaranteed support for the now usual circuit. Of course, there are many

difficulties in the way of this plan. The work is slow ; the League must win the support and confidence of each community and must establish an assured reputation which shall secure for it the pledges of its constituency even where they do not know what plays are to be brought to them. On the other hand, it must prove to the manager—who is a skeptical and discouraging individual—that it actually can create concrete interest, keen and practical enough to tax the seating capacity of the house and reward him with a successful engagement. Both of these things are difficult of accomplishment, but they are possible and, what is of more importance, they are being accomplished by slow degrees.

Already this year the League has a small circuit of towns to fill three weeks, pledged to support three special productions to be brought to them through the National Playgoing Committee. These three special productions would not otherwise have visited these towns at all this year, and so it is only through League effort and influence that this group of one night stands will see these desirable plays and worthy productions.

In this way the work of the playgoing side of the League has a two-fold purpose ; in the large cities it aims to keep its members informed and to build up audiences for the bulletined play ; in the smaller cities and night stands it aims to create an advance interest sufficiently keen to effect the bringing of the bulletined play to that town in preference to some other non-organized town. From more than one manager has come actual testimony to the assistance which the League has rendered his play. More than once has the League in the big cities been able to turn the tide in favor of a play whose fate lay in the balance ; more than once has the League bulletin

raised the League membership to concerted support of a needy drama. More than one play has owed its continuance to the support of the League members in various cities. Very apparent is it also how effective the League influence can be when there is a strong circuit of towns established which can give its support to a play once bulletined and saved in the producing centre.

In order to effect this project of the establishment of a solid chain of League Centres from coast to coast and border to border of the continent, the League needs most emphatically the assistance of the other very important department of its work—the educational. By means of the work of this department the League is creating a keen interest in drama throughout the country and awakening the general public to the fact that it alone is responsible for the plays upon our stage to-day, and establishing the fact that it is only as we increase the demand for worthy drama that we shall secure it. The various sub-divisions of the Educational Department are all working toward this end of creating a better dramatic taste throughout the country and starting the nation at large on a sane, eager, interested study of drama and the printed play. It is only as the playgoer of to-morrow acquires a background of the dramas of yesterday and to-day that he will be in a position to determine what the worthy play may be. Nothing can so improve our national dramatic taste as can the reading of the printed play. Consequently the League has created a special committee called the Drama Study Committee, composed of experts, who prepare study courses in the hope of persuading clubs and individuals to take up the intelligent study of drama. This committee has mapped out different courses suitable for various purposes and is glad to

advise those who desire special assistance. This Committee aims to prepare each year for the clubs a special series of a progressive and consecutive character which will be of interest to the conscientious student. In aiding clubs and individuals in their plans for drama study and in mapping out courses for them, this Committee has been continuously hampered by the scarcity of inexpensive dramas. So many clubs and individuals have written to ask how they can study the many plays which they desire without buying many expensive copies, that the League has become convinced that the scarcity of inexpensive dramas stands greatly in the way of thorough drama study.

Consequently the Directors have set about meeting this difficulty. With the co-operation of the publishing house of Doubleday, Page & Co., the League is effecting the publication of a series of plays to be called the Drama League Series. These volumes are to be inexpensive—seventy-five cents in cloth and fifty cents in paper—to League members. For the first year they will be chiefly modern plays, but as the demand grows, older plays not now existing in cheap editions will be added to the series. In this way the League members who purchase all of the Series will not only have in inexpensive editions the dramas he needs for his drama study, but he will also have a thoroughly desirable collection of plays with Drama League approval and in uniform size and binding. The League cannot, of course, promise that its plays will be the best dramas obtainable—that would be impossible as many dramatists contract for their work many years in advance, and the League therefore cannot secure their manuscripts. But it does promise that each of the plays in its series will be valuable and worth while. The first two of this

series have already been published and are Charles Kenyon's "Kindling" (in whose success the League played so prominent a part), and "A Thousand Years Ago," by Percy MacKaye. The former, while not a perfect reading play, is valuable for reading purposes, as it is distinctly American, possesses a vital theme, is remarkably strong and virile and well constructed, and is decidedly one of the best of American plays. The second volume is extremely interesting, not only as an example of Mr. MacKaye's work, but because in this quaint play the author has used the old legend of Turandot and treated it after the method of the *Commedia dell' arte* of Italy. It is valuable to the student of drama to read this play for the light which it will throw on the plays of that special period. Moreover, it is a striking current success, superbly staged in the Reinhardt method. Each of these volumes is prefaced by a critical introduction by Clayton Hamilton which will add greatly to the value of the volume.

There will probably be ten plays printed this season in this series. The next to appear will be "The Great Galeoto" by the accomplished Spanish dramatist, Echegaray, and a reprint of "The Sunken Bell" by Hauptmann; following them will be a French play and later another American play, A. E. Thomas's "Her Husband's Wife." Thus in the first six volumes the League will have published three plays by American dramatists of very different characteristics: a virile social problem, a lyric fantasy and a scintillating comedy; added to these will have been a prominent and popular Spanish drama which is now out of print, and a German play which is no longer obtainable, as well as a French play hitherto unprinted in translation. The other four volumes of the Series will be chosen later and will be equally

valuable and interesting. It is easily apparent how important this publication of the printed play will prove to Drama League members. With its aid the League will no longer be handicapped in its choice of plays for study outlines, but can use any play the Committee desires and if necessary can print special plays for the use of its members. Moreover, by the inexpensive publication of these dramas the League is making drama study accessible to its members.

Working in harmony with the idea of the League to improve the dramatic taste of the country and to develop a desire for the best plays, the Drama League soon realized the importance of Amateur Work for the rural community too small or remote to benefit by the circuit scheme. In the town of five or ten thousand inhabitants—too small to have a theatre—where there is almost no wholesome amusement for young or old, the acting of plays by amateurs has infinite possibilities. These possibilities the League hopes to encourage by developing lively rural amateur activity. Eventually it may even be possible to maintain a national director who could be sent out to the small towns to coach the plays. This would mean a great deal to the whole community in providing wholesome pastime for them. There are possibilities also for the amateur committee work in advising with more advanced amateurs who desire suggestions for plays to act. This committee prepares helpful lists describing desirable plays and listing them with all kinds of directions and advice. A larger field of activity lies in advising with the normal schools and high schools as to the choice of their senior play; there is great demand for such assistance and a committee of experts is kept busy meeting this demand.

Another very important department of the educa-



tional work is the connection gradually being established between the League and the public libraries. There are many ways in which the local library can assist in the development of the local dramatic taste. Not only can it add to its collection of dramas, but it can arrange attractively on a handy shelf to catch the eye of the idle reader, some especially opportune volume. It can post the bulletins of the League and make its study courses available to the student. This Library Department of the League is investigating the possibilities of the libraries of the States, hoping to be able to create a helpful interest in drama. It has met with warm response on the part of the libraries and state library commissions, and with assurances of co-operation in drama work in the library.

There has been a great demand from the field for assistance in selecting lecturers and readers. Here again the League can be of assistance by investigating readers and lecturers, by keeping informed of their routes, and by being thus able to advise the small clubs—which could not otherwise meet heavy traveling expenses—when a very desirable speaker is to be in their vicinity.

The Drama League had not been long in operation before its workers realized that one of its greatest opportunities lay with the children. Here were the audiences of the future ready at hand to be trained and molded, ready to be developed into a discriminating theatre-going public. Consequently the Junior Department of the League was organized to work with the children and train them to a knowledge of good drama. This department has met with enthusiastic response. Everywhere is quickly realized the importance of this special feature of the work and the charm and pleasure of working

with the children. All of the Centres of the League have done some Junior work. In Chicago five salaried workers are maintained who conduct little groups of children in playgrounds and settlements, studying and putting on plays. Last summer these groups put on an historical pageant of Chicago in eight playgrounds before audiences of perhaps ten thousand at each performance. In Washington the League has established a tiny Children's Theatre, called the House of Play, where neighborhood groups are trained and directed. The work there has been enormously successful and interesting. In Atlanta the Junior Committee is giving four recitals of such plays as "The Blue Bird" and "Peter Pan" to the public schools before crowded audiences of interested children. The Junior Committee also has a very important advisory work to perform. It prepares lists of plays suitable for children to act and is ready to confer at any time with leaders or directors who desire help and advice in this work with the children. The Committee is composed of those who have been devoting their lives to developing the dramatic taste of the child. This is wonderfully interesting work as there is such ready and immediate response to every effort. The children love the opportunity to act and gain poise and self-expression in the work. Two remarkable pageants have been put on by the League in different Centers. The Shakespeare Festival arranged in Chicago in 1912 in honor of the poet's birthday showed eighteen hundred school children in costume, representing pictorially nine of Shakespeare's dramas and doing real honor to his genius. For two years the Chicago Center has offered prizes to the eighth grade students for the best essays on certain given Shakespearean topics and has found much interested re-

spense. Large reproductions of the beautiful Chandos etching have been given to the schools doing the best work.

In Washington the Center arranged a remarkable Fourth of July Pageant, using several thousand children with great success and with very beautiful results. Pageants are being planned by several of the other Centers in a similar manner and will probably become an important feature of League activity. Opportunities for this branch of the work are, of course, limitless.

In all these many and varied ways the League carries on its activities. Remembering that it has been organized only three years one finds it most illuminating to realize that the League operates an important nation-wide work and in addition stimulates in each of thirty large cities, the various phases of the League work suited to local needs. In each of these cities are competent, energetic committees conducting study classes and forming reading circles; holding important public meetings and conducting conferences; informing the local members of the best local attractions and raising pledged support for special League plays; forming the children into junior study groups and the older amateurs into intelligent givers of worthy plays; aiding the manager in his effort to give the best plays to the public, and preparing the public to appreciate the worthy plays (each of these cities has a record of definite accomplishment along one line or another) and forming a chain of intelligent playgoers which will spread from town to town until it will create a genuine national dramatic taste which eventually will raise the standard of our plays.

Next April—23rd to 25th—the League will call together in Philadelphia its 90,000 affiliated members

for its Fourth Annual Convention, when the members and their speakers will discuss matters of keenest interest to the student of drama. This occasion will be as in the past, an opportunity to hear the highest authorities discuss matters of vast moment. An old-time morality play will be revived and performed for this convention by the accomplished Plays and Players of Philadelphia, and a professional performance of note will also be given for the delegates. The main topic for the convention will be Plays and Playgoers of To-day, and various sessions will discuss interesting features of the work: for instance, such specialized topics as The Guaranteed Audience; What Constitutes Dramatic Material; The Printed Play; Ethics versus Aesthetics; The Professional Critic; the League Playgoing Committee; The Successful Center; Right Leadership; The Personal Element in the Center; The Sphere of Influence of the Local Center; What the Large City Can Do for the Neighboring Town; The Psychological Effect of Stage Material; The Logic of Incident; and Sincerity of Treatment.

Experienced speakers will introduce each subject, but half of the time will be left open after each address for actual discussion by the delegates. The League Directors realize from previous convention experience that the delegates are made up so largely of the expert and the student that the audience has quite as much to contribute to the session as the speaker. It will also be of interest to hear the reports from the field and learn what is actually being accomplished in the various League Centers, for the work is reaching out in numberless directions, bearing upon schools, colleges, libraries, clubs and individuals, and dealing with play-attending, play-study, festivals, pageants, and all forms of

dramatic literature; but always with the audience—not interfering with the other side of the footlights. The League is not pragmatic—it is eminently practical. By its rapid growth in three years to representation in all of the forty-eight States, it has proved that its founders were not mistaken in their belief that there was a field ready for it. It can already count to its credit more than one definite achievement, but it is still aiming at the great future of an organized audience—nation-wide—educated and ready to support manager, actor and dramatist in their efforts to put forth the best drama possible.

One of the most striking reasons for the exceptional success of the movement has been the unusual personnel of the workers back of it. It was started by a group of eager, disinterested women, and has since had their untiring and unbounded devotion. Without salaried workers, with little or no income to spare, the League has yet been able to enlist the gratuitous services of experts in all types of its activities, and counts among its directors and active workers the names best known as authorities along these lines. In all branches of interest it has the assistance of prominent leaders, numbering its supporters and workers among the clergy; among the academic group, including from the larger colleges numberless professors; in the business world among men of means and influence, as presidents of centers; in the profession among managers and actors glad to be counted as its friends; in the society and club world among the efficient and with the endorsement of the federations; among men of letters and dramatists; among the teachers and laymen in countless hundreds.

It is, after all, a democratic movement, and must

count upon the masses if its individual membership is to effect the results for which it labors—organized support of clean, wholesome, worthy drama; an awakened national dramatic taste, which shall come to the support of the conscientious manager to supply him with an audience for his worth-while plays.

MRS. A. STARR BEST.

## THEATRICAL HISTORY IN AMERICA

*The Romance of the American Theatre*, by Mary Caroline Crawford: Little, Brown and Company, Boston.

One of the pernicious outgrowths of modern methods of exploiting books and plays and all sorts of other products is the alluring but unreliable title or description. Every article advertised nowadays is not only always the best in its kind, but also always gilt-coated in its denomination. "The Romance of the American Theatre," as a title for Miss Mary Caroline Crawford's recent book, is a case in point. As a matter of fact, in this creditable, but for the most part commonplace, narrative of stage history and anecdote, there is a minimum of the romantic and comparatively little that is American. Indeed, the volume is simply a desultory account of early stage history in this country, to which have been added long chapters of biography, dealing chiefly with English and Continental players—Kean, Matthews, Forrest, Macready, Rachel, Fechter, Kemble, Salvini, Modjeska, Irving—men and women distinctly not of the American stage except as they occasionally visited it. In the later chapters of her work, Miss Crawford deals similarly with our chief native actors and actresses, concluding with a survey of New York theatrical history and her views on the drama of today.

The author has done her work painstakingly. She has unearthed large quantities of miscellaneous information concerning the theatre and its associations. In fact, it is as a compendium of minute and frequently trivial gossip of the stage that her book

is chiefly valuable. It is personal and chatty and discursive. In glancing over its pages, one is struck by the number of them that are largely catalogues of names and titles. Documents and letters are quoted liberally, if not always in full. Of course, it is impossible that such a book should be invariably interesting. It is a work, indeed, to be dipped into—by means principally of its index of proper names—rather than read through consecutively. It is, in reality, a handbook of miscellaneous information, rather than a history—or a “romance.”

Miss Crawford's style is direct and simple, admirably adapted to its purpose, forming a substantial background for the many contrasting passages of sparkling personalities quoted from the letters of actors and playwrights. In summing up the great Sir Henry, she writes:

“Critics generally are agreed that, for a man who could ‘neither walk nor talk,’ Irving made a simply amazing success as an actor. This was very largely due to his tall, impressive figure and to his face—far and away the most fascinating face which has ever been seen on our stage. The high forehead, set off by strongly marked and exceedingly flexible eyebrows; the large, positive nose; the narrow, sensitive lips; the strong, thin jaw; the glowing and cavernous eyes—and, to crown all, the long and somewhat wavy, iron gray hair—combined to make a head which, even if empty, would have meant a fortune for an actor. Irving's head was by no means empty. The man was a most devout student of stage history, with a deep and highly intellectual interest in everything that bore even remotely upon his work. Hence, his success, in spite of obvious disadvantages. Henry Irving was a man of one passion and that for his calling. No task



was too arduous, no drill too exhausting, no expenditure, either of money or energy, too great, if so, there might be attained better results for the piece in hand. Such absolute sincerity and single-mindedness must spell success in any career."

This passage is representative, I take it, of the author at her best. Her style is, obviously, neither brilliant nor fascinating; rather, it tends to prolixity and often to the trite. For the most part, however, it is rarely dull.

It seems impossible these days to write any sort of a book on the theatre without appending a generally conventional and optimistic prophecy as to our dramatic future. The present reviewer, indeed, must enroll himself as a recent offender; though his single New Year's resolution has been never to do it again. Miss Crawford, in her valedictory, finds, as usual, that the artistic and moral outlook for our native drama is sufficiently roseate today. The work of our "social-minded young playwrights"—presumably those she mentions in her foreword as the product of Professor Baker's courses in dramatic technique—the author believes, will presently bring about a state of affairs wherein "there will be done for America what the Irish players" (and, presumably, dramatists) "are now doing for Ireland."

Let us all fervently pray that this faith may be speedily justified!

CHARLTON ANDREWS.

A SELECTIVE LIST OF PLAYS PUBLISHED  
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OF 1913.

Compiled by Frank Chouteau Brown.

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 Business Manager...Theodore B. Hinckley, 6018 Jackson Park Ave., Chicago  
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Sworn to and subscribed before me this 31st day of March, 1913.

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 (My commission expires September, 1914.)

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The Ownership, Management, Circulation, Etc., of THE DRAMA, Published  
 Quarterly at Chicago, Ill., Required by the Act of August 24, 1912.

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Managing Editor...	Theodore B. Hinckley,	6018 Jackson Park Ave., Chicago
Business Manager...	Theodore B. Hinckley,	6018 Jackson Park Ave., Chicago
Publisher.....	Drama League of America,	736 Marquette Bldg., Chicago
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# THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature

May, 1914

# THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature

Editor, THEODORE BALLOU HINCKLEY

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Published by

The Drama League of America

Chicago

75c A Number

\$3.00 A Year

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Entered as second-class matter February 25, 1911, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

# THE DRAMA

Number 14

MAY

1914

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From the Painting by William Penhallow Henderson

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

# THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature

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No. 14

May

1914

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## RABINDRANATH TAGORE



WO years ago the name of Rabindranath Tagore was unknown to western readers. Today one can hardly pick up a magazine that has not some reference to the great Bengali poet and mystic. The announcement of the award of the Nobel prize has had its share in awakening popular interest, but even before this event his work had had such an immediate reception that the English translations were in turn translated into French and German, apparently not losing even then their effective beauty and force.

When I asked Mr. Tagore why it was that his work had not been translated into English before he himself translated the poems now published in the *Gitanjali*, he said it was because the majority of Englishmen in India were of the governing class; they knew little of the native literature or language. He had not supposed that English readers would be interested in his songs. It remained for his translations of these poems to carry tidings to the western world of the literary and social Renaissance in Bengal; and, it may be, to awaken interest in *many*

phases of Indian life and culture which are not yet realized.

A passage from an article on the Bengali Renaissance by C. F. Andrews will give some idea of the conditions under which the poems of Rabindranath Tagore have been produced :

“The word ‘Renaissance,’ which I have already used, most nearly describes the period through which Bengal has been passing during the last century. There has come to pass under British rule a true rebirth of an ancient culture and civilization. The course taken has been more complex than that experienced by Europe in the sixteenth century—it has been a double instead of a single process—but the result has been the same. The Greek and Latin culture which lay behind the European movement was itself an indigenous European product. The Indian Renaissance, on the other hand, was ushered in by a wholly foreign culture—the Western Learning. But fortunately, or, as I would prefer to call it, providentially, this was but the beginning of the process, not the end. The second and far greater stage—the Indian Renaissance proper—was reached when, owing to the impact of a foreign culture, the classical literature of India itself, and the ideals of civilization which it contained, began to be revalued and discovered.”

If British rule has indeed been responsible for this rebirth of art and literature in India, the poems of Tagore certainly furnish a very delicate acknowledgment of the debt—for these translations have enriched the language and added a new beauty to English literature. How very distinctive that beauty is, how unusual and unique a place it has, Miss Sinclair has been at some pains to explain :

“In the Bengali poems of Rabindranath Tagore



you will find that common emotional appeal (she has been speaking of the power of Newman's 'Lead, Kindly Light,' to touch the common human heart) united in a music and a rhythm many degrees finer than Swinburne's, a music and rhythm almost unconceivable to western ears—with the metaphysical quality, the peculiar subtlety and intensity of Shelley; and that with a simplicity that makes this miracle appear the most natural thing in the world. As far as I know no western poet yet born has done precisely this. Not Milton; he is far too grandiose for the human heart. Not Wordsworth; he is at once too subtle and too ponderous. And not the great mystic poets of the west, for they are the poets of mystics, as Shelley is the poet of poets; not Crashaw and not Francis Thompson, nor Henry Vaughn nor Blake at his simplest; not even Dante and St. John of the Cross, though they stand nearest (they are very near) to the great mystic poet of Bengal. For the songs of the *Gitanjali*, the purest of pure poetry written in the Bengali vernacular, are sung all over his native province; they are sung in the churches of the Brama Somaj. You can not sing any of these great mystic poems of the west in church. And if you could they would not be understood by the congregation."

Perhaps not the least surprising thing about the songs of Tagore is the fact that they are understood not only by the congregations of Bengal, but that they are equally understood by the congregations of the west—that they have found an audience ready and waiting for them. Of course, there have been a few dissenting voices; a few for whom the transparent simplicity of the poems has been so misleading that they could not perceive the depth of thought concealed beneath the limpid surface; a few who

looked for some hidden allegorical clue other than that of direct experience—when clue there was none. But these dissenters have not themselves belonged to the congregation! They have been dissenters by profession, or by occupation (university professors, perhaps, or editors of magazines!).

The fact that the poems *have* found an immediate reception in the west means several very important things. It means—and this was emphasized as much as possible by the poet during his visit—that the east and west are not so separate in interests as has been supposed; that Bengal is no less modern than her neighbors; and that there is much in the history of the ancient civilization and ideals of India of which we have mistaken, or at best, very hazy ideas; and that modern Bengal, in revaluing these ideals and making them an active force in her growth, is proving their essential worth and readjusting the western apprehension of their tendency towards a static or negative state of being. There is no passivism or quietism implied in this new rebirth of an ancient religious ideal—rather an intensified vision of life, a delight in activity through an appreciation of its meaning and worth.

The poet's father no doubt had a great share in influencing the boy's trend of thought. Devendranath Tagore, who was known as Maharshi, the great sage or saint, was one of the founders of the Brama Somaj—a religious movement tending towards a simplified ritual and towards a return to the earliest and purest forms of faith as recorded in the Vedas and Upanishads of India. As a boy, therefore, the poet had the advantage of the general awakening that was in the air, together with an unusual start so far as heredity was concerned. For the Thakur family has been famous for learning and culture for

many generations. Even so, the genius of the boy did not manifest itself according to the wishes of the family in the first instance. The methods of his Bengali instructors or his English tutors did not commend themselves to him. He wished to be "not a servant of learning, but a friend." But though intractable as a scholar, he had his own way of acquiring knowledge. As a child he had heard the stories of the Ramayana and Mahabharata, the two great Indian epics, from his servants and nurses. Then, at about the time of his first impressions of school life—to quote from a young Bengali's outline biography—"his father started a literary society which used to meet at their home and which was attended by all the best poets, scholars and musicians of the time; Tagore, being young, was not allowed to enter the circle, but, clever as he was, he used to hear them by keeping himself aloof from their sight. Thus his inborn genius led him to read all the works of literature, English and Bengali and Sanskrit—which, although he did not always understand them—he used always to enjoy for their rhyme and meters. After a trip to the Himalayas with his father, who gave him lessons in astronomy and read to him from the Upanishads and the Persian mystic poets, the young Tagore came back and began to write for *Bharati*, a monthly paper edited by his eldest brother. To this he added *Balak*, a children's section, and he was a constant contributor of poetry, songs, travels and stories. Later he became editor of *Sādhana*, and of *Bharati*; then for a few years he left this work and went to manage the family estates, where he worked hard and passed this time of his life in a houseboat on the bank of the Padma, the great river of Bengal. During this time he wrote short stories, plays and poems, such as are in *The*

*Gardener*. His first play was a musical drama written when he was nineteen. His dramas, *Raja o Rani*, *Bisarjan* and others, came subsequently. Later he edited other papers, *Banga Darsan o Samalochani*, where his novels *Chokher Bali*, *Nouka Dubi* and other comedies and plays appeared.

“At this time came the awakening of the national movement of Bengal, in which Mr. Tagore took a leading part—writing national hymns and songs and papers dealing with political subjects. The moment was crucial, but Tagore thought on this occasion that the movement was tending more towards political rebellion, for which the people were not ready, than towards the really important conservation of native religious ideals and art and industry, and withdrew openly from the movement. He felt that ‘leading a mob was not his business,’ as it was not the real end of the nationalist movement, and gave himself up to a project that he thought more to the purpose—the founding of his school at Bolpur.” (It is impossible in this article to say more of the school than that it is intended to train the individual, not as a mere receptacle of learning or as a mere digit of functional efficiency, but as an individual, a creative being.) “It is during this last period, passed for the most part at Bolpur in close connection with the school, that Mr. Tagore has written and published his mystic poems and songs, many of which are contained in the *Gitanjali*. His lectures in *Sādhana* were written four or five years ago. In the year 1909-1911 he wrote his psychological novel *Gora* and mystic plays, such as *The King of the Dark Chamber*, *The Post Office*, and others. On his fiftieth birthday (he was born in 1861) he was honored in Calcutta.”

I have given this much of a biography of Tagore,

slight as it is, for the light that it throws upon the active share that the man has taken, that he is still taking, in life. There has been some tendency to think of Tagore as the voice of a remote golden age; and some small disposition among the "dissenters" to consider this one solitary and imposing figure a "cult," such as he is not and can never become—save through the more zealous than discriminating praise of those who would indeed consider the poet as the voice of a remote golden age and not as the keen, humorous, kindly, even satiric, sane, and modern thinker that he really is.

I have been asked to write something that shall serve as an introduction to *The King of the Dark Chamber*, published in this number of *The Drama*, and what I have already written has been intended in some measure to serve this purpose. I have also been asked to give some description of Mr. Tagore's powers as a playwright and the method of producing his plays.

It is quite impossible at the outset to characterize three of the four plays of Rabindranath Tagore about which I am to write without using the word "mystic," and I shall therefore use it in its exact sense, and not in its inexact, slovenly popular meaning. There is such a ban on the word "mystic," because of its indiscriminate and vague popular use, that it is no wonder that most of the general public "shies" at it.

The popular sense of the word mystic conveys an implication of something remote, obscure and dark to the understanding. And the experience of mysticism itself may not convey much reality to one who, from a lack of instinctive intuition or from intellectual stubbornness, is without sympathy for

experiences that do not tally sharply with the common occurrences of every-day life. Yet mysticism denotes a state of being much more common than many of us are willing to admit. It is doubtful if there is any one born into this world who is not, at some time or other, perhaps for a fleeting instant, perhaps for irregularly recurring intervals, a mystic. Yes, this is true even in our western world, obsessed as it is with material pursuits and pleasures and yet very eager underneath (as all our new births of old religions and our hunger in the theatre for works of more inherent idealism and beauty go to prove) for that underlying reality which unites the spirit of the individual to the spirit of the universe.

But outwardly mysticism may have many manifestations. It may, as did the alchemical mystics, use esoteric symbols; it may, as did William Blake, people a fanciful world with fanciful figures; or it may, as its medium of expression, use symbols which, in their utter simplicity, may be appreciated by a child. To this latter form of mysticism the later plays of Tagore belong. There is no esoteric symbol. The experience is indicated delicately and gradually with such supreme simplicity that one is almost surprised afterward to find how indelible an impression has been left upon the mind, how much a part of one's own self the experience of the poet has become.

It may seem strange to us that these plays—so far from our ideas of what is fitting for a scenery ridden stage and that contrasting externality of conflict which we call plot or dramatic action—should be written for actual interpretation upon the stage; but the fact is that they are so written and so presented in India. And in considering characteristics which these plays possess in common and which are

also characteristic of the ancient Hindu drama, we come upon several very important points of interest.

In one respect the Hindu drama differs essentially from that of other races of equally developed civilization—in the complete absence of any fixed or conventionalized stage. The liberty thus allowed the playwright is almost incredible. Without external restriction, the imaginative vision of the playwright is allowed a direct approach to the imaginative vision of the audience. And naturally his dramatic construction is not bound by the familiar unities of time, scene, or action. The stage for the Hindu drama was more or less any place that the actors happened to stand; the drama always taking place out of doors or in the court-yard of a palace.

As in Kalidasa's *Sakuntala*, the actors may rise upon the cloud, or, arresting the chariot in mid-air, descend from it and take up their airy habitation in the celestial cloud-hung regions; so the action of the Hindu play is not limited to any pictorial accompaniment of external realism. It is quite free to address itself to the imaginative vision of the audience.

It has been said that the Hindu plays are not dramatic, and this obviously in contrast with our own western mechanical plots of external action, which have themselves become mechanical through their necessary inter-relation with mechanical scenery. In reality the interpretation of an isolated mood is dramatic. The pantomime of a single actor or dancer often completes the circle, of which the tightly woven structure of a modern play gives only a broken, fragmentary arc.

Like the drama of ancient India, Mr. Tagore's plays are divorced from the idea of scenic accompaniment. Occasionally they are produced indoors, in which case there is the merest suggestion of back-

ground and harmonious arrangement. His plays place the interest where it really belongs—in the imaginative vision of the audience and in the acting. They could be produced, however, upon any stage that did not sacrifice this imaginative vision to external furnishing. In thus being freed from the restriction of external realism, Mr. Tagore's plays have the imaginative and poetic license which is too often denied to the western playwright on account of the destructive intervention of pictorial scenic accompaniment.

Of course, there is a modern stage in Bengal, on which modern scenery and modern theatrical rhetoric are said to flourish. But this is not an indigenous product, while the plays of Tagore are an indigenous product of Bengal. In fact, in reacting against that stage, Mr. Tagore's work is at once allied with what Mr. Andrews has called the Renaissance proper of Bengal—a revaluation of the ancient ideals of India.

Naturally, the imagination of a modern poet does not take the form of the cloudy, romantic, sky-born visions of his classic prototype. The classic playwright of Greece, China or Japan had the ready-made symbols—the gods, heroes or goddesses—of the mythic imagination of the race. The external forces of nature no longer assume these grandiose proportions to the human mind. The modern poet is a myth-maker in another sense. His imagination turns inward and, in expressing through outward forms his impressions of life, he becomes a symbolist. Such a poet is Tagore. Instead of taking his characters to a remote celestial region of the imagination, he brings heaven among them.

*The King of the Dark Chamber* is continuous symbolism. It never reaches the point, the galling obviousness of allegory. Instead of giving us a map of



experiences, through which the soul may travel, as did Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, it gives us the experience itself. It is thus concrete, immediate and vital.

And so it is with *Malini*, the only one of the four plays which Mr. Tagore read while he was in Chicago that is not yet published. This brief play is very beautiful, very dramatic in the real sense of the word, as well as in that outward contrast on which we have grown to depend. The Princess Malini, having received religious enlightenment through a Buddhist disciple, is in danger of being banished by the orthodox Brahmins. She embraces the idea of exile and poverty, although her father and mother naturally object. In the meantime the Brahmins, gathered in the courtyard and clamoring for her banishment, after some dispute among themselves, kneel in the dust and pray for a sign from heaven. The summons reaches the heart of the Princess Malini, who is in contemplation in her chamber, and she appears to them, and is accepted as divinely destined to guide them by all but the two leading Brahmins: Kshemanhar, who repulses the idea, and his friend Supriya, who is in doubt, although overcome by the spell of Malini's beauty. Kshemanhar leaves the country to gather force to uproot the heresy, as he believes it, from his native land. Supriya, left at home to keep watch, becomes a convert not only to the beauty but to the faith of the princess, and in this faith warns the King that his friend is returning with an armed force. In doing this he renounces all that he has held dearest in life—his friendship with Kshemanhar, and all hope of union with the princess Malini, even though it is offered him by the King.

*Supriya.* For pity's sake, sire, no more of this.

There are many worshipers who by their life-long devotion have gained the highest fulfillment of their desire. Could I be counted one of them I should be happy. But to accept it from the King's hand as the reward of a traitor! Lady, thou hast the plentitude and peace of thy greatness; thou knowest not the secret cravings of a poverty-stricken soul. I dare not ask from thee an atom more than that pity of love that thou hast for every creature in the world.

*Malini.* Ah! my woman's soul! It wails like an unmated dove in its lonely nest at noon! . . .

At the request of Malini and Supriya, the King agrees to pardon Kshemanhar, although he desires first to test his steadfast adherence to what he holds true. The captive Brahmin is brought in in his chains. Supriya craves his forgiveness and tries to win him to the religion of love that has illuminated his soul. But there is only one path to Truth for Kshemanhar.

*Kshemanhar.* Leave off this prattle, Supriya! Death alone is the final judge and every truth must take its trial before him. Do you remember our student days when we would wrangle the whole night through and in the morning would come to our master to know in a moment which of us was right? Even as in the old days, let us both stand together before death with all the questions that vexed us in life. Then all arguing will be at an end and truth stand self-manifest, and we two fools will look upon each other and smile.

*Supriya.* Yes, friend, let it be so.

*Kshemanhar.* Then come to my arms. You had wandered far, very far from your comrade.

*Supriya.* Come eternally close to me. Take your judgment from the kind hand of a friend.

(Kshemanhar strikes Supriya with his chains and Supriya falls to the ground mortally wounded.)

*The King.* Who is there? Bring my sword!

*Malini.* Pardon him, father. (She swoons.)

So ends a very beautiful play, with infinite possibilities for our western stage and with remarkable opportunities for the highest art of acting.

In many respects the work of Tagore will recall that of Maeterlinck, also a recipient of the Nobel prize for work of idealistic tendency. Although having something common in their method, *The King of the Dark Chamber* and *Tintagiles* form an interesting contrast. *Tintagiles* leaves one very hopeless; and I think that is why—not only that it was not popular—but that it did not even leave a satisfactory impression on its special audience last winter. It is very natural and not at all to be decried that we should yearn for the impetus of uplifting and upbuilding sentiment in the theatre, rather than for analytic psychology or destructive criticism. The impulse is as old as the world. We may have both, but we must have the former.

If the public does not care to see a play of which the resultant feeling is hopelessness, there is, after all, very good reason why it should not. Realism on the stage is an anachronism. There is enough in life. And yet the unreality of romanticism is equally unsatisfactory. It may be pretty, delightful, and very charming, but idealism, in the living sense of the word, is always more real than either romanticism or external realism, since it is based on concrete experience and is always constructively creative. This is not to say that a work outwardly realistic may not be essentially idealistic, but simply, that without this essential constructive upbuilding, realism is worthless, and that even a work of ideal-

istic tendency which stops short with analysis must fall below the idealistic work that supplies a spiritual synthesis. Our age has had enough of external realism and psychological analysis. *Tintagiles* is a play of atoms against destiny, with a little lamp as the one point of guidance, lost in a great void. There is the Door; Death on one side, Life on the other, and the unseen powers of destiny hovering above, unseen, terrifying, against whom it is quite useless to struggle. Yet the west speaks of the fatalism of the east! It is a drama of fear.

*The King of the Dark Chamber*, on the other hand, is a play giving us a synthetic vision of the realization of life. And so, also, is *The Post Office*, which again recalls *Tintagiles*, because it centers about the life and death of a child, but which, although poignantly moving, leaves one in an uplifted, reverent mood. Many who resent being so moved by a drama that does not excite applause by superficial cleverness, refer to a play like this as sentimental, chiefly because they do not understand the distinction between sentimentality and beauty. Hauptmann's *Hannele* may well be wept over. But the tragic beauty of *The Post Office* has the hard clear quality of cut stone.

Two of the plays by Tagore which have so far been translated by him, *The Post Office* and *Chitra*, are now published in book form. *The King of the Dark Chamber* is herewith given its premiere, and, of the fourth play, *Malini*, I have given a synopsis. There are other plays by Tagore, farces and dramas, political and domestic, corresponding to that phase of the author's temperament that has sought outlet in active social intercourse, and which has also found expression in numerous short stories and novels of psychological interest. These, however, have not yet

been translated. *Chitra* belongs to a much earlier period than the other plays mentioned. This dramatic poem, written when the author was about thirty years old, is very modern in spirit. It created something of a storm when it was first published in Bengal; both because of its emphasis of the love interest and because the author's style had not the pedantic and archaic formalism of century-old literary Bengali models. Although not in the first place intended as an acting play, it could be very easily presented with a slight dramatic paraphrasing of the earlier scenes. The poem should be warmly accepted by champions of the feminist movement, and might even serve to soften and conciliate the more militant members. *Chitra*, who has worn boy's apparel from her birth, fails to win the love of Arjuna without the charm of feminine apparel and beauty. Finally Arjuna himself wearies of the slavery of the senses and *Chitra* becomes freed of the bondage of disguise. In its charming sanity the play is worth a world of warlike tracts by uncompromising females and of redundant sex-novels by bewildered males like Mr. Wells.

The four plays translated by Tagore correspond very closely in spirit to the three volumes of his poems that have been published. Those who have read these will recall that *The Gitanjali*, although the first published, represents the most mature work of the man; *The Crescent Moon* is a collection of poems about childhood, very delicate, sensitive and imaginative, and *The Gardener* is composed of poems, for the most part love songs, of youth and manhood. Thus *Chitra* corresponds to the period of *The Gardener*; *The Post Office*, much intensified in feeling, to the spirit of *The Crescent Moon*, and *Malini* and *The King of the Dark Chamber* to that culminating

wisdom and experience of life which is recorded in *The Gitanjali*. The lyrics are bas-reliefs, as it were; the plays are expressions of the same emotions "in the round." And of all these the most essentially representative and the most perfect expression is perhaps this *King of the Dark Chamber*. A friend who was reading this play said to me, "This is the top of the mountain . . . and its base as well." The ideal of divinity which has flowered in the heart of this poet is, indeed, "matchless in beauty as in terror"—although the terror is only in the trembling heart of the seeker, for there is no retribution and no fear for one who knows in truth the mystery of the dark chamber.

Alice Corbin Henderson.

# THE KING OF THE DARK CHAMBER

BY RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Translated into English by the Author

## I.

[*A street. A few wayfarers, and a city guard.*]

FIRST MAN. Ho, Sir!

A CITY GUARD. What do you want?

SECOND MAN. Which way should we go? We are strangers here. Please tell us which street we should take.

CITY GUARD. Where do you want to go?

THIRD MAN. Where those big festivities are going to be held, you know. Which way do we go?

CITY GUARD. One street is quite as good as another here. Any street will lead you there. Go straight ahead, and you cannot miss the place. [*He goes out.*]

FIRST MAN. Just hear what the fool says: "Any street will lead you there!" Where, then, would be the sense of having so many streets?

SECOND MAN. You needn't be so awfully put out at that, my man. A country is free to arrange its affairs in its own way. As for roads in *our* country—well, they are as good as non-existent; narrow and crooked lanes, a labyrinth of ruts and tracks. Our king does not believe in open thoroughfares; he thinks that streets are just so many openings for his subjects to fly away from his kingdom. It is

quite the contrary here; nobody stands in your way, nobody objects to your going elsewhere if you like to; and yet the people are far from deserting this kingdom. With such streets our country would certainly have been depopulated in no time.

FIRST MAN. My dear Janardan, I have always noticed that this is a great fault in your character.

JANARDAN. What is?

FIRST MAN. That you are always having a fling at your country. How can you think that open highways may be good for a country? Look here, Kaundilya; here is a man who actually believes that open highways are the salvation of a country.

KAUNDILYA. There is no need, Bhavadatta, of my pointing out afresh that Janardan is blessed with an intelligence which is remarkably crooked, which is sure to land him in danger some day. If the king comes to hear of our worthy friend, he will make it a pretty hard job for him to find anyone to do him his funeral rites when he is dead.

BHAVADATTA. One can't help feeling that life becomes a burden in this country; one misses the joys of privacy in these streets—this jostling and brushing shoulders with strange people day and night makes one long for a bath. And nobody can tell exactly *what* kind of people he is meeting with in these public roads—ugh!

KAUNDILYA. And it is Janardan who persuaded us to come to this precious country! We never had any second person like him in our family. You knew my father, of course; he was a great man, a pious man if ever there was one. He spent his whole life within a circle of a radius of forty-nine cubits, drawn with a rigid adherence to the injunctions of the scriptures, and never for a single day did he cross this circle. After his death a serious difficulty arose—



how cremate him within the limits of the forty-nine cubits and yet outside the house? At length the priests decided that though we could not go beyond the scriptural number, the only way out of the difficulty was to reverse the figure and make it ninety-four cubits; only thus could we cremate him outside the house without violating the sacred books. My word, *that* was strict observance! Ours is indeed no common country.

BHAVADATTA. And yet, though Janardan comes from the very same soil, he thinks it wise to declare that open highways are best for a country.

[GRANDFATHER *enters with a band of boys.*]

GRANDFATHER. Boys, we will have to vie with the wild breeze of the south to-day—and we are not going to be beaten. We will sing till we have flooded all streets with our mirth and song.

[*They sing.*]

*The southern gate is unbarred. Come, my spring, come!*

*Thou wilt swing at the swing of my heart. Come, my spring, come!*

*Come in the lispings leaves, in the youthful surrender of flowers;*

*Come in the flute songs and the wistful sighs of the woodlands!*

*Let your unfastened robe wildly flap in the drunken wind!*

*Come, my spring, come!*

[*They all go out.*]

[*Enter a band of CITIZENS.*]

FIRST CITIZEN. After all, one cannot help wishing that the king had allowed himself to be seen at least this one day. What a great pity to live in his kingdom and yet not see him for a single day!

SECOND CITIZEN. If you only knew the real meaning of all this mystery! I could tell you if you would keep a secret.

FIRST CITIZEN. My dear fellow, we both live in the same quarter of the town, but have you ever known me letting out any man's secret? Of course, the matter of your brother's finding a hidden fortune while digging for a well—well, you know well enough why I had to give it out. You know all the facts.

SECOND CITIZEN. Of course I know. And it is because I know that I ask, could you keep a secret if I tell you? It may mean ruination to us all, you know, if you once let it out.

THIRD CITIZEN. You are a nice man, after all, Virupaksha! Why are you so anxious to bring down a disaster which as yet only *may* happen? Who will be responsible for keeping your secret all his life?

VIRUPAKSHA. It is only because the topic came up—well, then, I shall not say anything. I am not the man to say things for nothing. You had yourself brought up the question that the king never showed himself; and I only remarked that it was not for nothing that the king shut himself up from the public gaze.

FIRST CITIZEN. Pray do tell us why, Virupaksha.

VIRUPAKSHA. Of course I don't mind telling you—for we are all good friends, aren't we? There can be no harm. [*With a low voice.*] The king—is—hid-  
eous to look at; so he has made up his mind never to show himself to his subjects.

FIRST CITIZEN. Ha, that's it! It must be so. We have always wondered . . . why, the mere sight of a king in all countries makes one's soul quake like an aspen leaf with fear; but why should *our* king never have been seen by any mortal soul? Even if

he at least came out and consigned us all to the gibbet, we might be sure that our king was no hoax. After all, there is much in Virupaksha's explanation that sounds plausible enough.

THIRD CITIZEN. Not a bit—I don't believe in a syllable of it.

VIRUPAKSHA. What, Vishu, do you mean to say that I am a liar?

VISHU. I don't exactly mean that—but all the same I must say I cannot accept your words as true.

VIRUPAKSHA. Small wonder that you can't believe my words—you who think yourself sage enough to reject the opinions of your forefathers. How long do you think you could have stayed in this country if the king did not remain in hiding? You are no better than a flagrant heretic.

VISHU. My dear pillar of orthodoxy! Do you think any other king would have hesitated to cut off your tongue and make it food for dogs? And you have the face to say that our king is horrid to look at!

VIRUPAKSHA. Look here, Vishu, will you curb your tongue?

VISHU. It would be superfluous to point out whose tongue needs the curbing.

FIRST CITIZEN. Hush, my dear friends—this looks rather bad. . . . It seems as if they are resolved to put me in danger as well. I am not going to be a party to all this.

[*They go out.*]

[*Enter a number of men, dragging in GRANDFATHER, who is in boisterous exuberance.*]

SECOND CITIZEN. Grandpa, something strikes me to-day. . . .

GRANDFATHER. What is it?

SECOND CITIZEN. This year every country has

sent its people to our festival, but every one asks, "Everything is nice and beautiful—but where is your king?" and we do not know what to answer. That is the one big gap which cannot but make itself felt to every one in our country.

GRANDFATHER. "Gap," do you say! Why, the whole country is all filled and crammed and packed with the king: and you call him a "gap"! Why, he has made every one of us a crowned king!

[*He sings.*]

*We are all kings in the kingdom of our king.  
Were it not so, how could we hope in our heart to  
meet him?  
We do what we like, yet we do what he likes;  
We are not bound with the chain of fear at the feet  
of a slave-owning king.  
Were it not so, how could we hope in our heart to  
meet him?  
The king honors each one of us, thus honors his own  
very self.  
No littleness can keep us shut up in its walls of  
untruth for aye.  
Were it not so, how could we hope in our heart to  
meet him?  
We struggle and dig our own path, thus reach his  
path at the end.  
We can never get lost in the abyss of dark night.  
Were it not so, how could we hope in our heart to  
meet him?*

THIRD CITIZEN. But, really, I cannot stand the absurd things people say about our king simply because he is not seen in public.

FIRST CITIZEN. Just fancy! Anyone libeling me can be punished, while nobody can stop the mouth of any rascal who chooses to slander the king.

GRANDFATHER. The slander cannot touch the king. With a mere breath you can blow out the flame which a lamp inherits from the sun, but if all the world blow upon the sun itself, what harm is there?

[VISHVAVASU (VISHU) and VIRUPAKSHA enter.]

VISHU. Here's Grandfather! Look here, this man is going about telling everybody that our king does not come out because he is ugly.

GRANDFATHER. But why does that make you angry, Vishu? *His* king must be ugly, because he fashions his king after the image of himself.

VIRUPAKSHA. Grandfather, I shall mention no names, but nobody would think of disbelieving the person who gave me the news.

GRANDFATHER. Who could be a higher authority than yourself?

VIRUPAKSHA. But I could give you proofs. . . .

FIRST CITIZEN. The impudence of this fellow knows no bounds! Not content with spreading a ghastly rumor with an unabashed face, he offers to measure his lies with insolence!

SECOND CITIZEN. Why not make him measure his length on the ground?

GRANDFATHER. Why so much heat, my friends? The poor fellow is going to have his own festive day by singing the ugliness of his King. Go along, Virupaksha, you will find plenty of people ready to believe you. May you be happy in their company.

[*They go out.*]

[*Enter a BAND OF MEN, singing.*]

*My beloved is ever in my heart*

*That is why I see him everywhere;*

*He is in the pupils of my eyes*

*That is why I see him everywhere.*

*I went far away to hear his words,*

*But, ah, it was vain!*

*When I came back I heard them*

*In my songs.*

*Who are you who seek him like a beggar from door  
to door?*

*Come to my heart and see his face in the tears of my  
eyes!*

[ENTER HERALDS and ADVANCE GUARDS of the PRE-  
TENDER.]

FIRST HERALD. Stand off! Get away from the street, all of you!

FIRST CITIZEN. Eh, man, who do you think you are? You weren't of course born with such lofty strides, my friend?—Why should we stand off, my dear sir? Why should we budge? Are we street dogs, or what?

SECOND HERALD. Our king is coming this way.

SECOND CITIZEN. King? Which king?

FIRST HERALD. Our king, the king of this country.

FIRST CITIZEN. What, is the fellow mad? Whoever heard of our king coming out heralded by these vociferous gentry?

SECOND HERALD. The king will no longer deny himself to his subjects. He is coming to command the festivities himself.

SECOND CITIZEN. Brother, is that so?

SECOND HERALD. Look, his banner is flying over there.

SECOND CITIZEN. Ah, yes, that is a flag indeed.

SECOND HERALD. Do you see the red *Kimshuk* flower painted on it?

FIRST CITIZEN. Yes, yes, it is the *Kimshuk* indeed! What a bright scarlet flower!

FIRST HERALD. Well! do you believe us now?

FIRST CITIZEN. I never said I didn't. That fellow Kumbha started all this fuss. Did I say a word?

FIRST HERALD. Perhaps, though a pot-bellied man, he is quite empty inside; an empty vessel sounds most, you know.

SECOND HERALD. Who is he? Is he any kinsman of yours?

SECOND CITIZEN. Not at all. He is just a cousin of our village chief's father-in-law, and he does not even live in the same part of our village with us.

SECOND HERALD. Just so; he quite looks the seventh cousin of somebody's father-in-law and his understanding appears also to bear the stamp of uncle-in-lawhood.

KUMBHA. Alas, my friends, many a bitter sorrow gave my poor mind a twist before it became like this. It is only the other day that a king came and paraded the streets, with as many titles in front of him as the drums that made the town hideous by their din. . . . What did I not do to serve and please him! I rained presents on him, I hung about him like a beggar—and in the end I found the strain on my resources too hard to bear. But what was the end of all that pomp and majesty? When people sought grants and presents from him, he could not somehow discover an auspicious day in the calendar; though all days were red-letter days when *we* had to pay our taxes!

SECOND HERALD. Do you mean to insinuate that our king is a bogus king like the one you have described.

FIRST HERALD. Mr. Uncle-in-law, I believe the time has come for you to say good-bye to Aunty-in-law.

KUMBHA. Please, sirs, do not take any offence. I am a poor creature—my sincerest apologies, sirs; I will do anything to be excused. I am quite willing to move away as far as you like.

SECOND HERALD. All right, come here and form a line. The king will come now—we shall go and prepare the way for him.

[*They go out.*]

SECOND CITIZEN. My dear Kumbha, your tongue will be your death one day.

KUMBHA. Friend Madhay, it isn't my tongue; it is fate. When the bogus king appeared I never said a word, though that did not prevent my striking at my own feet with all the self-confidence of innocence. And now, when perhaps the real king has come, I simply must blurt out treason. It is fate, my dear friends!

MADHAV. My faith is, to go on obeying the king—it does not matter whether he is a real one or a pretender. What do we know of kings that we should judge them! It is like throwing stones in the dark—you are almost sure of hitting your mark. I go on obeying and acknowledging—if it is a real king, well and good; if not, what harm is there?

KUMBHA. I should not have minded if the stones were nothing better than stones. But they are often precious things; here, as elsewhere, extravagance lands us in poverty, my friend.

MADHAV. Look! There comes the king! Ah, a king indeed! What a figure, what a face! Whoever saw such beauty—lily-white, creamy-soft! What now, Kumbha? What do you think now?

KUMBHA. He looks all right—yes, he may be the real king for all I know.

MADHAV. He looks as if he were moulded and carved for kingship, a figure too exquisite and delicate for the common light of day.

[*The "KING" enters.*]

MADHAV. Prosperity and victory attend thee, O King! We have been standing here to have a sight



of thee since the early morning. Forget us not, your Majesty, in your favours.

KUMBHA. The mystery deepens. I will go and call grandfather. [*He goes out.*]

[*Another BAND OF MEN enters.*]

FIRST MAN. The king, the king! Come along, quick, the king is passing this way.

SECOND MAN. Do not forget me, O King! I am Viraj, the grandson of Udaya of Kusgalivastu. I came here at the first report of thy coming. I did not stop to hear what people were saying; all the loyalty in me went out towards thee, O Monarch, and brought me here.

THIRD MAN. Rubbish! I came here earlier than you—before the cockcrow. Where were you then? O King, I am Bhadrasena, of Vikramasthali. Deign to keep thy servant in thy memory!

THE KING. I am much pleased with your loyalty and devotion.

VIVAJADATTA. Your Majesty, many are the grievances and complaints we have to make to thee; to whom could we turn our prayers so long, when we could not approach thy august presence?

KING. Your grievances will all be redressed. [*He goes out.*]

FIRST MAN. It won't do to lag behind, boys. The king will lose sight of us if we get mixed up with the mob.

SECOND MAN. See there—look what that fool Narottam is doing! He has elbowed his way through all of us and is now sedulously fanning the king with a palm leaf!

MADHAV. Indeed! Well, well, the sheer audacity of the man takes one's breath away.

SECOND MAN. We shall have to pitch the fellow out of that place. Is he fit to stand beside the king?

MADHAV. Do you imagine the king will not see through him? His loyalty is obviously a little too showy and profuse.

FIRST MAN. Nonsense! Kings can't scent hypocrites as we do. I should not be surprised if the king be taken in by that fool's strenuous fanning.

## II.

[*A Dark Chamber. QUEEN SUDARSHANĀ and Her Maid of Honour, SURANGAMA.*]

SUDARSHANĀ. Light, light! Where is light? Will the lamp never be lighted in this chamber?

SURANGAMA. My Queen, all your other rooms are lighted—will you never long to escape from the light into a dark room like this?

SUDARSHANĀ. But why should this room be kept dark?

SURANGAMA. Because otherwise you would know neither light nor darkness.

SUDARSHANĀ. Living in this dark room you have grown to speak darkly and strangely. I cannot understand you, Surangama. But tell me, in what part of the palace is this chamber situated? I cannot make out either the entrance or the way out of this room.

SURANGAMA. This room is placed deep down, in the very heart of the earth. The king has built this room specially for your sake.

SUDARSHANĀ. Why he has no dearth of rooms—why need he have made this chamber of darkness specially for me?

SURANGAMA. You can meet others in the lighted rooms, but only in this dark room can you meet your lord.

SUDARSHANĀ. No, no—I cannot live without light. I am restless in this stifling dark. Surangama, if you can bring a light into this room, I will give you this necklace of mine.

SURANGAMA. It is not in my power, O Queen. How can I bring light to a place which he would have kept always dark?

SUDARSHANĀ. Strange devotion! And yet, is it not true that the king punished your father?

SURANGAMA. Yes, that is true. My father used to gamble. All the young men of the country used to gather at my father's house—and they used to drink and gamble.

SUDARSHANĀ. And when the king sent away your father in exile, did it not make you feel bitterly oppressed?

SURANGAMA. Oh, it made me quite furious. I was on the road to ruin and destruction. When that path was closed for me, I seemed left without any support. I raged and raved like a wild beast in a cage—how I wanted to tear everyone to pieces in my powerless anger!

SUDARSHANĀ. But how did you get this devotion towards that same king?

SURANGAMA. How can I tell? Perhaps I could rely and depend on him *because* he was so hard, so pitiless!

SUDARSHANĀ. When did this change of feeling take place?

SURANGAMA. I could not tell you—I do not know that myself. A day came when all the rebel in me knew itself beaten, and then my whole nature bowed down in humble resignation on the dust of the earth. And I saw . . . I saw that he was as matchless in beauty as in terror. Oh, I was saved; I was rescued.

SUDARSHANĀ. Tell me, Surangama, I implore you,

won't you tell me what is the king like to look at? I have not seen him yet for a single day. He comes to me in darkness, and leaves me in this dark room again. How many people have I not asked. But they all return vague and dark answers. It seems to me that they all keep back something.

SURANGAMA. To tell you the truth, Queen, I could not say well what he is like. No—he is not what men call handsome.

SUDARSHANĀ. You don't say so? Not handsome!

SURANGAMA. No, my Queen, he is not handsome! To call him beautiful would be to say far too little about him.

SUDARSHANĀ. All your words are like that—dark, strange and vague. I cannot understand what you mean.

SURANGAMA. No, I will *not* call him handsome. And it is because he is not beautiful that he is so wonderful, so superb, so miraculous!

SUDARSHANĀ. I do not quite understand you—though I like to hear you talk about him. But I must see him at any cost.

SURANGAMA. Do you feel a faint breeze blowing?

SUDARSHANĀ. A breeze? Where?

SURANGAMA. Do you not smell a soft perfume?

SUDARSHANĀ. No, I don't.

SURANGAMA. The large door has opened. . . . He is coming; my king is coming in.

SUDARSHANĀ. How can you perceive when he comes?

SURANGAMA. I cannot say: I seem to hear his footsteps in my own heart. Being his servant of this dark chamber, I have developed a sense—I can know and feel without seeing.

SUDARSHANĀ. Would that I had this sense, too, Surangama!

SURANGAMA. You will have it, O Queen . . . this sense will waken in you one day. Your longing to have a sight of him makes you restless, and therefore all your mind is strained and warped in that direction. When you are past this state of feverish restlessness, everything will become quite easy.

SUDARSHANĀ. How is it that it is easy to you, who are a servant, and so difficult to me, the queen?

SURANGAMA. It is because I am a mere servant that no difficulty balks me. On the first day, when he left this room in my care, saying "Surangama, you will always keep this chamber ready for me; this is all your task," then I did not say, even in thought, "O give me the work of those who keep the other rooms lighted." No, but as soon as I bent all my mind to my task, a power woke and grew within me, and mastered every part of me unopposed. . . . O, there he comes! . . . He is standing outside, before the door. Lord! O King!

[A song is sung outside.]

*Open your door. I am waiting.*

*The ferry of the light from the dawn to the dark is done for the day;*

*The evening star is up.*

*Have you gathered your flowers, braided your hair,  
And donned your white robe for the night?*

*The cattle have come to their folds and birds to their nests.*

*The cross paths that run to all quarters have merged into one in the dark.*

*Open your door. I am waiting.*

SURANGAMA. O King, who can keep thine own doors shut against thee? They are not locked or bolted—they will swing wide open if you only touch them with thy fingers. Wilt thou not even touch

them? Wilt thou not enter unless I go and open the doors?

[*She sings.*]

*At a breath you can remove my veils, my lord!  
If I fall asleep in the dust and hear not your call,  
would you wait till I wake?*

*Would not the thunder of your chariot wheel make  
the earth tremble?*

*Would you not burst open the door and enter your  
own house unbidden?*

Then do you go, O Queen, and open the door for him; he will not enter otherwise.

SUDARSHANĀ. I do not see anything distinctly in the dark. I do not know where the doors are. You know everything here—go and open the doors for me. [SURANGAMA opens the door, bows to the KING, and goes out. The KING will remain invisible throughout this play.]

SUDARSHANĀ. Why do you not allow me to see you in the light?

KING. So you want to see me in the midst of a thousand things in broad daylight! Why should I not be the only thing you can feel in this darkness?

SUDARSHANĀ. But I *must* see you. I am longing to have a sight of you.

KING. You will not be able to bear the sight of me. It will only give you pain, poignant and overpowering.

SUDARSHANĀ. How can you say that I shall be unable to bear your sight? O, I can feel even in this dark how lovely and wonderful you are; why should I be afraid of you in the light? But tell me, can you see me in the dark?

KING. Yes, I can.

SUDARSHANĀ. What do you see?

KING. I see that the darkness of the infinite

heavens, whirled into life and being by the power of my love, has drawn the light of a myriad stars into itself, and incarnated itself in a form of flesh and blood. And in that form, what aeons of thought and striving, untold yearnings of limitless skies, the countless gifts of unnumbered seasons!

SUDARSHANĀ. Am I so wonderful, so beautiful? When I hear you speak so, my heart swells with gladness and pride. But how can I believe the wonderful things you tell me? I cannot find them in myself!

KING. Your own mirror will not reflect them—it lessens you, limits you, makes you look small and insignificant. But could you see yourself mirrored in my own mind, how grand would you appear! In my own heart you are no longer the daily individual which you think you are; you are verily my second self.

SUDARSHANĀ. O, do show me for an instant how to see with your eyes! Is there nothing at all like darkness to you? I am afraid when I think of this. This darkness which is to me real and strong as death—is this simply nothing to you? Then how can there be any union at all between us, in a place like this? No, no—it is impossible! There is a barrier betwixt us two—not here, no, not in this place. I want to find you and see you where I see trees and animals, birds and stones and the earth—

KING. Very well, you can try to find me. But no one will point me out to you. You will have to recognize me, if you can, yourself. And even if anybody professes to show me to you, how can you be sure he is speaking the truth?

SUDARSHANĀ. I shall know you; I shall recognize you; I shall find you out among a million men. I cannot be mistaken.

KING. Very well then, to-night during the festival of the full moon of the spring, you may try to find me out from the high turret of my palace; with your own eyes you may search for me amongst the crowd of people.

SUDARSHANĀ. Wilt thou be there amongst them?

KING. I shall show myself again and again, from every side of the crowd. Surangama!

[SURANGAMA enters.]

SURANGAMA. What is thy pleasure, lord?

KING. To-night is the full moon festival of the spring.

SURANGAMA. What have I to do to-night?

KING. To-day is a festive day, not a day of work. The pleasure-gardens are in full bloom—you will join in my festivities there.

SURANGAMA. I shall do as thou desirest, lord.

KING. The queen wants to see me to-night with her own eyes.

SURANGAMA. Where will the queen see you?

KING. Where the music will play at its sweetest, where the air will be heavy with the dust of flowers—there in the pleasure grove of silver light and mellow gloom.

SURANGAMA. What can be seen in that hide-and-seek of darkness and light? There the wind is wild and restless; everything is dance and swift movement—will it not puzzle the eyes?

KING. The queen is curious to search me out.

SURANGAMA. Curiosity will have to come back baffled and in tears!



III.

[*Before the Pleasure-Gardens. AVANTI, KOSHALA, KANCHI, and other Kings enter.*]

AVANTI. Will the king of this place not receive us?

KANCHI. What manner of governing a country is this? The king is having a festival in a forest, where even the meanest and commonest people can have easy access!

KOSHALA. We ought to have had a separate place set apart and ready for our reception.

KANCHI. If he has not prepared such a place yet, we shall compel him to have one erected for us.

KOSHALA. All this makes one naturally suspect whether these people have really any king at all—it looks as if an unfounded rumour had led us astray.

AVANTI. It may be so with regard to the king, but the Queen Sudarshanā of this place isn't at all an unfounded rumour.

KOSHALA. It is only for her sake that I have cared to come at all. I don't mind omitting to see one who never makes himself visible, but it would be a stupid mistake if we were to go away without a sight of one who is eminently worth a visit.

KANCHI. Let us make some definite plan, then.

AVANTI. A plan is an excellent thing, so long as you are not yourself entangled in it.

KANCHI. Hang it, who are these vermin swarming this way! Here! who are you?

[*GRANDFATHER and the Boys enter.*]

GRANDFATHER. We are the Jolly Band of Have-Notings.

AVANTI. The introduction was superfluous. But

you will take yourself away a little farther and leave us in peace.

GRANDFATHER. We never suffer from a want of space; we can afford to give you as wide a berth as you like. What little suffices for us is never the bone of contention between any rival claimants. Is not that so, my little friends? [*They sing.*]

*We have nothing; indeed we have nothing at all!*

*We sing merrily fol de rol de rol!*

*Some build high walls of their houses*

*On the bog of the sands of gold.*

*We stand before them and sing*

*Fol de rol de rol.*

*Pickpockets hover about us*

*And honour us with covetous glances.*

*We shake our empty pockets and sing*

*Fol de rol de rol.*

*When death, the old hag, steals to our doors*

*We snap our fingers at her face,*

*And we sing in a chorus with gay flourishes*

*Fol de rol de rol. ~*

KANCHI. Look over there, Koshala. Who are those coming this way? A pantomime? Somebody is out masquerading as a king.

KOSHALA. The king of this place may tolerate all this tomfoolery, but we won't.

AVANTI. He is perhaps some rural chief.

[GUARDS enter on foot.]

KANCHI. What country does your king come from?

FIRST SOLDIER. He is the king of this country. He is going to command the festivities. [*They go out.*]

KOSHALA. What! The king of this country come out for the festivities!

AVANTI. Indeed! We shall then have to return

with a sight of him only—leaving the delectable queen unseen.

KANCHI. Do you really think that fellow spoke the truth? Anybody can pass himself off as the king of this kingless country. Can you not see that the man looks like a dressed up king—much too overdressed?

AVANTI. But he looks handsome; his appearance is not without a certain pleasing attractiveness.

KANCHI. He may be pleasing to your eye, but if you look at him closely enough there can be no mistaking him. You will see how I expose him before you all.

*The PRETENDER enters.*

PRETENDER. Welcome, princes, to our kingdom! I trust your reception has been properly looked after by my officials?

KINGS. [*with feigned courtesy*] Oh, yes—nothing was lacking in the reception.

KANCHI. If there was any shortcoming at all, it has been made up by the honour of our sight of your Majesty.

PRETENDER. We do not show ourselves to the general public, but your great devotion and loyalty to us has made it a pleasure for us not to deny ourselves to you.

KANCHI. It is truly hard for us, your Majesty, to bear the weight of your gracious favours.

PRETENDER. We are afraid we shall not be able to stop here long.

KANCHI. I have thought so, already; you do not quite look up to it.

PRETENDER. In the meantime if you have any favours to ask of us—

KANCHI. We have; but we would like to speak a little more in private.

PRETENDER [*to his attendants*]. Retire a little from our presence. [*They retire.*] Now you can express your desires without any reserve.

KANCHI. There will be no reserve on our part—our only fear is that you might think restraint necessary for yourself.

PRETENDER. Oh no, you need have no scruples on that score.

KANCHI. Come then, do us homage by placing your head on the ground before us.

PRETENDER. It seems my servants have distributed the Varuni spirits too liberally in the reception camps.

KANCHI. False pretender, it is you who are suffering from an overdose of arrogant spirits. Your head will soon kiss the dust.

PRETENDER. Princes, these heavy jokes are not worthy of a king.

KANCHI. Those who will jest properly with you are near at hand. Soldiers!

PRETENDER. No more, I entreat you. I can see plainly I owe homage to you all. The head is bowing down of itself—there is no need for the application of any sharp methods to lay it low. So here I do my obeisance to you all. If you will kindly allow me to escape I shall not inflict my presence long on you.

KANCHI. Why should you escape? We will make you king of this place—let us carry our joke to its legitimate finish. Have you got any following?

PRETENDER. I have. Everyone who sees me in the streets flocks after me. When I had a meager retinue at first everyone regarded me with suspicion, but now with the increasing crowd their doubts are waning and dissolving. The crowd is being hypnotised by its own magnitude. I have not got to do anything now.

KANCHI. That's excellent! From this moment we all promise to help and stand by you. But you will have to do us one service in return.

PRETENDER. Your commands and the crown you are putting on my head will be equally binding and sacred to me.

KANCHI. At present we want nothing more than a sight of the Queen Sudarshanā. You will have to see to this.

PRETENDER. I shall spare no pains for that.

KANCHI. We cannot put much faith in your pains; you will be solely directed by our instructions. But now you can go and join the festivities in the royal arbor with all possible splendor and magnificence. [*They go out.*]

#### IV.

[*Turret of the Royal Palace. SUDARSHANA and her friend ROHINI.*]

SUDARSHANĀ. You may make mistakes, Rohini, but I cannot be mistaken. Am I not the queen? That, of course, must be my king.

ROHINI. He who has conferred such high honour upon you cannot be long in showing himself to you.

SUDARSHANĀ. His very form makes me restless like a caged bird. Did you try well to ascertain who he is?

ROHINI. Yes, I did. Everyone I asked said he was the king.

SUDARSHANĀ. What country is he the king of?

ROHINI. Our country, king of this land.

SUDARSHANĀ. Are you sure that you are speaking of him who has a sunshade made of flowers held over his head?

ROHINI. The same; he whose flag has the *Kimshuk* flower painted on it.

SUDARSHANĀ. I recognized him at once, of course, but it is you who had your doubts.

ROHINI. We are apt to make mistakes, my Queen, and we are afraid to offend you in case we are wrong.

SUDARSHANĀ. Would that Surangama were here! There would remain no room for doubt then.

ROHINI. Do you think her cleverer than any of us?

SUDARSHANĀ. Oh no, but she would recognize him instantly.

ROHINI. I cannot believe that she would. She merely pretends to know him. There is none to test her knowledge if she professes to know the king. If we were as shameless as she is, it would not have been difficult for us to boast about our acquaintance with the king.

SUDARSHANĀ. But no, she never boasts.

ROHINI. It is pure affectation, the whole of it; which often goes a longer way than open boasting. She is up to all manner of tricks; that is why we could never like her.

SUDARSHANĀ. But whatever you may say, I should like to ask her, if she were here.

ROHINI. Very well, Queen. I will bring her here. She must be lucky if she is indispensable for the queen to know the king.

SUDARSHANĀ. Oh no—it isn't for that—but I would like to hear it said by everyone.

ROHINI. Is not everyone saying it? Why, just listen; the acclamations of the people mount up even to this height!

SUDARSHANĀ. Then do one thing: put these flowers on a lotus leaf, and take them to him.

ROHINI. And what am I to say if he asks who sends them?

SUDARSHANĀ. You will not have to say anything—he will know. He thought that I would not be able to recognize him. I cannot let him off without showing that I have found him out. [ROHINI goes out with the flowers.]

SUDARSHANĀ. My heart is all a-quiver and restless to-night: I have never felt like this before. The white, silver light of the full moon is flooding the heavens and brimming over on every side like the bubbling foam of wine. . . . It seizes on me like a yearning, like a mantling intoxication. Here, who is here? [A servant enters.]

SERVANT. What is your pleasure, your Majesty.

SUDARSHANĀ. Do you see those festive boys singing and moving through the alleys and avenues of the mango trees? Call them hither; bring them to me. I want to hear them sing. [The servant goes out and soon enters with the boys.]

Come, living emblems of youthful spring, begin your festive song! All my mind and body is song and music to-night—but the ineffable melody escapes my tongue. Do you then sing for my sake.

*My sorrow is sweet to me in this spring night.*

*My pain smites at the chords of my love and softly sings.*

*Visions take birth from my yearning eyes and flit in the moonlit sky.*

*The smells from the depths of the woodlands have lost their way in my dreams.*

*Words come in whispers to my ears, I know not from where,*

*And bells in my anklets tremble and jingle in time with my heart thrills.*

SUDARSHANĀ. Enough! enough!—I cannot bear it any more! Your song has filled my eyes with tears. . . . A fancy comes to me—that desire can never attain its object—it need never attain it. What sweet hermit of the woods has taught you this song? Oh, that my eyes could see him whose song my ears have heard! Oh, how I wish—I wish I could wander rapt and lovely in the thick woodland arbors of the heart! Dear boys of the hermitage! How shall I reward you? This necklace is but made of jewels, hard stones—its hardness will give you pain—I have nothing like the garlands of flowers you have on.

[*The boys bow and go out. ROHINI enters.*]

SUDARSHANĀ. I have not done well—I have not done well, Rohini. I feel ashamed to ask what happened. I have just realized that no hand can really give the greatest of gifts. Still, let me hear all.

ROHINI. When I gave the king those flowers, he did not appear to understand anything.

SUDARSHANĀ. You don't say so? He did not understand——!

ROHINI. No; he sat there like a doll, without uttering a single word. I think he did not want to show that he understood nothing; so he just held his tongue.

SUDARSHANĀ. Fie on me! My shamelessness has been justly punished. Why did you not bring back my flowers?

ROHINI. How could I? The King of Kanchi, a very clever man who was sitting by him, took in everything at a glance, and he just smiled a bit and said, "Emperor, the Queen Sudarshanā sends your Majesty her greetings with these blossoms—the blossoms that belong to the God of Love, the friend of spring." The king seemed to awake with a start, and said, "This is the crown of all my regal glory



to-night." I was coming back, all out of countenance, when the King of Kanchi took off this necklace of jewels from the king's person, and said to me, "Friend, the king's garland gives itself up to you, in return for the happy fortune you have brought."

SUDARSHANĀ. What! Kanchi had to make the king understand all this! Woe is me—to-night's festival has opened wide for me the doors of ignominy and shame! What else could I expect? Leave me alone, Rohini; I want solitude for a time. [ROHINI goes out.] A great blow has scattered my pride to atoms to-day, and yet . . . I cannot efface from my mind that beautiful, fascinating figure! No pride is left me—I am beaten, vanquished, utterly helpless. . . . I cannot even turn away from him. Oh, how the wish comes back to me again and again—to ask that garland of Rohini! But what would she think! Rohini!

[ROHINI enters.]

ROHINI. What is your wish?

SUDARSHANĀ. What reward do you deserve for your services to-day?

ROHINI. Nothing from you—for I had my reward from the king, as it should be.

SUDARSHANĀ. That is no free gift, but an extortion of reward. I do not like to see you put on what was given in so indifferent a manner. Take it off—I give you my bracelets if you leave it here. Take these bracelets and go now. [ROHINI goes out.] Another defeat! I should have thrown this necklace away—but I could not! It is pricking me as if it were a garland of thorns—but I cannot throw it away. This is what the god of the festival has brought me to-night—this necklace of shame!

## V.

[*The* PRETENDER *and* KANCHI.]

KANCHI. You must do exactly as I have told you. Let there be no mistake of any kind.

PRETENDER. There shall be no mistake.

KANCHI. The Queen Sudarshanā's mansions are in the . . .

PRETENDER. Yes, sire, I have seen the place well.

KANCHI. What you have to do is to set fire to the garden, and then you will take advantage of the bustle and confusion to accomplish your object straightway.

PRETENDER. I shall remember.

KANCHI. Look here, Sir Pretender, I cannot help thinking that a needless fear is troubling you—there is really no king in this country.

PRETENDER. My sole aim is to rid this country of this anarchy. Your common man cannot live without a king, whether a real one or a fraud! Anarchy is always a source of danger.

KANCHI. Pious benefactor of the people, your wonderful self-sacrifice should really be an example to all of us. I am thinking of doing this extraordinary service to the people myself.

[*They go out.*]

## VI.

[*Inside the Garden.*]

ROHINI. What is the matter? I cannot make out what is all this! [*To the gardeners.*] Where are you all going in such a hurry?

FIRST GARDENER. We are going out of the garden.

ROHINI. Where?

SECOND GARDENER. We do not know where—the king has called us.

ROHINI. Why, the king is in the garden! Which king has called you?

FIRST GARDENER. We cannot say.

SECOND GARDENER. The king we have been serving all our life, of course.

ROHINI. Will you all go?

FIRST GARDENER. Yes, all—we have to go instantly. Otherwise we might get into trouble.

[*They go out.*]

ROHINI. I cannot understand their words. . . . I am afraid. They are scampering off like wild animals that fly just before the bank of a river breaks down into the water.

[*The KING OF KOSHALA enters.*]

KOSHALA. Rohini, do you know where your king and Kanchi have gone?

ROHINI. They are somewhere in the garden, but I could not tell you where.

KOSHALA. I cannot really understand their intentions. I have not done well to put my trust in Kanchi.

[*He goes out.*]

ROHINI. What is this dark affair going on amongst these kings? Something dreadful is going to happen soon. Shall I, too, be drawn into it?

[*AVANTI enters.*]

AVANTI. Rohini, do you know where the other princes are?

ROHINI. It is difficult to say which of them is where. The King of Koshala just passed by in this direction.

AVANTI. I am not thinking of Koshala. Where are your king and Kanchi?

ROHINI. I have not seen them for a long time.

AVANTI. Kanchi is always avoiding us. He is certainly planning to deceive us all. I have not done well to put my hand in this imbroglio. Friend, could you kindly tell me any way out of this garden?

ROHINI. I do not know.

AVANTI. Is there no man here who will show me the way out?

ROHINI. The servants have all left the garden.

AVANTI. Why did they do so?

ROHINI. I could not exactly understand what they meant. They said the king had commanded them to leave the garden at once.

AVANTI. King? Which king?

ROHINI. They could not say exactly.

AVANTI. This does not sound well. I shall have to find a way out at any cost. I cannot stay here a single moment more.

*[He goes out hurriedly.]*

ROHINI. Where shall I find the king? When I gave him the flowers the queen had sent, he did not seem much interested in me at the time; but ever since that hour he has been showering gifts and presents on me. This causeless generosity makes me more afraid. . . . Where are the birds flying at such an hour of the night? What has frightened them all on a sudden? This is not the usual time of their flight, certainly. . . . Why is the queen's pet deer running that way? Chapata! Chapata! She does not even hear my call. I have never seen a night like this! The horizon on every side suddenly becomes red, like a madman's eye! The sun seems to be setting at this untimely hour on all sides at the same time. What madness of the Almighty is this! Oh, I am frightened! . . . Where shall I find the king?

VII.

[*At the Door of the Queen's Palace.*]

PRETENDER. What is this you have done, Kanchi?

KANCHI. I wanted to fire only this part of the garden near the palace. I had no idea that it would spread so quickly on all sides. Tell me, quickly, the way out of this garden.

PRETENDER. I can tell you nothing about it. Those who brought us here have all fled away.

KANCHI. You are a native of this country—you must know the way.

PRETENDER. I have never entered these inner royal gardens before.

KANCHI. I won't hear of it—you must show me the way, or I shall split you into halves.

PRETENDER. You may take my life by that means, but it would be a very precarious method of finding the way out of this garden.

KANCHI. Why were you, then, going about saying that you were the king of this country?

PRETENDER. I am not the king—I am not the king. [*Throwing himself with folded hands on the ground.*] Where art thou, my king? Save me, oh, save me! I am a rebel—punish me, but do not kill me!

KANCHI. What is the use of shouting and cringing to the empty air? It is a much better way of spending the time to search for the way.

PRETENDER. I shall lie down here—I shall not move an inch. Come what will, I will not complain.

KANCHI. I will not allow all this nonsense. If I am to be burnt to death, you will be my companion to the very end.

FROM THE OUTSIDE. Oh, save us, save us, our King! The fire is on all sides of us!

KANCHI. Fool, get up! Lose no more time.

SUDARSHANĀ. [*Entering.*] King, O my King! save me, save me from death! I am surrounded by fire.

PRETENDER. Who is the king? I am no king!

SUDARSHANĀ. You are not the king?

PRETENDER. No, I am a hypocrite! I am a scoundrel! [*Flinging his crown on the ground.*] Let my deception and hypocrisy be shattered into dust!

[*He goes out with KANCHI.*]

SUDARSHANĀ. No king! He is not the king? Then, O thou god of fire, burn me—reduce me to ashes! I shall throw myself into thy hands, O thou great purifier; burn to ashes my shame, my longing, my desire!

ROHINI. [*Entering.*] Queen, where are you going? All your inner chambers are shrouded in raging fire—do not enter there.

SUDARSHANĀ. Yes! I will enter those burning chambers! It is the fire of my death!

[*She enters the palace.*]

## VIII.

[*The dark room. The KING and SUDARSHANĀ.*]

KING. Do not be afraid—you have no cause for fear. The fire will not reach this room.

SUDARSHANĀ. I have no fear—but oh, shame has accompanied me like a raging fire. My face, my eyes, my heart, every part of my body, is being scorched and burnt by its flames.

KING. It will be some time before you get over this burning.

SUDARSHANĀ. This fire will never cease—will never cease!

KING. Do not be despondent, Queen!

SUDARSHANĀ. O King, I shall not hide anything from you. . . . I have another's garland round my neck.

KING. That garland, too, is mine—how else could he get it? He stole it from my room.

SUDARSHANĀ. But it is *his* gift to me; yet I could not fling this garland away! When the fire came roaring on all sides of me, I thought of throwing this garland into the fire. But no, I could not. My mind whispered, "Let that garland be on you in your death." . . . What fire is this, O King, into which I, who had come out to see you, leaped like a moth that cannot resist the flame? What a pain is this! Oh, what agony! The fire keeps burning as fiercely as ever, but I go on living within its flames!

KING. But you have seen me at last—your desire has been fulfilled.

SUDARSHANĀ. But did I seek to see you in the midst of this dreadful doom? I know not what I saw, but my heart is still beating fast with fear.

KING. What did you see?

SUDARSHANĀ. Terrible!—oh, it was terrible! I am afraid even to think of it again. Black, black—oh, thou art black like the everlasting night! I looked on thee for one dreadful instant only. The blaze of the fire fell on your features—you looked like the awful night when a comet swings fearfully into our ken. Oh, then I closed my eyes—I could not look on you any more. Black as the threatening storm-cloud, black as the shoreless sea with the spectral red tint of twilight on its tumultuous waves!

KING. Have I not told you before that one cannot bear my sight unless one is really prepared for me? One would want to run away from me to the ends of the earth. Have I not seen this times without

number? This is why I wanted to reveal myself to you slowly and gradually, not all too suddenly.

SUDARSHANĀ. But sin came and destroyed all your hopes—the very possibility of a union with you has now become unthinkable to me.

KING. It will be possible in time, my Queen. The utter and bleak blackness that has to-day shaken you to your soul with fear will one day be your solace and salvation. What else can my love exist for?

SUDARSHANĀ. It cannot be; it is not possible. What will *your* love only do? *My* love has now turned away from you. Beauty has now cast its spell on me. This frenzy, this intoxication, will never leave me—it has dazzled and fired my eyes; it has thrown its golden glamour over my very dreams! I have told you all now. Punish me as you like.

KING. The punishment has already begun.

SUDARSHANĀ. But if you do not cast me off, I will leave you——

KING. You have the utmost liberty to do as you like.

SUDARSHANĀ. I cannot bear your presence! My heart is angry at you. Why did you—but what have you done to me? . . . Why are you like this? Why did they tell me you were fair and handsome? Thou art black, black as night—I shall never, I can never like you. I have seen what I love—it is soft as cream, delicate as the *shirisha* flower, beautiful as a butterfly.

KING. It is false as a mirage, empty as a bubble.

SUDARSHANĀ. Let it be—but I cannot stand near you—I simply cannot! I must fly away from here. Union with you—it cannot be possible. It cannot be



anything but a false union—my mind must inevitably turn away from you.

KING. Will you not even try a little?

SUDARSHANĀ. I have been trying since yesterday—but the more I try, the more rebellious does my heart become. If I stay with you I shall constantly be pursued and hounded by the thought that I am impure, that I am false and faithless.

KING. Well, then, you can go as far from me as you like.

SUDARSHANĀ. I cannot fly from you—just because you do not prevent my going. Why do you not hold me back—hold me by the hair, saying, “You shall not go”? Why do you not strike me? Oh, punish me, strike me, beat me with violent hands! But your unresisting silence makes me wild—Oh, I cannot bear it!

KING. How do you think that I am really silent? How do you know that I am not trying to keep you back?

SUDARSHANĀ. Oh, no, no!—I cannot bear this—tell me aloud; command me with the voice of thunder; compel me with words that will drown everything else in my ears—do not let me off so easily, so mildly!

KING. I shall leave you free; but why should I let you break away from me?

SUDARSHANĀ. You will not let me? Well, then, I must go!

KING. Go, then.

SUDARSHANĀ. Then I am not to blame at all. You could have held me back by force, but you did not! You have not hindered me—and now I shall go away. Command your sentinels to prevent my going.

KING. No one will stand in your way. You can

go as free as the broken storm-cloud driven by the tempest.

SUDARSHANĀ. I can resist no more—something in me is impelling me forward—I am breaking away from my anchor! Perhaps I shall sink, but I shall return no more. [*She rushes out.*]

[SURANGAMA enters, singing.]

SURANGAMA. What will of thine is this that sends me afar? Again shall I come back to thy feet from all my wanderings. Is it thy love that feigns this neglect? Thy caressing hands are pushing me away—to draw me back to thy arms again! O my King, what is this game that thou art playing throughout thy kingdom?

SUDARSHANĀ. [*Re-entering.*] King, O King!

SURANGAMA. He has gone away.

SUDARSHANĀ. Gone away? Well, then, . . . then he has cast me off for good! I have come back, but he could not wait a single instant for me! Very well, then, I am now perfectly free. Surangama, did he ask you to keep me back?

SURANGAMA. No, he said nothing.

SUDARSHANĀ. Why should he say anything? Why should he care for me? . . . I am, then, free, perfectly free. But, Surangama, I wanted to ask one thing of the king, but could not utter it in his presence. Tell me if he has punished the prisoners with death.

SURANGAMA. Death? My king never punishes with death.

SUDARSHANĀ. What has he done to them, then?

SURANGAMA. He has set them at liberty. Kanchi has acknowledged his defeat and gone back to his kingdom.

SUDARSHANĀ. Ah, what a relief!

SURANGAMA. My Queen, I have one prayer to make to you.

SUDARSHANĀ. You will not have to utter your prayer in words, Surangama. Whatever jewelry and ornaments the king gave me, I leave to you—I am not worthy to wear them now.

SURANGAMA. No, I do not want them, my Queen. My master has never given me any ornaments to wear—my unadorned plainness is good enough for me. He has not given me anything of which I can boast before people.

SUDARSHANĀ. What do you want of me, then?

SURANGAMA. I, too, shall go with you, my Queen.

SUDARSHANĀ. Consider what you are saying: you are wanting to leave your master. What a prayer for you to make!

SURANGAMA. I shall not go far from him—when you are going out unguarded he will be with you, close by your side.

SUDARSHANĀ. You are talking nonsense, my child. I wanted to take Rohini with me, but she would not come. What gives you courage enough to wish to come with me?

SURANGAMA. I have neither courage nor strength. But I shall go—courage will come of itself, and strength, too, will come.

SUDARSHANĀ. No, I cannot take you with me; your presence will constantly remind me of my shame. I should not be able to endure that.

SURANGAMA. Oh, my Queen, I have made all your good and all your evil my own as well; will you treat me as a stranger still? I must go with you.

## IX.

[*The KING OF KANYA KUBJA, father of SUDARSHANĀ,  
and his MINISTER.*]

**KING OF KANYA KUBJA.** I heard everything before her arrival.

**THE MINISTER.** The princess is waiting alone outside the city gates on the bank of the river. Shall I send people to welcome her home?

**THE KING.** What! She who has faithlessly left her husband—do you propose trumpeting her infamy and shame to everyone by getting up a show for her?

**THE MINISTER.** Shall I, then, make arrangements for her residence at the palace?

**THE KING.** You will do nothing of the sort. She has left her place as the empress of her own accord. Here she will have to work as a maid-servant if she wishes to stay in my house.

**THE MINISTER.** It will be hard and bitter to her, your Highness.

**THE KING.** If I seek to save her from her sufferings, then I am not worthy to be her father.

**THE MINISTER.** I shall arrange everything as you wish, your Highness.

**THE KING.** Let it be kept a secret that she is my daughter; otherwise we shall all be in an awful trouble.

**THE MINISTER.** Why do you fear such disaster, your Highness?

**THE KING.** When woman swerves from the right path, then she appears fraught with the direst calamity. You do not know with what deadly fear this daughter of mine has inspired me. She is coming to my home laden with peril and danger.

X.

[*The Inner Apartments of the Palace.* SUDARSHANĀ  
and SURANGAMA.]

SUDARSHANĀ. Go away from me, Surangama! A deadly anger rages within me—I cannot bear anybody—it makes me wild to see you so patient and submissive.

SURANGAMA. Whom are you angry with?

SUDARSHANĀ. I do not know; but I wish to see everything destroyed and convulsed in ruin and disaster! I left my place on the throne as the queen in a moment's time. Did I lose my all to sweep the dust, to sweat and slave in this dismal hole? Why do the torches of mourning not flare up for me all over the world? Why does not the earth quake and tremble? Is my fall but the unobserved dropping of the puny bean-flower? Is it not more like the fall of a glowing star, whose fiery blazon bursts the heavens asunder?

SURANGAMA. A mighty forest inly smokes and smolders before it bursts into a conflagration: the time has not come yet.

SUDARSHANĀ. I have thrown my queen's honor and glory to the dust and winds. But is there no human being who will come out to meet my desolate soul here? Alone, oh, I am fearfully, terribly alone!

SURANGAMA. You are not alone.

SUDARSHANĀ. Surangama, I shall not keep anything from you. When he set the palace on fire, I could not be angry with him. A great inward joy set my heart a-flutter all the while. What a stupendous crime! What glorious prowess! It was this courage that made me strong and fired my own spirits. It was this terrible joy that enabled me to

leave everything behind me in a moment's time. But is it all my imagination only? Why is there no sign of his coming anywhere?

SURANGAMA. He of whom you are thinking did not set fire to the palace—it is the King of Kanchi who did it.

SUDARSHANĀ. Coward! But is it possible? So handsome, so bewitching, and yet no manhood in him! Have I deceived myself for the sake of such a worthless creature? Oh, shame! Fie on me! . . . But, Surangama, don't you think your king should yet have come to take me back? [SURANGAMA *remains silent.*] You think I am anxious to go back? Never! Even if the king had really come I should not have returned. Not even once did he forbid me to come away, and I found all the doors wide open to let me out! And the stony and dusty road over which I walked—it was nothing that a queen was treading on it. It is hard and has no feeling—like your king; the meanest beggar is the same to it as the highest empress. You are silent! Well, I tell you, your king's behavior is—mean, brutal, shameful!

SURANGAMA. Everyone knows that my king is hard and pitiless. No one has ever been able to move him.

SUDARSHANĀ. Why do you, then, call him day and night?

SURANGAMA. May he ever remain hard and relentless, like rock—may my tears and prayers never move him! Let my sorrows be ever mine only—and may his glory and victory be forever!

SUDARSHANĀ. Surangama, look! A cloud of dust seems to rise over the eastern horizon across the fields.

SURANGAMA. Yes, I see it.

SUDARSHANĀ. Is that not like the banner of a chariot?

SURANGAMA. Indeed, a banner it is.

SUDARSHANĀ. Then he is coming. He has come at last!

SURANGAMA. Who is coming?

SUDARSHANĀ. Our king—who else? How could he live without me? It is a wonder how he could hold out even for these days.

SURANGAMA. No, no, this cannot be the king.

SUDARSHANĀ. No, indeed! As if you knew everything! Your king is hard, stony, pitiless, isn't he? Let us see how hard he can be. I knew from the beginning that he would come—that he would have to rush after me. But remember Surangama, I never for a single moment asked him to come. You will see how I make your king confess his defeat to me! Just go out, Surangama, and let me know everything. [SURANGAMA goes out.] But shall I go if he comes and asks me to return with him? Certainly not! I will not go! Never!

[SURANGAMA enters.]

SURANGAMA. It is not the king, my Queen.

SUDARSHANĀ. Not the king? Are you quite sure? What! he has not come yet?

SURANGAMA. No, my king never raises so much dust when he comes. Nobody can know when he comes at all.

SUDARSHANĀ. Then this is——

SURANGAMA. The same: he is coming with the King of Kanchi.

SUDARSHANĀ. Do you know his name?

SURANGAMA. His name is Suvarna.

SUDARSHANĀ. It is he, then. I thought, "I am lying here like waste refuse and offal, which no one

cares even to touch!" But my hero is coming now to release me. Did you know Suvarna?

SURANGAMA. When I was at my father's home, in the gambling den—

SUDARSHANĀ. No, no, I won't hear anything of him from you. He is my own hero—my only salvation. I shall know him without your telling stories about him. But just see, a nice man your king is! He did not care to come to rescue me even from this degradation. You cannot blame me after this. I could not have waited for him all my life here, toiling ignominiously like a bondslave. I shall never have *your* meekness and submissiveness.

## XI.

[*An encampment.*]

KANCHI. [To KANYA KUBJA'S MESSENGER.] Tell your king that he need not receive us exactly as his guests. We are on our way back to our kingdoms, but we are waiting to rescue Queen Sudarshanā from the servitude and degradation to which she is condemned here.

MESSENGER. Your Highness, you will remember that the princess is in her father's house.

KANCHI. A daughter may stay in her father's home only so long as she remains unmarried. If the king chooses not to give up his daughter to me on peaceful terms, our *Kshatriva* code of righteousness will oblige me to employ force. You may take this as my last word.

MESSENGER. Your Highness, do not forget that our king, to, is bound by the same code. It is idle to expect that he will deliver up his daughter by merely hearing your threats.



KANCHI. Tell your king that I have come prepared for such an answer.

[*The MESSENGER goes out.*]

SUVARNA. King of Kanchi, it seems to me that we are daring too much.

KANCHI. What pleasure would there be in this adventure if it were otherwise?

SUVARNA. It does not cost much courage to challenge Kanya Kubja,—but—

KANCHI. If you once begin to be afraid of “but,” you will hardly find a place in this world safe enough for you.

[*A SOLDIER enters.*]

SOLDIER. Your Highness! I have just received the news that the Kings of Koshala, Avanti, and Kalinga are coming this way with their armies. [*He goes out.*]

KANCHI. Just what I was afraid of! The report of Sudarshanā’s flight has spread abroad. Now we are going to be in for a general scramble, which is sure to end in smoke.

SUVARNA. It is useless now, your Highness. These are not good tidings. I am perfectly certain that it is our emperor himself who has secretly spread the report everywhere.

KANCHI. Why, what good will it bring him?

SUVARNA. The greedy ones will tear one another to pieces in the general rivalry and scramble—and he will take advantage of the situation to go back with the booty.

KANCHI. Now it becomes clear why your king never shows himself. His trick is to multiply himself on every side—fear makes him visible everywhere. But I will still maintain that your king is but an empty fraud from top to bottom.

SUVARNA. But, your Highness, will you have the kindness to let me off?

KANCHI. I cannot let you go. I have some use for you in this affair.

[A SOLDIER enters.]

SOLDIER. Your Highness, Virat, Panchala, and Vidarbha, too, have come. They have encamped on the other side of the river. [*He goes out.*]

KANCHI. In the beginning, we must all fight together. Let the battle with Kanya Kubja first be over; then we shall find some way out of the difficulty.

SUVARNA. Please do not drag me into your plans. I shall be happy if you leave me alone. I am a poor, mean creature—nothing—can——

KANCHI. Look here, King of Hypocrites, ways and means are never of a very exalted order; roads and stairs and so forth are always to be trodden under our feet. The advantage of utilizing men like you in our plans is that we have to make use of no mask or illusion. But if I were to consult my prime minister, it would be absurd for me to call theft by any name less dignified than public benefit. I will go now, and move the princes about like pawns on the chessboard; the game cannot evidently go on if all the chessmen propose moving like kings!

## XII.

[*The Interior of the Palace.*]

SUDARSHANĀ. Is the fight still going on?

SURANGAMA. As fiercely as ever.

SUDARSHANĀ. Before going out to the battle, my father came to me and said, "You have come away from one king, but you have drawn seven kings after you; I have a mind to cut you up into seven

pieces and distribute them among the princes." It would have been well if he had done so. Surangama!

SURANGAMA. Yes?

SUDARSHANĀ. If your king had the power to save me, could my present state have left him unmoved?

SURANGAMA. My Queen, why do you ask me? Have I the power to answer for my king? I know my understanding is dark; that is why I never dare to judge him.

SUDARSHANĀ. Who have joined in this fight?

SURANGAMA. All the seven princes.

SUDARSHANĀ. No one else?

SURANGAMA. Suvarna attempted to escape in secret, before the fight began, but Kanchi has kept him a prisoner in his camps.

SUDARSHANĀ. Oh, I should have been dead long ago! But, O King, my King, if you had come and helped my father, your fame would have been none the less! It would have become brighter and higher. Are you quite sure, Surangama, that he has not come?

SURANGAMA. I know nothing for certain.

SUDARSHANĀ. My old window in the palace comes back to my memory. I used to come, after dressing in the evening, and stand at my window, and out of the blank darkness of our lampless meeting-place used to stream forth melodies, dancing and vibrating in endless succession.

SURANGAMA. Oh, deep and sweet darkness! the profound and mystic darkness whose servant I was!

SUDARSHANĀ. Why did you come away with me from that room?

SURANGAMA. Because I knew he would follow us and take us back.

SUDARSHANĀ. But no, he will not come—he has left us for good. Why should he not?

SURANGAMA. If he can leave us like that, then we have no need of him. Then he does not exist for us; then that dark chamber is totally empty and void—no *vina* ever breathed its music there—none called you or me in that chamber; then everything has been a delusion and an idle dream.

[*The DOORKEEPER enters.*]

SUDARSHANĀ. Who are you?

DOORKEEPER. I am the porter of this palace.

SUDARSHANĀ. Tell me quickly what you have to say.

DOORKEEPER. Our king has been taken prisoner.

SUDARSHANĀ. Prisoner? O Mother Earth! [*She faints.*]

### XIII.

[*The KING OF KANCHI and SUVARNA.*]

SUVARNA. You say, then, that there will be no more necessity of any fight amongst yourselves?

KANCHI. No, you need not be afraid. I have made all the princes agree that he whom the queen accepts as her husband will have her, and the others will have to abandon all further struggle.

SUVARNA. But you must have done with me, your Highness; so I beg to be let off now. Unfit as I am for anything, the fear of impending danger has unnerved me and stunned my intellect. You will therefore find it difficult to put me to any use.

KANCHI. You will have to sit there as my umbrella-holder.

SUVARNA. Your servant is ready for anything; but of what profit will that be to you?

KANCHI. My man, I see that your weak intellect cannot go with a high ambition in you. You have no notion yet with what favor the queen looked upon

you. After all, she cannot possibly throw the bridal garland on an umbrella-bearer's neck in a company of princes, and yet, I know she will not be able to turn her mind away from you. So on all counts this garland will fall under the shade of my regal umbrella.

XIV.

[SUDARSHANĀ and SURANGAMA at the Window.]

SUDARSHANĀ. Must I go to the assembly of the princes, then? Is there no other means of saving my father's life?

SURANGAMA. The King of Kanchi has said so.

SUDARSHANĀ. Are these the words worthy of a king? Did he say so with his own lips?

SURANGAMA. No; his messenger, Suvarna, brought this news.

SUDARSHANĀ. Woe, woe is me!

SURANGAMA. And he produced a few withered flowers and said, "Tell your queen that the drier and more withered these souvenirs of the Spring Festival become, the fresher and more blooming do they grow within my heart."

SUDARSHANĀ. Stop! Tell me no more. Do not torment me any more.

SURANGAMA. Look! There sit all the princes in the great assembly. He who has no ornament on his person, except a single garland of flowers round his crown—he is the King of Kanchi. And he who holds the umbrella over his head, standing behind him—that is Suvarna.

SUDARSHANĀ. Is that Suvarna? Are you quite certain?

SURANGAMA. Yes, I know him well.

SUDARSHANĀ. Can it be that it is this man I saw

the other day? No, no,—I saw something mingled and transfused and blended with light and darkness, with wind and perfume. No, no, it cannot be he; that is not he.

SURANGAMA. But everyone admits that he is exceedingly beautiful to look at.

SUDARSHANĀ. How could *that* beauty fascinate me? Oh, what shall I do to purge my eyes of their pollution?

SURANGAMA. You will have to wash them in that bottomless darkness.

SUDARSHANĀ. But tell me, Surangama, why does one make such mistakes?

SURANGAMA. Mistakes are but the preludes to their own destruction.

A MESSENGER. [*Entering.*] Princess, the kings are waiting for you in the hall. [*He goes out.*]

SUDARSHANĀ. Surangama, bring me the veil. [*SURANGAMA goes out.*] O King, my only King! You have left me alone, and you have been but just in doing so. But will you not know the inmost truth within my soul? [*She takes out a dagger from within her bosom.*] This body of mine has received a stain. I shall make a sacrifice of it to-day in the dust of the hall, before all these princes! But shall I never be able to tell you that I know of no stain of faithlessness within the hidden chambers of my heart? That dark chamber where you would come to meet me lies cold and empty within my bosom to-day—but, O my Lord! none has opened its doors, none has entered it but you, O King! Will you never come again to open those doors? Then, let death come, for it is dark like yourself, and its features are beautiful as yours. It is you—it is yourself, O King!

XV.

[*The Gathering of the Princes.*]

VIDARBHA. King of Kanchi, how is it that you have not got a single piece of ornament on your person?

KANCHI. Because I entertain no hopes at all, my friend. Ornaments would but double the shame of my defeat.

KALINGA. But your umbrella-bearer seems to have made up for that; he is loaded with gold and jewelry all over.

VIRAT. The King of Kanchi wants to demonstrate the futility and inferiority of outer beauty and grandeur. Vanity of his prowess has made him discard all outer embellishments from his limbs.

KOSHALA. I am quite up to his trickery; he is seeking to prove his own dignity, maintaining a severe plainness among the bejeweled princes.

PANCHALA. I cannot commend his wisdom in this matter. Everyone knows that a woman's eyes are like a moth—they fling themselves headlong on the glare and glitter of jewel and gold.

KALINGA. But how long shall we have to wait more?

KANCHI. Do not grow impatient, King of Kalinga—sweet are the fruits of delay.

KOSHALA. Kanchi, did you feel as if something shook your seat just now? Is it an earthquake?

KANCHI. Earthquake? I do not know?

VIDARBHA. I cannot regard this as a very auspicious omen.

KANCHI. Everything looks inauspicious to the eye of fear.

VIDARBHA. I fear none except Fate, before which courage or heroism is as futile as it is absurd.

PANCHALA. Vidarbha, do not darken to-day's happy proceedings with your unwelcome prognostications.

KANCHI. I never take the unseen into account till it has become seen.

VIDARBHA. But then it might be too late to do anything.

KALINGA. Isn't that a music somewhere outside?

PANCHALA. Yes, it sounds like music, sure enough.

KANCHI. Then at last it must be the Queen Sudarshanā who is approaching near. [*Aside to SUVARNA.*] Suvarna, you must not hide and cower behind me like that. Mind, the umbrella in your hand is shaking!

[GRANDFATHER, *dressed as a warrior, enters.*]

KALINGA. Who is that? Who are you?

PANCHALA. Who is this that dares to enter this hall unbidden?

VIRAT. Amazing impudence! Kalinga, just prevent the fellow from advancing further.

KALINGA. You are all my superiors in age; you are fitter to do that than myself.

VIDARBHA. Let us hear what he has to say.

GRANDFATHER. The king has come.

VIDARBHA. [*Starting.*] King?

PANCHALA. Which king?

KALINGA. Where does he come from?

GRANDFATHER. My king!

VIRAT. Your king?

KALINGA. Who is he?

KOSHALA. What do you mean?

GRANDFATHER. You all know whom I mean. He has come.



VIDARBHA. He has come?

KOSHALA. With what intention?

GRANDFATHER. He has summoned you all to come to him.

KANCHI. Summoned us, indeed? In what terms has he been pleased to summon us?

GRANDFATHER. You can take his call in any way you like; there is none to prevent you. He is prepared to make all kinds of welcome to suit your various tastes.

VIRAT. But who are you?

GRANDFATHER. I am one of his generals.

KANCHI. General? It is a lie! Do you think of frightening us? Do you imagine that I cannot see through your disguise? We all know you well—and you pose as a general before us!

GRANDFATHER. You have recognized me to perfection. Who is so unworthy as I to bear my king's commands? And yet it is he who has invested me with these robes of a general and sent me here; he has chosen me before greater generals and mightier warriors.

KANCHI. All right; we shall observe the proprieties and amenities on a fitting occasion—but at present we are in the midst of a pressing engagement. He will have to wait till this little function is over.

GRANDFATHER. When he sends out his call he does not wait.

KOSHALA. I shall obey his call; I am going at once.

VIDARBHA. Kanchi, I cannot agree with you in your proposal to wait till this function is over. I am going.

KALINGA. You are older than I am—I shall follow you.

PANCHALA. Look behind you, Prince of Kanchi;

your regal umbrella is lying in the dust; you have not noticed that your umbrella-holder has stolen away.

KANCHI. All right, General. I, too, am going,—but not to do him homage. I go to fight him on the battle-ground.

GRANDFATHER. You will meet my king in the field of battle; that is no mean place for your reception.

VIRAT. Look here, friends, perhaps we are all flying before an imagined terror—it looks as if the King of Kanchi will have the best of it.

PANCHALA. Possibly. When the fruit is so near the hand, it is cowardly and foolish to go away without plucking it.

KALINGA. It is better to join the King of Kanchi. He cannot be without a definite plan and purpose when he is doing and daring so much.

## XVI.

[SUDARSHANĀ and SURANGAMA.]

SUDARSHANĀ. The fight is now over. When will the king come?

SURANGAMA. I do not know myself. I also am looking forward to his coming.

SUDARSHANĀ. I feel such a throb of joy, Surangama, that my breast is positively aching. But I am dying with shame, too; how shall I show my face to him?

SURANGAMA. Go to him in utmost humility and resignation, and all shame will vanish in a moment.

SUDARSHANĀ. I cannot help confessing that I have met with my utmost defeat for all the rest of my life. But pride made me claim the largest share in his love so long. Everyone used to say I had such wonderful beauty, such graces and virtues; every-

one used to say that the king showed unlimited kindness towards me—this is what makes it difficult for me to bend my heart in humility before him.

SURANGAMA. This difficulty, my Queen, will pass off.

SUDARSHANĀ. Oh, yes, it will pass. The day has arrived for me to humble myself before the whole world. But why does not the king come to take me back? What more is he waiting for?

SURANGAMA. Have I not told you my king is cruel and hard—very hard, indeed?

SUDARSHANĀ. Go out, Surangama, and bring me news of him.

SURANGAMA. I do not know where I should go to get news of him. I have asked Grandfather to come; perhaps when he comes, we shall hear something from him.

SUDARSHANĀ. Alack, my evil fate! I have been reduced to asking others to hear about my own king!

[GRANDFATHER *enters.*]

SUDARSHANĀ. I have heard that you are my king's friend. Give me good news. Tell me when the king is coming to take me back.

GRANDFATHER. You ask me a hard question, indeed! I hardly understand yet the ways of my friend. The battle is over, but no one can tell where he is gone.

SUDARSHANĀ. Is he gone away, then?

GRANDFATHER. I cannot find any trace of him here.

SUDARSHANĀ. Has he gone? And do you call such a person your friend?

GRANDFATHER. That is why he gets people's abuse as well as suspicion. But my king simply does not mind it in the least.

SUDARSHANĀ. Has he gone away? Oh, oh, how hard, how cruel, how cruel! He is made of stone; he is hard as adamant! I tried to move him with my own bosom—my breast is torn and bleeding—but him I could not move an inch! Grandfather, tell me, how can you manage with such a friend?

GRANDFATHER. I have known him now—I have known him through my griefs and joys—he can make me weep no more now.

SUDARSHANĀ. Will he not let me know him also?

GRANDFATHER. Why, he will, of course. Nothing else will satisfy him.

SUDARSHANĀ. Very well, I shall see how hard he can be! I shall stay here near the window, without saying a word; I shall not move an inch; let me see if he will not come!

GRANDFATHER. You are young still—you can afford to wait for him; but to me, an old man, a moment's loss is a week. I must set out to seek him whether I succeed or not. [*He goes out.*]

SUDARSHANĀ. I do not want him—I will not seek him! Surangama, I have no need of your king! Why did he fight with the princes? Was it for me at all? Did he want to show off his prowess and strength? Go away from here—I cannot bear your sight. He has humbled me to the dust, and is not satisfied still!

## XVII.

[*A band of citizens.*]

FIRST CITIZEN. When so many kings met together, we thought we were going to have some big fun; but somehow everything took such a turn that nobody knows what happened at all!

SECOND CITIZEN. Did you not see? They could

not come to an agreement among themselves; everyone distrusted everyone else.

THIRD CITIZEN. None kept to the original plans: one wanted to advance; another thought it better policy to recede; some went to the right; others made a rush to the left; how can you call that a fight?

FIRST CITIZEN. They had no eye to real fighting; each had his eyes on the others.

SECOND CITIZEN. Each was thinking, "Why should I die to enable others to reap the harvest?"

THIRD CITIZEN. But you must all admit that Kanchi fought like a real hero.

FIRST CITIZEN. He for a long time after his defeat seemed loath to acknowledge himself beaten.

SECOND CITIZEN. He was at last fixed in the chest by a deadly missile.

THIRD CITIZEN. But before that he did not seem to realize that he had been losing ground at every step.

FIRST CITIZEN. As for the other kings—well, nobody knows where they fled, leaving poor Kanchi alone in the field.

SECOND CITIZEN. But I have heard that he is not dead yet.

THIRD CITIZEN. No, the physicians have saved him—but he will carry the mark of his defeat on his breast till his dying day.

FIRST CITIZEN. None of the other kings who fled has escaped; they have all been taken prisoners. But what sort of justice is this that was meted out to them?

SECOND CITIZEN. I heard that everyone was punished except Kanchi, whom the judge placed on his right on the throne of justice, putting a crown on his head.

THIRD CITIZEN. This beats all mystery hollow.

SECOND CITIZEN. This sort of justice, to speak frankly, strikes us as fantastic and capricious.

FIRST CITIZEN. Just so. The greatest offender is certainly the King of Kanchi; as for the others, greed of gain now pressed them to advance, now to draw back in fear.

THIRD CITIZEN. What kind of justice is this, I ask? It is as if the tiger got scot-free, while his tail got cut off.

SECOND CITIZEN. If I were the judge, do you think Kanchi would be whole and sound at this hour? There would be nothing left of him altogether.

THIRD CITIZEN. They are great, high justices, my friends; their brains are of a different stamp from ours.

FIRST CITIZEN. Have they any brains at all I wonder? They simply indulge their sweet whims as there is none to say anything to them from above.

SECOND CITIZEN. Whatever you may say, if we had the governing power in our hands we should certainly have carried on the government much better than this.

THIRD CITIZEN. Can there be any real doubts about that? That of course goes without saying.

## XVIII.

[*A Road at Night.*]

[SUDARSHANĀ and SURANGAMA.]

SUDARSHANĀ. What a relief, Surangama, what freedom! It is my defeat that has brought me freedom. O what an iron pride was mine! Nothing could move it or soften it. My darkened mind could not in any way be brought to see the plain truth that

it was not the king who was to come; it was I who ought to have gone to him. All through yesternight I lay alone on the dusty floor before that window—lay there through the desolate hours and wept! All night the southern winds blew and shrieked and moaned like the pain that was biting at my heart; and all through it I heard the plaintive “Speak, bride!” of the nightbird echoing in the tumult outside! . . . It was the helpless wail of the dark night, Surangama!

SURANGAMA. Last night’s heavy and melancholy air seemed to hang on for an eternity—oh, what a dismal and gloomy night!

SUDARSHANĀ. But would you believe it—I seemed to hear the soft strains of the *vinā* floating through all that wild din and tumult! Could he play such sweet and tender tunes, he who is so cruel and terrible? The world knows only my indignity; but none but my own heart could hear those strains that called me through the lone and wailing night. Did you too, Surangama, hear that *vinā*? Or was that but a dream of mine?

SURANGAMA. But it is just to hear that same *vinā*’s music that I am always by your side. It is for this call of music, which I knew would one day come to dissolve all the barriers of love, that I have all along been listening with an eager ear.

SUDARSHANĀ. He did at last send me on the open road—I could not withstand his will. When I find him, the first words that I shall tell him will be, “I have come of my own will—I have not awaited your coming.” I shall say, “For your sake have I trodden the hard and weary roads, and bitter and ceaseless has been my weeping all the way.” I shall at least have this pride in me when I meet him.

SURANGAMA. But even that pride will not last. He

came before you did; who else could have sent you on the road?

SUDARSHANĀ. Perhaps he did. As long as a sense of offended pride remained with me, I could not help thinking that he had left me for good; but when I flung my dignity and pride to the winds and came out on the common streets, then it seemed to me that he too had come out: I have been finding him since the moment I was on the road. I have no misgivings now. All this suffering that I have gone through for his sake, the very bitterness of all this is giving me his company. Ah, yes, he has come; he has held me by the hand, just as he used to do in that chamber of darkness, when, at his touch, all my body would start with a sudden thrill: it is the same, the same touch again! Who says that he is not here?—Surangama, can you not see that he has come, in silence and secret? . . . Who is that there? Look, Surangama, there is a third traveller of this dark road at this hour of the night.

SURANGAMA. I see. It is the King of Kanchi, my Queen.

SUDARSHANĀ. King of Kanchi!

SURANGAMA. Don't be afraid, my Queen!

SUDARSHANĀ. Afraid! Why should I be afraid? The days of fear are gone forever for me.

KANCHI. [*Entering.*] Queen-mother, I see you two on this road! I am a traveller of the same path as yourself. Have no fear of me, O Queen!

SUDARSHANĀ. It is well, King of Kanchi, that we should be going together, side by side—this is but right. I came on your way when I first left my home, and now I meet you again on my way back. Who could have dreamed that this meeting of ours would augur so well?

KANCHI. But, Queen-mother, it is not meet that



you should walk over this road on foot. Will you permit me to get a chariot for you?

SUDARSHANĀ. Oh, do not say so: I shall never be happy if I could not on my way back home tread on the dust of the road that led me away from my king. I would be deceiving myself if I were now to go in a chariot.

SURANGAMA. King, you too are walking in the dust to-day: this road has never known anybody driving his horse or chariot over it.

SUDARSHANĀ. When I was the queen, I stepped over silver and gold. I shall have now to atone for the evil fortune of my birth by walking over dust and bare earth. I could not have dreamed that thus I would meet my king of common earth and dust at every step of mine to-day.

SURANGAMA. Look, my Queen, there on the eastern horizon comes the dawn. We have not long to walk: I see the spires of the golden turrets of the king's palace.

[GRANDFATHER *enters.*]

GRANDFATHER. My child, it is dawn—at last!

SUDARSHANĀ. Your benedictions have given me godspeed, and here I am, at last.

GRANDFATHER. But do you see how ill-mannered our king is? He has sent no chariot, no music band, nothing splendid or grand.

SUDARSHANĀ. Nothing grand, did you say? Look, the sky is rosy and crimson from end to end; the air is full of the welcome of the scent of flowers.

GRANDFATHER. Yes, but however cruel our king may be, we cannot help feeling pain at seeing you in this state, my child. How can we bear to see you going to the king's palace attired in this poor and wretched attire? Wait a little—I am running to fetch you your queen's garments.

SUDARSHANĀ. Oh, no, no, no! He has taken away those regal robes from me forever—he has attired me in a servant's dress before the eyes of the whole world; what a relief this has been to me! I am his servant now, no longer his queen. To-day I stand at the feet of all those who can claim any relationship with him.

GRANDFATHER. But your enemies will laugh at you now; how can you bear their derision?

SUDARSHANĀ. Let their laughter and derision be immortal—let them throw dust at me in the streets; this dust will to-day be the powder with which I shall deck myself before meeting my lord.

GRANDFATHER. After this, we shall say nothing. Now let us play the last game of our spring festival—instead of the pollen of flowers let the south breeze blow and scatter dust of lowliness in every direction! We shall go to the lord clad in the common grey of the dust. And we shall find him, too, covered with dust all over. For do you think the people spare him? Even he cannot escape from their soiled and dusty hands, and he does not care even to brush the dirt off his garments.

KANCHI. Grandfather, do not forget me in this game of yours! I also will have to get this royal garment of mine soiled till it is beyond all recognition.

GRANDFATHER. That will not take long, my brother. Now that you have come down so far—you will change your color in no time. Just look at our queen—she got into a temper with herself and thought that she could spoil her matchless beauty by flinging away all her ornaments; but this insult to her beauty has made it shine forth in tenfold radiance, and now it is in its unadorned perfection. We hear that our king is all innocent of beauty—that is why he loves

all this manifold beauty of form which shines as the very ornament of his breast. And that beauty has to-day taken off its veil and cloak and vanity! What would I not give to be allowed to hear the wonderful music and song that has filled my king's palace to-day!

SURANGAMA. Lo, there rises the sun!

XIX.

[*The Dark Chamber.*]

SUDARSHANĀ. Lord, do not give me back the honor which you once did turn away from me! I am the servant of your feet. I seek only the privilege of serving you.

KING. Will you be able to bear me now?

SUDARSHANĀ. Oh, yes, yes, I shall. Your sight repelled me because I had sought to find you in the pleasure garden, in my queen's chambers; there even your meanest servant looks handsomer than you. That fever of longing has left my eyes forever. You are not beautiful, my lord—you stand beyond all comparisons!

KING. That which can be comparable with me lies within yourself.

SUDARSHANĀ. If this be so, then that too is beyond comparison. Your love lives in me—you are mirrored in that love, and you see your face reflected in me; nothing of this is mine; it is all yours, O Lord!

KING. I open the doors of this dark room to-day—the game is finished here! Come, come with me now, come outside—*into the light!*

SUDARSHANĀ. Before I go, let me bow at the feet of my lord of darkness, my cruel, my terrible, my peerless one!

## AMERICAN DRAMATIC CRITICISM

*Studies in Stagecraft*, by Clayton Hamilton  
Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1914

Some years ago, Sir William Harcourt startled all England with the complacent announcement, "We are all Socialists now." This comprehensive pronouncement did not meet with universal acceptance. For there were many people, even many Socialists, who denied the right of anyone else to stand sponsor for their politics. They preferred to speak for themselves—to pronounce their unalterable opposition to Socialism, or to elucidate the shades and gradations of Socialistic feeling or doctrine they represented. No one would have expressed more than mild surprise had Sir William spoken in particularist mood, in behalf of his own individual opinion. People reacted because he indulged in a sweeping generalization, and presumed to speak for a whole race.

The appearance of Mr. Hamilton's second book challenges our attention. Certainly we feel the inevitable interest in the second book of an author whose first book has achieved deserved success. At the same time we instinctively wonder if that same facile tendency to sweeping generalization, against which so many reacted in reading the *Theory of the Theatre*, may not have been somewhat tempered by experience. That convenient fiction of the "Drama of Conversation," from Etherege to Sheridan and beyond, marked, we were told, the period of the disappearance of oratory and set speeches, and the sub-

stitution of rapid repartee for poetic lines; yet it was until the time of Pinero that the oratorical, the theatrical, the manufactured, long-winded speech continued to characterize the drama. The sweeping generalizations on "crowd-psychology," applied to the theatre by Mr. Hamilton, would, if valid, set back the clock of civilization some thousands of years. If it were really true that the "commonplace emotions" hold sway in the theatre, then are we caught in the toils of the demonstrable delusion that the cultivated modern individual relapses atavistically in the theatre. If the contemporary drama means anything, it means the denial of the sweeping generalization that "the crowd evinces little favor for the speculative, the original, the new." If he is speaking of the average theatre audience of to-day, when he says the "crowd"—and he is doing nothing else—surely, he cannot be thinking of Berlin, Munich, Moscow, or even London. In dividing tragedies into three classes, he chooses as a characteristic example of the third class, the modern social drama, Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*. Can he really mean tragedy? Or perhaps does he only mean comedy? The difference is a vital one; and it is essential to note that *An Enemy of the People* is not even a characteristic specimen of the tragi-comedy of to-day, made so notable by other works by Ibsen, by Strindberg, by Wedekind. Nor can we accept the sweeping generalization that the drama is a "function" of the playhouse, in the sense of being determined by its structural limitations. The drama is not a "by-product of the physical exigencies of the theatre," as some one has extravagantly phrased it; surely it is a creative art, conditioned, not determined, by the media of expression and exposition which it employs. The modern American spirit of

utilitarianism, the contemporary scientific habit of attributing disproportionate weight to the influence of environment in the shaping of creative and life-forms, has given to our dramatic criticism the color of theatric criticism. The line of cleavage is succinctly illustrated in a signal instance: the disappearance of the soliloquy. Those who hold that the drama is essentially a creative art, subject to limitations within which the dramatist must work, maintain, as I have several times affirmed, that it was Ibsen who in 1869 gave the death-blow to the soliloquy; and that this decisive stroke was a natural consequence of the pressure of realism in all modern art, entirely irrelevant to the mechanical paraphernalia of the theatre. The school of which Mr. Hamilton is a talented representative maintains that Edison, with his invention of the incandescent bulb, and not Ibsen gave the death-blow to the soliloquy. The consideration that Ibsen antedates Edison by a quarter of a century or less is a fact apparently without bearing or even standing in the discussion.

It is the theatre, with its mechanism and its properties, and the drama on its technical side, in which Mr. Hamilton seems primarily to be interested. The very titles of his books are eloquent: *The Theory of the Theatre, Studies in Stagecraft*. The theatre and stagecraft, these are assuredly the two subjects which are uppermost with the author in all his critical work. Coupled with this characteristic is the tendency to broad generalization, which marks his critical writing. This trait is partly temperamental, beyond doubt; but at the same time it must be recognized that the materials of which Mr. Hamilton's books are for the most part composed are "determined" by the circumstances of their original appearance in print. Each month, with keen pleasure

and genuine interest, we read in *The Bookman* and in *Vogue*, for example, articles by Mr. Hamilton on the drama of the month, built after the familiar pattern brought into fashion by Mr. Frederick Taber Cooper in his treatment of current fiction. First comes a well-phrased generalization, neatly expounded, on some phase of the theatre or of the drama; this is followed by sketchy descriptive commentary upon a number of current plays which, more or less accurately, illustrate the original generalization. No one in the United States accomplishes this task so successfully as does Mr. Hamilton. Yet it must be recognized that his books, in considerable measure made up of such generalized statements, exhibit the defects of their qualities.

The critical work of Mr. Hamilton is a significant illustration of the tendency of modern criticism of the drama. The day of the closet drama is forever past. Plays nowadays are judged primarily according to one unalterable criterion: successful stage production. This strain of appreciation of the topically successful, of depreciation of the topically unsuccessful, in the theatre, is the leading motive of Mr. Hamilton's criticism. Along with this tendency goes the cognate tendency of ignoring all drama which he himself has not seen produced. Nor is it possible to evade the conclusion that Mr. Hamilton is more interested in the drama as material for the theatre than in the drama as the creative manifestation of the human spirit. In the chapter on "The Function of Dramatic Criticism," he makes an eloquent plea for dramatic criticism of the first rank, in the United States—catholic in taste, sympathetic in tone, constructive in spirit. At the same time, we observe that the intellectual content, the social trend, the philosophical bias of contemporary dramatic art

largely escapes his own consideration. The critic, he pertinently observes, must be "cognizant of life"; and the critical work of Shaw, of Archer, of Walkley, to which he accords discriminating praise, achieved eminence by very reason of that parallel life-interpretation which we are accustomed to term organized knowledge. It is precisely in this respect that Mr. Hamilton's criticism is most signally deficient. The three cardinal tests of a play are intellectual and emotional content, literary form, and technic. The deeper implications of the movement of ideas in our time, the philosophical basis of contemporary dramatic art, conspicuously representative of the thinking of to-day—for these Mr. Hamilton displays but slight concern. Nor does he lay stress, in just proportion, upon the literary form and color of the drama; the esthetic of the drama lies, for the most part, outside of the field of his observation. It is technic, stagecraft, which evokes his highest praise and wins his most sustained notice. One thing the American dramatist needs is contact with "constructive" criticism which emphasizes the importance of faultless technic, of impeccable craftsmanship. Yet there is one thing which the American dramatist needs still more: it is that larger constructive criticism which emphasizes the necessity for thought in the creation of the drama of to-day. The lack of ideas, the deficiency in intellectual content, in the American drama—these have proved to be far more effective in retarding the progress of the American drama than inexpertness in stagecraft, weakness in technic. The pregnant saying of Shaw, with reference to his *Saturday Review* dramatic criticism, fully elucidates the entire position: "My real aim is to widen the horizon of the critic, especially of the dramatic critic, whose



habit at present is to bring a large experience of stage life to bear on a scanty experience of real life, although it is certain that all really fruitful criticism of the drama must bring a wide and practical knowledge of real life to bear on the stage."

Having now indulged myself in those easy generalizations for which I have been so illogical as to take Mr. Hamilton to task, I may pay belated tribute to the many high qualities which give his criticism both high interest and genuine distinction. Nor can I let slip the opportunity to make clear this one point: it is just because Mr. Hamilton's criticism is so uniformly excellent in quality, so continuously interesting in presentation, that we would all wish to see it still more catholic in taste, sympathetic in tone, constructive in spirit. With a delicate perception of literary values, a masterly comprehension of stagecraft and technic, a style both pliant and distinguished, he achieves a dramatic commentary upon the contemporary drama uniform for high excellence and elevated standards. And his new book, in certain chapters, reveals a growing maturity of judgment and a steadily widening horizon. If there is, of necessity, much of repetition in his books, much resumption of familiar generalities, much bandying about of truisms, there are, notably in the new volume, certain finely conceived and ably wrought studies of modern dramatic and theatric phenomena. The chapters entitled, respectively, "The Pictorial Stage," "The Undramatic Drama," "The Irish National Theatre," "The Art of the Moving-Picture Play," are broad-voiced studies of certain significant developments of to-day in the art of the theatre and of the drama. The fine work of Mr. George Middleton, in the genre of the one-act play, for example, makes peculiarly pertinent the chapter on "The

One-Act Play in America," with its plea for a theatrical policy that shall "call our latent talent into active exercise." Especially suggestive, too, is the chapter on "Organizing an Audience," with particular reference to the pioneer experimental efforts in this direction now being instituted under expert supervision by the Drama League of America. A work entirely made up of such essays as those mentioned by title would have a value far beyond that of the present volume. Mr. Hamilton's best work is of so fine a texture, so popular in the proper sense of the term, that we have the right to hope that his next published book may be entirely, not fragmentarily, representative of that best work.

ARCHIBALD HENDERSON.

## THE SPANISH STAGE



THE Renaissance epoch of the Spanish stage commences about the middle of the nineteenth century, after a long period (more than twenty years) during which it was almost completely given over to the invasion of French Romanticism. In this Romantic period, precursor of the Renaissance epoch referred to, several authors had appeared who achieved considerable fame with dramatic works of extraordinary success, such as Garcia Gutierrez, author of *El Trovador*; Gil y Zarate, author of *Carlos II el Hechizado* (Charles II, the Bewitched), and José Zorrilla, author of *Don Juan Tenorio*. On the first night of *El Trovador*, the success of which was instantaneous and immense, occurred positively the first known case of an author being called for by the public and applauded at the end of the representation. The representations of *Carlos II el Hechizado* gave rise in almost all the theatres throughout the Peninsula to noisy popular manifestations against the monks. In many cities, amongst them Sarra-gossa, the police actually had to interfere to prevent the public, incensed against a certain monk—one of the principal personages of the work—from mounting the stage and wreaking summary vengeance upon the actor who played the part. With respect to *Don Juan Tenorio*, the immortal production of José Zorrilla, time has proved powerless to dim its fame, for in spite of the years which have passed since it first saw the light, it is still represented

yearly in almost all the theatres in Spain during the first few days of November. The *motif* of this drama is hardly original, for besides being based upon an old legend, it has been repeatedly treated dramatically by bygone authors; but the elegance of the language and the brilliance of the poetic lines put into the mouths of the different personages are qualities which seem to endow this popular drama with eternal youth.

To the names of the three famous dramatists of the Romantic period must be added that of another excellent Spanish author, Manuel Breton de los Herberos, who possessed the additional merit of not allowing himself to be carried away by the prevailing impetuous current of Romanticism proceeding from France. His art was purely Spanish, cultivating as he did humorous works with great success, his principal comedies being *El Pelo de la Dehesa* (Rusticity), *Marcelo; o, Cual de los Tres* (Marcela; or, Which of the Three), *Muere y Veras* (Die and You'll See). In our opinion, the last is the finest of his numerous comedies. Manuel Breton de los Herberos, although almost always original in his work, possesses as an author a certain likeness to the French comedy writer, Labiche.

The Renaissance period in the Spanish theatre, which, as has been previously indicated, commenced about the middle of the nineteenth century, was principally due to a new author, who, by uniting a sobriety in good modern taste and correctness of appreciation of social customs and contemporary problems to the purity of diction of the classic authors—Calderon, Lope de Vega, Rojas, Olarcon, and Tirso de Molina—gave the Spanish stage a real new lease on life. The young author in question, who came to Madrid from Extremadura, was Adelardo Lopez

de Ayala. His work *El Tanto Por Ciento* (So Much Per Cent) created a deep impression. It is a pure comedy, in which the different personages are limited neither by the air they breathe nor by the uses and customs of Castille: they live not the simple Spanish life depicted in the comedies of the authors who preceded Lopez de Ayala, but are personages of wider views, who have breathed the air of the great world without, who talk of their business and affairs of universal interest with as much zest as could be found in the most advanced country in Europe. All saw in *El Tanto Por Ciento* a model comedy, destined to serve as a base and provide an orientation in the work of creating a new Spanish Theatre, the necessity of which was beginning to be felt, but for which no other author had provided an appropriate formula. *El Tanto Por Ciento* was produced at the Teatro del Principe, now Teatro Español. Its author became the object of tremendous ovations and for the first time in the history of the theatre's management it became necessary to break through the long-established tradition of bringing the season to a close on the thirty-first of May. Such was the desire of the Madrid public to see the work, that the theatre was kept open for an additional month, and the final run of the piece exceeded in number of representations those of any work known here.

Two other comedies by Lopez de Ayala, both excellent and models of their class, are *El Tejado de Vidrio* (The Glass Roof) and *El Nuevo Don Juan* (The New Don Juan). But next to *El Tanto Por Ciento*, the work which reaped most applause, and with which he obtained the greatest success, was undoubtedly *Consuelo*, the last which this really glorious author wrote before his death. In our opinion,

*Consuelo* is superior to *El Tanto Por Ciento*; it is more artistic, more perfect, and possesses greater depth, the natural product of the author's maturity, whilst *El Tanto Por Ciento* was the work of a comparative youth.

Another author who largely contributed to the Renaissance of our theatre was Garcia Gutierrez—the author of *El Trovador*—who, after an absence of years in America, again took up his pen with fresh vigor and mettle. A complete evolution had taken place in him, for, freed from the old Romantic influence, he reappeared almost as a new author, with his taste and art admirably refined and modernized.

The success of his historic drama *Venganza Catalona* (Catalonian Vengeance) was hardly less than that obtained by *El Tanto Por Ciento*. In *Venganza Catalona*, Gutierrez staged the glorious expedition of the Cataloneans and Aragonese to the Orient, captained by Berenguer and Roger de Flor. On our public's witnessing that heroic adventure placed in scene, accompanied by a theatrical interest of the first class, with really masterly dramatic situations, the fortunate author was made the object of a continuous apotheosis of applause in Madrid, Barcelona, and Sarragossa, a meritorious tribute of appreciation which lasted nearly two years, during which *Venganza Catalona* pursued a victorious progress through all the theatres in the Peninsula.

The success attending another work by the same author, *Juan Lorenzo*, although perhaps less spontaneous, was nevertheless brilliant. This was another historical work, a drama consecrated to the defense of popular liberties, in which Garcia Gutierrez depicted the rancorous strife of the Germanias in Valencia.

Next to Lopez de Ayala and Garcia Gutierrez, the

most notable writers of that epoch, so rich and prosperous for our stage, were Manuel Zamayo y Baus, Luis de Eguilaz, and Narciso Serra.

The principal dramatic production of Zamayo y Baus, and that which undoubtedly achieved greater success than his other theatrical works, was *Un Drama Nuevo* (A New Drama), where the author thrills the spectator with horror by cleverly feigning the actual death of one of the actors who had to simulate assassination by a sword thrust. The spectators rise in their seats dumbfounded, believing themselves in the presence of a corpse. Only when they recognize that the *affaire* was not really mortal, and that the representation for that reason has not suffered interruption, being only the natural denouement of the drama, do they become aware of the original nature of the work and break out in applause, acclaiming the author with enthusiasm. Another huge success of Zamayo y Baus was *La Bola de Nieve* (The Snowball), a model of ingenious comedy, perfect, healthy, and of captivating interest. This author wrote several works for the theatre, but the two cited are his best, and had he written no others, he would still be worthy to figure in the first line amongst the most famous Spanish authors of the past century.

Luis de Eguilaz established his claims to authorship with a magnificent comedy of manners and customs, entitled *Verdades Amargas* (Bitter Truths). He is a keen, observant critic of the life of our *petite bourgeoisie*. Without possessing the elevating spirit of Lopez de Ayala, he approaches realism as nearly as possible, seeking emotion in the every-day family life and incidents which many would judge of little import. Luis de Eguilaz was in his epoch one of the authors who drew the largest audiences. He was also

the favorite author of that incomparable artist, Julian Romea, the greatest, the most finished, the most flexible, and probably the most genial of the actors Spain has produced. In Eguilaz' comedy *Los Soldados de Plomo* (Lead Soldiers), produced by Julian Romea in the Teatro del Principe, and one of the biggest theatrical successes of which record exists, that wonderful actor, unequaled even yet by any other Spanish artists, was to be seen at his best, at the height of an art which must be considered prodigious.

Another of the principal and perhaps more lasting successes of Eguilaz was a musical comedy, entitled *El Molinero de Subiza* (The Miller of Subiza), with music by the composer Oudrid. Eguilaz was inclined to be careless and even slightly vulgar in the outward form, but in the main, his knowledge of audiences was such, and his capacity to go direct to the heart of the spectator so great, that he was rarely, if ever, mistaken. He possessed, as no one else did, the great gift of stagecraft, the theatrical sense, so to speak. Thus it came about that actors and managers clamored for his works, which, although incorrect and superficial, were undoubtedly original, and, moreover, of an interest at once palpitating and human.

Narciso Serra was a military man, crippled, half paralytic, and almost continually bedridden, who contrived to obtain distraction amidst such sad surroundings by writing works of a comic character. He possessed, according to the unanimous judgment of Spanish critics, "the difficult facility of Breton delos Herreros" for amusing the public with his situations, brimful of sparkling wit and with jokes which never failed to provoke the spectator's hilarity. The brothers Alvarez Quintero, to-day his natural suc-



cessors in this kind of scenic literature, have never been able to equal him either in the lively character of his dialogue or the spontaneous nature of his jokes. Amongst the funniest and most popular of his works must be cited *Don Tomás*, in three acts; *El Ultimo Moro* (The Last of the Moors), in one act, and *A la Puerta del Cuartel* (At the Barracks' Door), also in one act. Breton delos Herreros and Narciso Serra were the two best comic authors Spain produced during the nineteenth century.

In the times of Narciso Serra, there lived an actress who interpreted admirably his comedies, slight of figure, naturally witty, by name Pepita Hijosa. Serra's comedies, interpreted by Pepita Hijosa, occupied the play-bill for an eternity. She was undoubtedly the finest comedienne we have had in Spain. Her equal has not been and probably will not be known here.

This vigorous movement of the renovation of the Spanish stage reached its climax in the years 1860-1867, and was not limited to theatres producing comedy and drama, but extended equally to those which cultivated the lyric art under the form of musical comedy (*Zarzuela*).

This *Zarzuela* is a genus of theatrical art which combines what is known in Italy as *opereta* with the French *opera comique*. In *Zarzuela*, as in *operetta*, the music alternates with spoken lines. In *Zarzuela*, as in French comic opera, humorous incidents are interlarded with affairs of a serious character.

The name *Zarzuela* comes from a place of that name situated in the Royal possessions at El Pardo, near Madrid, and in that pretty little spot there once existed a palace in which the kings of Spain were wont in older days to hold high feast and revelry, entertaining the ambassadors, the aristocracy, and

the court with theatrical representations. And since it was in the theatre of this Royal Palace of Zarzuela that scenic work of this class was first produced in Spain, the new genus was styled "a Zarzuela spectacle," and henceforward received the simple name of Zarzuela.

About the middle of the nineteenth century, a theatre was built in Madrid, especially dedicated to the production of Zarzuelas. In this theatre—recently destroyed by fire but reconstructed and reopened this year—to which the name of "Teatro de la Zarzuela" was given, many works of this kind, by Spanish authors and composers, were produced, works which obtained in many cases brilliant successes and achieved immense popularity. Amongst the most notable of Zarzuelas, and that which obtained most fame and material profit to its authors and composers, should be named *Marina*, in two acts, the lyrics by Camprodon and the music by Arrieta. The work of the composer is infinitely the superior of the two. So great was the triumph achieved by Arrieta in this work, that it was afterwards converted into a three-act opera, and was transferred to the Madrid Opera House (Teatro Real), where the leading part was admirably rendered by the celebrator tenor Tamberlick, amidst the clamorous applause of the public. The Zarzuela in three acts, *Pan y Toros*, the book by José Picon and music by the Spanish composer Barbieri, was another of the biggest successes recorded in this theatre, and Barbieri, who had already been heard and applauded in a previous work of a similar kind, entitled *Jugar con Fuego* (Playing with Fire), was proclaimed one of our finest composers, the finest, perhaps, with the exception of Arrieta. A new Zarzuela which attained to extraordinary success, *El Barberillo de Lavapiés*

(The Little Barber of Lavapies), with music by the same composer, gave him another triumph hardly inferior to that achieved by *Pan y Toros*. The music of several of these scores is still to be heard throughout Spain, and the epoch of Arrieta and Barbieri must be considered as the golden age of our national Zarzuela. At the very moment these lines are being penned, *Marina* is being presented at the Apolo Theatre, one of the leading Madrid playhouses.

This renovation movement, as much in the dramatic and comedy theatres as in those where Zarzuela was the exclusive production, began a noticeable decline in the year 1867. On the one hand, a series of political disturbances, one of which, in 1866, converted the streets of Madrid into a shambles (after a day's bloody combat, no less than sixty sergeants were shot outside of the walls of the Madrid Park, El Retiro), began to make people shy of venturing forth at night to visit the theatres. The general state of alarm, especially at night, was such that the mere closing of a door or the shutting up of a place of business was sufficient to make people apprehensive that a fresh scene of violence was about to be enacted. Many absolutely shut themselves indoors at night, and consequently the theatres had few patrons. On the other hand, a fresh invasion had fallen upon our stage in the form of the comic opera created by Offenbach in Paris, an invasion which likewise proceeded from France, as had Romanticism. Those who in moments of relative political calm decided to rally forth and visit a theatre went with the intention of seeing the novelty of that day, the gods of Olympus dancing a quadrille to the hasty compass of the music composed by Offenbach for *Orphée aux Enfers*. Offenbach had completely replaced the Spanish composers in the Teatro de la

Zarzuela. The protagonists of the new school were not long in invading the Teatro de Variedades, where the great Julian Romea, now in the ulturia period of his glorious artistic career, had been appearing nightly to two or three dozens of faithful admirers. Arderius and his farcical comedians soon laid siege to the Teatro del Circo, achieving yet another triumph with *La Gran Duquesa de Gerolstein* and *Genoveva de Brabante*, and on Arderius passing to the latter theatre, a light comic opera company was installed in the Teatro del Variedades, with Valles and Leijon as the leading attractions. These latter, with the object of competing with the representatives of the new invasion, divided their soiree entertainments into sections or acts, each independent of the other, reducing the price per seat to fifty centimes of a peseta for each section. In this manner the modern light opera, or "genero chico," as it is generally styled here, was created, and in the very theatre which had been witness of the apotheosis of the never-to-be-forgotten Julian Romea, probably the best actor Spain has had.

As the company managed by Valles and Leijon was good, and the price of their wares highly economical, the Variedades Theatre was the only one which was able to resist the competition of the "opera bouffe" school, now completely in possession of the Circo, the Zarzuela, and the Circo de Rivas. At the Variedades Theatre, about this time, several highly diverting one-act farces by Ricardo de la Vega were produced, amongst them *De Getafe al Paraiso, ó Lu Boda del Tio Maroma*, the success of which was so great that the work appeared upon the play-bill for two successive years. The existence of the remaining declamation theatres became every day more precarious, and the classical Teatro Espa-

ñol itself, frequently empty, now opened its doors only at intervals. Only one dramatic author of note, Marcos Zapata, appeared during this crisis, his historical drama, *La Capilla de Lanuza*, being received with applause, but Marcos Zapata, more than a dramatic author, was a poet of no mean order.

Finally, in the midst of the artistic penury in which the Spanish stage languished, arose José Echegaray, during the theatrical season of 1874-75, with the determination to revolutionize our theatre and win back a public which for too long had strayed along strange paths. Echegaray had already, as it were, spied out the land during the first few months of 1874 by the production of a comedy in one act, signed pseudonymously, a precaution which is easy of explanation when we remember that at the time the author was Minister of Finance. After all, although the case must be considered rare of a Finance Minister figuring amongst the rising authors who lay siege to the actor and to the manager's office, Echegaray strayed very little from the scope of his official capacity, if we take into account the circumstance that his first comedy was christened *El Libro Talonario* (The Stub-Book). The work pleased, and nothing more. That for the moment was Echegaray's only ambition. That production was little more than training exercise, as a sportsman would say. Within a few months he resolutely waged war upon public indifference, which all had now accustomed themselves to consider invincible, a trouble without a remedy. He produced at the Teatro Español a drama entitled *La Esposa del Vengador* (The Revenger's Wife), in which all recognized a work of exceptional vigor and impulse. The author was repeatedly called for and the public filled the theatre during many weeks. Echegaray had accomplished the miracle of winning

back the public and filling the Teatro Español. But to his friends he is reported to have said at that time, with his characteristic smile, "This is hardly sufficient; something better must be aimed at. Something stronger must be employed, *and where powder is useless, the aid of dynamite must be called in.*" In the phrase which appears italicized, Echegaray himself confessed the nature of the procedure which he afterwards employed for winning everybody back to the theatre at any cost, and when the word "everybody" is employed, it must be remembered that Echegaray's public was drawn from all classes of society. High and low, rich and poor, men and women, all flocked to the theatre to applaud him. His success in Spain was, if we may use the term, universal. After the production of *La Esposa del Vengador*, came *En el Puño de la Espada*, presented by a great actor, Antonio Vico—amidst incessant applause at the Apolo Theatre—followed with other works, each one stronger than the preceding—works which, besides causing enthusiasm amongst an ever-increasing public, excited lively discussion amongst the critics. Echegaray's triumph acquired enormous, colossal proportions, and the discussion between critics reached a great height and almost degenerated into a personal question—since some condemned the procedure by which the author produced his effects, whilst others applauded his having endowed the Spanish stage with a new long lease of life. This coincided with the production at the Teatro Español of *O Locura ó Santidad*, a tragic drama of the taste, style, and spirit of Shakespeare. This, then, was what Echegaray wanted, and what he referred to when he had emphasized the necessity of employing dynamite. After a veritable apotheosis with which an enthusiastic public rewarded his

efforts, the successful author was accompanied through the streets of Madrid by a huge procession of admirers, carrying lighted torches, the demonstration only terminating at an advanced hour of the morning in front of the author's house. The productions of *Como Empieza y Como Acaba*, *La Muerte en los Labios*, and *El Gran Galeoto* were characterized by spontaneous demonstration of a similar character.

In *El Gran Galeoto*, Echegaray achieved the crowning triumph of a long and glorious career of dramatic authorship. The representation of the piece was a continual round of ovation. It is undoubtedly his last work. At the time of writing it, and now during many years in the enjoyment of a success so thorough that the public literally stormed the theatres where his works were produced, Echegaray was no longer preoccupied with the question of attracting people to the theatre, and thus his *El Gran Galeoto* was written with one idea only—that of artistic beauty; one of the most successful and beautiful works of modern Spanish theatrical literature was the result.

In 1904 he was awarded the Nobel prize (jointly with Mistral), and on the eighteenth of March of the same year a solemn official homage was paid him in the Spanish Senate, where King Alfonso, who presided, read a discourse full of praise, other orations being pronounced by the Prime Minister and the Swedish Minister Plenipotentiary. The following day, the feast of San José (Echegaray's name day), a popular manifestation was held in his honor with a gala festival in the Teatro Real, where *El Gran Galeoto* was represented. Echegaray is now eighty-three years of age.

Following Echegaray, the Spanish authors of most

fame are Benito Perez Galdos, Jacinto Benavente, and the brothers Alvarez Quintero. The theatre, however, constitutes only a phase of Galdos' literary career, since he has devoted much more time and work to the writing of novels and to his celebrated collection of National Episodes. In his scenic works *La de San Quintin* and *La Loca de lu Casa*, which are his best comedies, Galdos proposes the creation of the new and future Spanish society by the formation of a mixture between the impoverished and ruined aristocracy and those who become enriched by work in its most rude form and who naturally lack aristocratic lustre. *El Abuelo* is also an excellent comedy by Galdos, of Shakespearian inspiration. But the work which has obtained the greatest success is undoubtedly *Electra*, the production of which is memorable because the liberal elements utilized the occasion to congregate, rising against clerical reaction and more especially against *conventionalism*, since the author in this work found inspiration in a judicial process regarding alleged undue influence exercised upon a young lady well known in Madrid society, with the object of obliging her to embrace a religious life, the trial of which was a theme of general discussion here at the time. The representation of *Electra* and the manifestations during its production, coinciding with Galdos' triumph, received an immediate echo throughout Spain and exercised a powerful influence in political events.

Jacinto Benavente underwent a solid preparation before eventually launching out as a dramatic author. Not only did he study conscientiously the foreign stage for years, up to the point of acquiring a knowledge, the solidity of which has probably been excelled by no one in Spain, but he even became an actor and lived perpetually amidst theatrical sur-



roundings, taking part in the pilgrimages of one and another of those nomadic companies which, as in Shakespeare's times, journeyed from town to village throughout the country.

Thus admirably equipped, he entered the lists with manifest advantages. In one of his first comedies, *El Nido Ageo*—compared with which few works are as bitter—people recognized an author with a great future. His first great success, where he revealed himself as an excellent dramatist and achieved a well-merited triumph, was *Lo Cursi*, one of the most beautiful comedies of our contemporary theatre. But the occasion on which he was universally proclaimed as an author of the first rank, and when, moreover, his triumph was complete, was at the Lara Theatre, in 1905, on the production of his comedy *Los Malhechores del Bien*. The following year and the same theatre witnessed an even more powerful production, that of another two-act comedy, which can only be described as magnificent, entitled *Los Intereses Creados*. From that moment Benavente became in Spain Echegaray's successor, since the latter years ago definitely laid down his pen. Benavente is to-day Spain's first dramatist, the most famous, and undoubtedly occupying the highest position. The fount of his inspiration is Ibsen. Traces can be noted in no mistaken fashion of the influence which the reading of Ibsen has left upon the spirit of Benavente. Amongst his best works must be cited *La Noche del Sábado*, *Por Las Nubes*, and *Señora Aina*.

The Alvarez Quintero brothers are also extremely popular, and, as we have stated previously, are to-day, as comedy authors, the natural successors of Breton de los Herreros and Narciso Serra. Besides the natural graces which permeate their comedies,

the fact that they have succeeded in transplanting in them the light, color, and general atmosphere of Andalusia has contributed in no small measure to their popularity. The brothers are of Andalusian origin, a region of Spain which enjoys the sympathies of all Spaniards, and whose name alone, Andalusia, seems to fill with content all who hear it pronounced. They are not only humorous authors, since they have written works which, without abandoning entirely the festive muse, possess in their *ensemble* a serious idea and a sentimental end. Amongst the principal achievements must be cited *Los Galeotes*, *Las Flores*, *La Zagala*, *El Genio Alegre*, and *Malvaloca*, all of them of great beauty and of an attraction which seduces the spectator. The characteristic note of the brothers Alvarez Quintero is that of always presenting Spanish life in its different phases. Their works possess, therefore, a marked national character which explains the unprecedented success which their comedies have achieved. In the great majority of the theatres throughout Spain the works of these authors are daily represented, never failing to provoke singular mirth amongst the spectators. The most diverting are, perhaps, *El Nido*, *Pepita Reyes*, *La Musa Loca*, *La Buena Sombra*, *La Mala Sombra*, and *La Patria Checa*.

Guimerá and Felin y Codina are two eminent dramatic authors who have achieved successes of the first order on the Spanish stage, the former a real sensation with his superb drama *Tierra Baja*, the favorite work of our great actor Borrás, who has interpreted it throughout Spain and Spanish America for years. The second author achieved a great success with another drama of which audiences are very fond and which profoundly affects them, entitled *La Dolores*. *Tierra Baja* and *La Dolores* have

crossed our European frontier and have been converted into opera. Guimerá's work has been heard in Paris and has been presented in English as *Martha of the Lowlands*; that of Felin y Codina, with music written by our famous composer, Tomás Breton, director of the National Academy of Music in Madrid, after being sung in our own Teatro Real and in the most important lyric theatres in Spain, has recently been heard in Italy and other countries. Another magnificent work by Felin y Codina, a drama entitled *Maria del Carmen*, which was produced by Maria Guerrero in the Teatro Español, enjoys also largely the favor of our public. This impressive work of Murcian manners and customs has also been done into opera and was produced in Paris with great success.

The two last named authors offer a curious contrast. Felin y Codina, now dead, was a Catalonian, but wrote and produced his works in the language of Castille. Guimerá, the author of *Tierra Baja* and *La Reina Joven*, the production of which during the last Madrid season constituted the greatest success in the Teatro Español, always writes and produces his works in the Catalonian dialect, in spite of the fact that he is a Canary-Islander by origin. In order to represent his works in Madrid these had to be translated into pure Spanish.

Marquina, another young author already celebrated for his constant successes, must be regarded as the Spanish Rostand, and writes all his dramas in verse. Their form is always superior to the thought. Cadence and rhyme play a more important part in his work than argument, and it must be admitted that the technical part of his work is somewhat weak. After all, with very few exceptions, this failing is noticeable in all the works written by poets

for the stage. Marquina commenced his brilliant career with a drama entitled *Las Hijas del Cid*, which Maria Guerrero produced at the Teatro Español, and which obtained merely a *Succes d'estime*. Soon he achieved greater triumphs, his most notable dramatic efforts being *En Flandes Se Ha Puesto el Sol* and *Por los Pecados del Rey*, both well applauded. In the first of these works the audience sees the loss of Flandes to the Spanish arms, and in the second witnesses the separation of Portugal. Marquina also wrote and produced an excellent drama, but without historic interest, entitled *Cuando Florezcan los Rosales*. In this work, which was produced by Maria Guerrero during the last season at the Teatro de la Princesa, occurred the contrary to what we have been accustomed to expect from this author in his previous historical dramas, in that the theme of the drama, its general idea and argument, were very superior to the form; and the work received applause for that reason rather than for any inherent beauty in the prose.

As will be seen, therefore, dramatic art in Spain can hardly be considered as decadent; on the contrary, it has been maintained on the same high level established by Echegaray during the second stage of the Renaissance of the Spanish stage inaugurated in 1874-75.

During the long crisis from which our theatre suffered in consequence of the invasión of "opera bouffe" and the frequent disturbances during the Revolution which eventually overthrew the throne of Isabel II, the great majority of the Madrid theatres, whether devoted to comedy or Zarzuela, followed the example set by Variedades,—that is to say, of dividing their evening entertainment into sections or independent acts. In these sections the price of a stall

became reduced to fifty cents of a peseta, and the system evolved the style of "Teatro de genero chico." Only two theatres remained in Madrid faithful to the old regime, which thus got to be styled "genero grande" (the old Zarzuela), which were the Español and Comedia theatres. And since all the others adopted this "genero chico," the fifth part of the authors and composers launched out into writing works of only one act, to suit the new regime. Besides that, a number of people who under less favorable circumstances could never have even dreamed of becoming dramatic authors began to write for the theatre. In a few years these have amongst them accumulated an immense repertory of these short musical comedies or Zarzuelas on a small scale. The great majority of these works are bad. There are, however, amongst them a few written by authors who previously had produced work of a more ambitious character. We must cite the best works of this type: *La Verbena de la Paloma*, with music by Tomás Breton; *El Punas de Rosas*, music by Chape; *El Duo de la Africana*, music by Caballero; *Gigantes y Cabezudos*, and *La Viejecita*, with music by the same composer; *Alma de Dios*, music by Serrano, and *La Revoltosa*, with music by Chape. Our composer Chape, who likewise composed several operas and many Zarzuelas of a serious character, such as *La Tempestad*, *La Bruja*, and *El Trey que Rabio*, is undoubtedly the most inspired and prolific musician Spain has produced since the times of Arrieta and Barbieri.

DR. JULIUS BRONTA.

## THE TOY THEATRE OF BOSTON



THE Toy Theatre of Boston, now bringing to a close its third successful season, is a tiny playhouse seating only one hundred and twenty-seven persons. Until three years ago the place was a stable. A few simple alterations have changed the stable into a most attractive little theatre. A raised stage at one end with the necessary space overhead for the borders and fly-gallery was installed. The remainder of the space was used for the auditorium; the walls were tinted a solid gray, and a pink velvet curtain was placed at the proscenium.

The Toy Theatre owes its existence to Mrs. Lyman Whitman Gale, who conceived the idea for the organization and gathered the workers and who has headed the entire venture since its inception.

In the three short seasons, each consisting of only eight different bills, the Toy has given more than forty-five plays, first productions of the work of native American authors, plays of foreign dramatists never before seen in this country, and the recent pieces of the modern Englishmen. Of these some of the most important have been—Shaw's *Press Cuttings*, *How He Lied to Her Husband*, *The Dark Lady of the Sonnets* and *Getting Married*; Arnold Bennett's *Cupid and Commonsense*; G. K. Chesterton's *Magic*; Josephine Preston Peabody's *Wings*; Percy MacKaye's *Sam Average* and *Chuck*; Cale Young Rice's *A Night in Avignon*; Sudermann's *Das Glück im Winkel* and *Fritzchen*; Schnitzler's *The Literary Sense*; George Middleton's *In His House* and *Madonna*; Strindberg's *Pariah* and *The*

*Stronger*; Guimerá's *Maria Rosa*, which has since gone to the professional stage; Tchekoff's *The Swan Song* and Giacosa's *A Right of Sanctuary*.

The entire work of the theatre has been carried on by amateurs. Between sixty and seventy actors have taken part in the plays each year. Some of these have appeared as often as four times in one season but more than half of them were seen only once during the eight performances. Probably in no other city could be found such a supply of experienced and competent amateur actors. The supply has come from as many as eleven amateur dramatic societies, some of which have been in existence for two generations in and about Boston. The dramatic schools, of which Boston has several, have also provided a number of young aspirants, eager for even a small part on the Toy stage. Not less than eighteen professionals have appeared at the Toy Theatre, giving their services like all the rest.

While the services are given freely by the actors, the work is carried on in a most serious manner. A person found incompetent or unfitted for a part during the rehearsals of a piece is immediately dropped from the cast. Competency has been the one necessary credential, and no other consideration, social or otherwise, has been allowed to weigh in the least for or against a possible candidate. This seriousness of purpose on the part of the producers at the Toy Theatre has speedily developed a conscientiousness and faithfulness on the part of the actors, which has had much to do with the success of this dramatic venture. Only in the most rare cases has a performer shown carelessness, lack of punctuality, or any unmanageable trait. And in these few instances, his name has been immediately removed from the list of available material.

The plays are not all produced by the same person. This plan at once makes for variety in the performances. It is interesting to watch the different methods employed and the results obtained in the finished product. The majority of the plays are prepared in the theatre itself, though on occasion an outside producer imports his entire production for the Toy. Such a case is the recent visit of two actors from the Chicago Little Theatre Company, who brought to Boston a dramatic version of Oscar Wilde's *The Happy Prince* which they had done in Chicago.

While no member of an existing dramatic club has been officially connected with the Toy Theatre, these organizations have been of immense aid in other ways than in supplying actors. They have provided enthusiastic subscribers who were already trained to appreciate something better than second-hand professional plays, worn threadbare up and down the land and then produced by a club in as close imitation of the original professional cast as is possible. Thus the audience is eager to welcome the atmosphere which is created by the union of out-of-the-ordinary plays with unusual settings and acting perfectly adapted to the intimateness of the tiny auditorium. The total effect has been most refreshing to the jaded theatregoer and to the person who has been depressed by the ordinary amateur productions. The accomplishment of the Toy has been unique in that it has, for the most part, brought forward plays which otherwise would not have been seen and in that it has produced these pieces in a manner in which they could scarcely have been produced elsewhere.

When it is remembered that the stage of the Toy is only fifteen feet in width and twenty-three feet in depth, the difficulties of the staging at once become



evident. This is especially so in the case of exteriors demanding perspective. Upon this stage Mr. Livingston Platt worked miracles. The settings have all been designed for the theatre and built and painted in the theatre. Mr. Platt has staged thirty-four plays and several dances and pantomimes in such extraordinary and beautiful fashion, with so much atmosphere and so in keeping with the tone of the pieces that he has obtained professional engagements as a result of his work at the Toy.

The cost of these productions seems very small when the results are considered, but even then the expenses have been out of proportion to the small income of a theatre which seats only one hundred and twenty-seven persons and gives only thirty-two performances each year. Therefore during the present season greater simplicity has been the rule in the accessories of productions. At the close of the second season there were several complete sets of scenery on hand. These have been in part rebuilt and slightly altered, and after repainting have become virtually new sets. Mrs. Gale herself has designed some of the most successful settings of this season. Only recently Mr. Clifford Pember has taken charge of the staging of the plays. Not only has he planned the scenery but he has also painted a large part of it himself, thus attaining a personal touch and great individuality. Quite aside from the question of expense, elaborate staging, however beautiful, is not essential to a satisfactory production of a play when there is an intelligent audience upon which to depend for sympathetic interest. "The play's the thing" is a good motto for any worth-while dramatic undertaking. To throw the attention upon the acting and thus by reflection, at least, upon the play itself is becoming the settled

policy of the Toy Theatre. This in no sense implies that the settings have become crude or unsatisfactory. It means only that settings are being placed in their just position, as one of the means of giving adequate interpretation to the work of the dramatist and not as an end in themselves.

The cramped conditions behind the curtain have not been calculated to promote a rapid change of scene, and partly to overcome the dissatisfaction occasioned by long waits between the acts; a tea-room was provided after the first season. Here the audience may retire during the intermissions to chat and be generally sociable. In preparation for the second season a more complete lighting system was also installed.

For the present, the third season, the price of subscription seats was reduced from twenty dollars to fifteen dollars. This was made possible because there were virtually no alterations to be made in the theatre itself. Also a tiny periodical called "The Crier" was instituted. This little paper goes to the subscribers and to the newspapers two weeks before each performance and carries to them the names of the plays to be included in the next program, the names of the actors who will take part and news of the authors of the pieces and of the theatre. On the Wednesday afternoons of the performance weeks there is always a Toy Theatre tea to which all subscribers are welcomed to meet the authors and the actors and an occasional distinguished visitor in Boston.

In order to increase the scope of the Toy's activities it has become desirable to have a larger home. A friend of the theatre is erecting a theatre building which will be leased to the Toy Theatre on most favorable terms, much as the Boston opera house is

leased to the present opera management. Shares of stock are being sold which entitle the shareholder to a seat for the season of eight performances, besides a share in any profits which may accrue from the letting of the theatre to visiting companies from other little theatres and for such musicals, recitals, and other productions as may find it available.

There is to be a large organ in the new theatre and besides the regular dramatic productions of the Toy season, it is planned to give performances of some little operas suited only to an intimate place, and of some of the shorter classics and of the original work of American composers. Several of the younger musicians and composers are interesting themselves in the plan and there are undoubtedly amateur performers of sufficient ability and enthusiasm to carry the project to accomplishment equal in standard to the Toy Theatre work.

A series of children's plays to be given on Saturday mornings is also part of the plan for next season.

The enthusiasm which the little group of friends brought to the initiation of this amusing venture has only grown stronger as the seasons have passed and has spread and increased to an even wider circle of associates. In attempting to interest a larger public the aim of the Toy Theatre is to hold to its own standards devotedly, believing that, situated as the little theatre will be in the centre of a metropolitan district of over three million people, accessible to steam and electric cars from all directions, practically in Copley Square, which is really Boston's centre, enough kindred spirits will find it and support it to mould it into a stronghold of delight, a creative enterprise of art in which the workers and the audience shall feel themselves equally responsible.

HOMER HILDRETH HOWARD.

## STRINDBERG, REINHARDT, AND BERLIN

For the present winter at least, Berlin has chosen to do honor to Sweden's poet, in producing *The Crown Bride* and *Heat-lightning*, rather than to the somewhat gloomy psychologist with whose *Creditors* and *Countess Julia* the American public is only too ready to associate Strindberg's name.

*Heat-lightning*, produced at the Kammerspiele by Max Reinhardt, was lately pronounced by the eminent critic and publicist, Maximilien Harden, as one of the two really significant novelties of the season. This charming "intimate" play concerns the fate of a man who left his wife and daughter to live with another woman; the return of the wife and daughter, the husband's agony of mind, and the departure of wife and daughter, many years later, constitute the chief outlines of the simple story. This seems at first sight to be the well-known Strindberg formula, but it is but the barest skeleton upon which the poet, aided by Reinhardt, builds up a marvelous picture of quiet solitude, full of the silence of nature. The first act passes outside a small city house. Half-way up-stage is a typical three-story apartment, of which only two stories are visible. The soft light of early evening, the faint flickering of the street lamp, the quivering leaves on the slim lindens, the resounding sidewalk, the open windows of the ground-floor apartment, the distant thunder and pink flashes of heat-lightning—all combine to re-create for us the very essence of a hot summer evening. Two men stroll in and sit down on a bench before the house and talk—for twenty minutes. Seated in the little

Kammerspiele, that haven of comfort and silence, listening to the ominous, distant rumble of the thunder, the occasional splash of a rain-drop, *over-hearing* the casual conversation of the two men—all this is no longer the theatre: the *stimmung* of the stage has at last permeated the audience and made it one with the actors. Then the storm approaches; the men go indoors, the windows close, and the rain pours; from time to time the wet sidewalk is illumined by a prolonged flash, and for a moment after all is in darkness. Then the curtain falls. The next act is the very interior we were permitted to spy through the windows from without. The faint flush of dawn is seen through the open windows at the back. The story proceeds so naturally that we are scarcely aware it is a story. With no apparent stress, the climax is reached, and the curtain falls again. In a few seconds (there is a revolving stage) it rises again, on the same scene as in the first act. The play ends, with hardly a voice raised above its natural pitch. Mother and daughter have come and gone, the husband sits quietly on the bench again with his friend, lights his cigar, the conversation recommences, and the curtain falls.

In Berlin, the city of contradictions and extremes, where acting and staging of the worst kind may be seen any night, a perfect work of art like *Heat-lightning* seems little short of miraculous. Reinhardt, without doubt the most original producer in Europe, is by no means infallible; there is not a single one of his Shakespeare productions which is without a serious artistic shortcoming, but it seems that the moment he sets to work in his *little* theatre, he is inspired. In this Strindberg play he has at length achieved that end which the innovators in the dramatic world are striving for—a perfect commu-

nion between audience and stage, sympathy and understanding between dramatist and public.

During the present season Germany is, broadly speaking, not interested in problem or thesis plays; the chief dramatists are all turning to the past for their subjects, and the plays of authors like Strindberg, which do not deal with social and purely psychological questions, are being tried out, as it were, with phenomenal success. The Theater in der Königgrätzerstrasse has found in Strindberg's *The Crown Bride* one of its finest artistic achievements, as well as a piece which almost invariably plays to capacity houses.

It is interesting to note that three Scandinavians are responsible for this play—August Strindberg, the poet; August Enna, the composer, and Sven Hedin, the scenic artist. The result is one of the most touching and beautiful productions of the past few years. The play leaves one with a sensation of spiritual elevation similar to that produced by *The Blue Bird*, only more poignant; there is a deeper sense of reality, a stranger feeling of beauty.

*The Crown Bride* is the story of a young girl who, with the aid of a witch, exchanges her illegitimate child for the crown, the symbol of purity worn by the brides of Sweden. Here is another *Faust* story—the theme of atonement—but how different are the two treatments!

In a deep valley, one end of which looks out upon the sun-lit lakes and islands so characteristic of northern scenery, lives little Kersti and her mother. As evening approaches, the mother goes about her work and leaves Kersti by herself. The girl then sings into the distance, winds a call on the horn, and her young lover, the miller's son, Mats, runs in a moment later, bearing their infant child. She loves

Mats deeply, but bitterly regrets that she cannot wear the crown. Mats, however, making Kersti kneel before him, pronounces a simple wedding ceremony, the two exchange rings, pray, and consider one another man and wife. Still, the idea of entering the church on the day of the final consecration without the symbol of purity terrifies Kersti. The child is laid in its tiny hammock-like cradle, hung between two saplings. As Mats leaves, the Midwife Witch comes in and declares that she will come to the wedding; meantime, she begs for shelter. Kersti attempts to drive her away, but is attracted by the promise of the bride's crown. When her mother enters unexpectedly, just after the witch leaves, Kersti goes to the cradle, and covers it with blankets. The witch returns almost immediately, bearing the coveted crown; then Kersti puts more blankets upon the cradle, and smothers the child. Darkness comes and silence, when to the accompaniment of mysterious music the green waterfall becomes transparent and the Waterman appears, speaks prophetic words of warning to the girl, and disappears.

WITCH. [*Taking the crown from her pocket.*] Here!

KERSTI. [*Seeing the witch by the cradle.*] What are you taking?

WITCH. [*Pointing to the cradle.*] You see it, I see it, the whole world sees it, and yet it is not there!

KERSTI. Take it!

WITCH. [*Bending over the cradle.*] I have it! Now may I come to the wedding?

KERSTI. Come.

And the witch bears away the tiny bundle, Mats comes in, and Kersti shows him the crown—her mother gave it her, she says. “But the little one—the little one?” demands Mats.

KERSTI. My parents have made certain conditions.

MATS. I know.

KERSTI. They want me to be a crown bride. What is a crown bride? A girl who wears the crown.

MATS. With honor.

KERSTI. With or without. What is not known, makes no difference.

The child, Kersti says, is safe in the forest. Now at last she can appear "with honor" at the wedding ceremony. Mats goes out, and, swiftly, Kersti throws the cradle into the nearby pool of water. The Little White Child, invisible to Kersti, walks through the pool, raises a finger of warning, and retires noiselessly; the Waterman sings his warning, Kersti goes into the hut and stirs the fire, and the scene closes.

The next scene is laid within the mill. Mats' family is at evening prayers. The family knows of Kersti's guilt, through the mysterious Officer, who keeps the records of births and deaths. (The part is played with memorable dignity and impressiveness by Paul Wegener.) Brita, the spirit of hatred, Mats' sister, lets Kersti know in no uncertain manner her attitude toward her. Then the Officer comes in and questions Kersti, who begins to be terrified. Mats, in the best of spirits, left alone with his bride-to-be, shows her the dark interior of the mill. The huge mill-wheel at the back begins to turn, an enchanting dance from the orchestra accompanying its slow revolutions. But all at once it stops and begins to turn in the opposite direction. "Jesus, help!" cries Mats; "the mill goes backward!" He runs out, leaving Kersti alone. As the dance grows wilder, the loom begins to work, the spinning-wheel to turn, the sacks and the stove to dance. Then the Waterman appears above the mill-wheel with his eternal warning. As he fades away, the Witch comes in and dances, then disappears into the stove. Brita comes in:

KERSTI. Whom are you looking for?



BRITA. You.  
 KERSTI. How kind!  
 BRITA. Indeed!  
 KERSTI. Hateful!  
 BRITA. Servant!  
 KERSTI. Sister-in-law!  
 BRITA. What do you mean?  
 KERSTI. What do you prophesy, sorceress?  
 BRITA. The rope!

Then Brita scatters earth on the hair of Kersti, and cries "Shame on you!" while the voice of the Little White Child echoes "Shame on you!" And Brita leaves her victim to herself and her conscience. Mats enters a moment later. As the evening angelus rings, Kersti asks her lover to pray for her.

MATS. One must pray for himself.  
 KERSTI. If he can!  
 MATS. He can, if he wills it!  
 KERSTI. If he wills it?  
 MATS. Do you hear the angelus?  
 KERSTI. No!  
 MATS. I hear it. You must hear it!  
 KERSTI. I don't hear it; I don't! How terrible!  
 MATS. That is bad! Do you hear the waterfall?  
 KERSTI. I hear the water in the forest, the sound of the thrashing, the tinkling of the cowbells, but not the angelus!  
 MATS. That is bad! I remember now—at the burial of the last Officer, all the bells rang—we saw them move—but not one did we hear. That is bad!  
 KERSTI. Brita bewitched me.  
 MATS. That was wrong of her.  
 KERSTI. Come with me to the dairy. I must see the sun!  
 MATS. I'm coming, dear Kersti.  
 KERSTI. Oh!  
 MATS. [*Taking her head and shoulders in his arms.*]  
 Oh, Kersti!

The night before the wedding is passed at Kersti's home. Brita and the Officer continue to make Ker-

sti's life miserable; the consciousness of her deed begins to tell on her.

The wedding day comes at last; the old mill is brightened with the feast tables and the gaily bedecked guests and the portly old pipers. Kersti, deadly pale, but wearing the crown, receives the half-hearted compliments from the assembled company. As she goes to the wheel to look into the stream, the crown falls into the water, to the consternation of the guests. Suddenly the floor opens, and the dead child, swathed in a tiny black bundle, slowly rises before the distraught murderess. Kersti is accused of her crime, confesses it, and is manacled, while her mother puts a black hood over her daughter's face. The grief-stricken Mats leaves the mill, followed by all but Kersti, who sits with the child in her arms. Forced by the witch to put it back, she sinks to the floor, and raises her arms to Heaven. A moment of silence, then the silvery *motif* from muted violins and flutes, and the Little White Child steals in behind her, and strews her head with white flowers. "Kersti's face, which before was a picture of tortured agony, has now become tranquil and happy."

But Kersti must pay the price of her crime. Before the church, between it and the dark graveyard, she lies, clothed in a long brown robe and cowl. Mats enters, bearing the white coffin of the child.

MATS. [*Standing by Kersti.*] There is the little one. He is light, light as the thoughts of this wicked woman.—Now he sleeps—soon will you sleep.

KERSTI. [*Her head in her hands.*] . . . Oh!

MATS. . . . Oh! Well may you say "Oh!" Say it again, and again—that the little one may hear it, so that the Lord in Heaven may hear it, and forgive you! Good!—Kiss the little white coffin—there, there are the little feet, the little feet that will never patter on the earth again! [*KERSTI kisses the coffin.*]

But if there is still hope for Kersti's forgiveness, there is none for her earthly life. The beadle brings her coffin in, shows it to her, and goes out by the side of the church. Then the Witch comes to torture and tempt her; there is still time to flee, and not repent and die.

WITCH. Shall we meet on Thursday night at the Cross-roads?

KERSTI. Through the Cross shall I meet my Savior, not you! Leave me!

WITCH. There is a boat in the canal, a horse and cart on land.—Mats is there, but not the Officer—Run, run, run!

KERSTI. [*Struggling with herself.*] Oh God! Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil!

WITCH. Nonsense! The cart!

[KERSTI gets up from her bench, pulls the rope by the church door, ringing the bell three times. The WITCH runs away in fear. The LITTLE WHITE CHILD appears.]

KERSTI. [*Dazzled.*] Who are you, little child, who always appear when evil goes away? [*The LITTLE WHITE CHILD puts her finger to her lips.*] White as snow, white as purest linen—why are you white?

WHITE CHILD. [*In a soft voice.*] Thy faith hath redeemed thee! From thy hope is born faith. [*The CHILD approaches KERSTI.*]

KERSTI. Crush not the ant who is before thee!

WHITE CHILD. . . . Love is the greatest thing of all; it is for all living creatures, great and small. . . . Doubt not, only have faith, Kersti. Believe.

KERSTI. How can I?

WHITE CHILD. [*Disappearing behind a pillar.*] Believe!

The *motif* of the Waterman is heard; his words ("I believe that the Redeemer will forgive thee!") ring out clear to Kersti. She says, "He sings to me of my Redeemer. He gives me hope!" Then the Officer, this time in gentler mood, comes to Kersti, and lets her know that she is forgiven.

OFFICER. Are you happy, Kersti?

KERSTI. I am thankful that my shame is forgiven, but I am not happy, for a life in bondage is less than everlasting life.

OFFICER. This is only in preparation for something greater. Think of that.

KERSTI. I do! . . . I fear not, for I have seen death!

OFFICER. Then follow me!

KERSTI. Free me, first!

OFFICER. [*Taking off the manacles. The organ is heard within the church. KERSTI stretches forth her hands, takes a step, then falls to the ground.*]

The last scene is "a great lake, covered with ice; a canal in the foreground." The two families are standing divided in dispute for a moment, when a litter is brought in. The Officer follows and stands at the head of the litter.

OFFICER. We bring the Crown Bride; we bring Kersti.

PRIEST. Is she dead?

OFFICER. She is dead. The water took her.

PRIEST. May the Lord take her soul!

[*The lake opens, and little by little the church rises from the opening. . . . The Waterman is heard singing from afar—*]

PRIEST. Thank and praise we the Lord!

ALL. [*Kneeling at the litter and extending their hands to one another over KERSTI'S body.*]

Lord God, we thank Thee,  
Lord God, we praise Thee!

BARRETT H. CLARK.

## GOLDONI: A BIOGRAPHY

*Goldoni: A Biography*, by H. C. Chatfield-Taylor  
Duffield and Company, New York, 1913

When his patrons and friends, the Venetian gondoliers, called him "Papa Goldoni," they recognized and saluted in the great Italian dramatist a quality, very salient, very charming, and surprisingly rare among men of letters—that quality of charm, of *bonhomie*, which, beaming from their pages, or playing over the events of their times, makes you long to know them and assures you of their capacity for human friendship. One would feel smitten into awesome silence in the presence of Dante or Milton; of all the Roman poets, Horace alone seems to invite you in for a chat; Lowell says of Chaucer that he is one of the few men whom, if you met him under a porch during a shower, you would prefer to the rain; Charles Lamb promises companionship for a walk and a talk, but on the whole, the Englishmen are reticent and distant. It is among French men of letters that we most often find this loveliness, this live-with-ability—in Marot, in Montaigne, above all in La Fontaine, whose guilelessness and impracticableness make us feel toward him as Mme. de la Sabliere must have felt, who, when she retired from the world, took with her only "her cat, her dog, and La Fontaine." It is with some such regard, affectionate and almost domestic, that we picture Goldoni—Papa Goldoni—stout, eager, and hungry for joy, all his life thrilling at the appeal of a dashing if not hazardous adventure—and always thoroughly lovable. Add to

the charm of this personality the distinction that belongs to the leader of an epoch-making dramatic and theatrical reform, the interest that attaches to his environment as a citizen of the picturesque, decaying Republic of Venice, and his relation to those momentous monuments of life and thought which his generation achieved and witnessed—and we must congratulate Mr. H. C. Chatfield-Taylor upon his opportunity, the chance to introduce to the greater English-speaking public a personality of so much charm and a play writer of so much importance. At the same time we must felicitate ourselves that it has been done in a book at once so readable and so scholarly as Mr. Chatfield-Taylor's *Goldoni: A Biography*.

The main source of information concerning the life of Carlo Goldoni is his own *Mémoires*, written in French, toward the close of his life. Their frankness and sincerity with regard to Goldoni's own experiences, together with the fullness and almost photographic accuracy of detail as concerns the life of the eighteenth century makes the *Mémoires* one of the most precious documents we possess relative to its time. In the first part of this record he gives us the events of his own early life—escapades and adventures so romantic as to rival a novel of the elder Dumas; all told with a quaint and blithe candor such as can be equaled only in the *Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini*, but told with this difference—Cellini was an unmitigated scoundrel and an unpardonable ruffian; Goldoni, a man of peace, and, for the most part honest, his only vices being gambling and sou-brettes—and concerning these he is most often gentle and humorous, confessing to the foibles of a mischievous boy.

The second part of the *Mémoires* is taken up with

accounts of his plays; their inception, genesis, composition, presentation, success or failure. He was essentially and above all else a playwright, and whatever concerned his plays seemed interesting to him. Out of the mass of material contained in this part of the book, one may find here and there invaluable records of the dramatist's method and purpose. But it lacks altogether the charm of the first part. A third part records his life in France. This lacks both the vagrant joy of the first part and the critical value of the second. It is sometimes dull and often concerned with things of ephemeral interest.

Goldoni was born in Venice in 1707, in the midst of one of those carnival times that were then almost continuous there; and the great city, then entering on a species of senile decay, was concealing her lack of true stability and real magnificence with a gilding of gaudy fêtes, engaging in well-nigh uninterrupted masquerades, which were both the cover and the pretext for all sorts of licentiousness. Those sections of the book in which Mr. Chatfield-Taylor projects for us with almost cinematographic effect the dissolute and indulgent practices of Venetian society in city and country, are among the most telling and valuable in the book.

As might be expected, the theatres in Venice expressed the general indecency and libertinism, and were indeed schools of vice. It was but to be expected, perhaps that the plays should be for the most part without art and without cleverness, tied hand and foot by the traditions of the moribund *Commedia dell' arte*. The dramatic state of things which Goldoni was destined to change is strikingly put before us in a chapter, *The Improvised Comedy*.

Into the city of Venice, heir as it proved, to this dramatic inheritance, was born Carlo Goldoni, in

February, 1707. He came of a family of previously prosperous condition, but at the time of Carlo's birth in somewhat straightened circumstances owing to the extravagance of his grandfather. This gay old gentleman seems to have pursued diversion with true Venetian fervor, and the little Goldoni may have inherited from him some of his taste for the drama—a taste in the case of his grandfather expressed in costly *fêtes champêtres* and private theatricals. However this may be, he inherited very small material fortune, his father managing to save only a modicum from the wreck of the family fortunes. His father became a physician in Venice, in which capacity he seems to have had both fame and success. Whether deliberately or not, he encouraged the little Carlo in his interest in the theatre, even going so far as to purchase a puppet-show and conduct performances for the little boy's benefit. This same boy's childhood and youth were replete with adventure. He ran away from a medical school at Rimini in order to make a vagabond voyage home with a troupe of wandering comedians; he was expelled from the law school at Parma for a libelous and scurrilous lampoon on the townspeople; he narrowly escaped being married three or four times; he had the smallpox twice; at last he fell most romantically in love and married his good Nicolletta, who proved to be a dutiful, loyal, but scarcely companionable wife, and who lived with him fifty-seven years and survived him. He pursued for a while a diplomatic career, representing various courts at other courts in the indiscriminate way of the eighteenth century in diplomacy; he witnessed, in the capacity of an honorable spy, the siege of a town by the Austrians and saw a battlefield after the fight—sights which awoke in him that horror of



legitimized murder which long after inspired his play *La Guerra*.

Mr. Chatfield-Taylor sums up with taste and discrimination, and with genuine enjoyment, the wandering and adventures of Goldoni's youth.

Goldoni's instinctive love for the drama and his childhood's experience in theatricals was reinforced at a very early age by contact with written dramas. He found in the library of his first law professor the plays of Terence and Plautus; having discovered these, he looked for more plays. He found Greek, Latin, English, French, Spanish, but no Italian plays. The humiliation and disappointment he then felt he later interpreted in a patriotic determination to make good this lack. After he discovered the dramatists, his law studies went by the board, though he made shift to pass a law examination at Pavia and became a licentiate. But, though all the while, beginning when he was eleven years old, he was writing plays—comedies, farces, tragedies, operas, thirty in all—it was not until 1743 that he definitely gave up his profession and accepted a position as play-purveyor to a Venetian theatre manager.

After this, for the whole productive period of his life, his history is the history of his plays. He wrote always with the idea of "the regeneration of the drama," but he set about it with judgment. He knew that a play should "play" a bit; that the people must be weaned by degrees from the obscenity and buffoonery that characterized the *Commedia dell' arte*, degrees so gradual that the innocent public, who hated "uplift" in those days too, would not realize that they were being improved. Goldoni was equal to the task, having the good judgment to retain the loved characters while transforming them into actual living personages, substituting for the stale

*lazzi* of the improvised comedy the real speech, plain, often coarse, sometimes witty, of actual Venetians. Being a great artist, he could be also a great naturalist and put on the stage the people of Venice as he knew them, the people, the bourgeoisie, the aristocracy, as they lived and talked. In this Goldoni is supreme—unless Synge in our own day can rival him—catching the spirit of the people and displaying it in their own speech, especially in his plays in the Venetian dialect, such as *The Chioggian Brawls*, *The Boors*, and *The New House*.

Apropos of these Venetian comedies, Mr. Chatfield-Taylor makes a wise and far-reaching distinction between the *realism* of Molière and the *naturalism* of Goldoni. However, when he says Molière was “the first dramatic realist and his characters are in large degree taken from life,” he seems to lose sight of the old French popular farces from which Molière derived so much of his inspiration—old farces like that masterpiece of realism and satire, *Maitre Pierre Pathelin*, whose personages are the village judge, the village lawyer, and even the village idiot, portrayed with appalling *vraisemblance*.

But the details of Mr. Chatfield-Taylor’s distinction between the two dramatists are just. Molière’s peasants, he says, “are clowns and even his middle-class characters are not exactly translated from life to the stage, as are many of Goldoni’s. Moreover, their sentiments are sometimes so tempered by their author’s avowed purpose to paint ridiculous likenesses of the vices of his time, that occasionally his persons become merely thematic. Goldoni had no thesis to maintain, no purpose to fulfill that could tempt him to spoil nature, and he presented life as it appealed to him”; he loved human nature too much to depict merely “humorous” persons.

Probably just because he knew his Venetian and Chioggian neighbors so well, and put them on the stage precisely as he knew them, his comedies in the Venetian dialect are far and away the best. They are rather few in numbers, but Mr. Chatfield-Taylor very justly gives them pre-eminence. Goldoni's enormous dramatic product cannot be satisfactorily classified. Mr. Chatfield-Taylor devises a classification which, though unsatisfactory in many ways because artificial and arbitrary, does serve to divide the plays into groups small enough to be considered. His division is this: comedies in the Venetian dialect, comedies of the bourgeoisie, comedies of the aristocracy, exotic comedies, comedies in verse. He gives only incidental consideration to Goldoni's other verse, to his operas and other musical pieces.

Goldoni had immense and immediate success. His gondoliers colliding in the canal, each refusing to back water, roaring and quarreling, declaring their intention of remaining where they are forever rather than yield; his fishermen and their sweethearts; the lace-makers, loving, brawling, shouting and stamping on the sunny quays, the dwellers in one of those open spaces called *campielli*, "where two tortuous Venetian streets cross each other and a whole neighborhood works and plays"—these were real people, this was real life, and the audience loved them all. Goldoni had the serious purpose of satirizing the weakness of the bourgeoisie: avarice, sordid social ambitions; he really meant to score the vices of the aristocracy, the mad indulgence and extravagance of the *Villeggiatura*, the evils of *cicisbeism*, that curious species of licensed marital infidelity which, a degenerate survival from feudalistic sentimentality, went hopelessly to seed in the eighteenth century. But he was so gentle and good-

natured and so hated to spoil a play that his condemnations were rather mild. However, he did bring upon himself the disapproval of the aristocracy, whose opposition he was able to bear quite debonairly.

Not so lightly could he meet another opposition that finally arose. Mr. Chatfield-Taylor gives a very clear and important account of Goldoni's experience with his rival playwright, Pietro Chiari, and with his enemy, Carlo Gozzi. This same Gozzi was a most interesting man. His *Useless Memoirs* is a curious and intimate picture of the Venetian life that surrounded him. The pages teem with descriptions of the author's life, his dealings with lawyers, brokers, Jews, and all sorts of odd persons, while the more varied pictures they present of literary, social, and stage life make them a richer document for the study of Venetian customs in the eighteenth century than Goldoni's more restricted memoirs. Gozzi was a curious fellow, a chronic grouch, always seeking a quarrel, with a keen trained mind, and a passionate love of Italy. He was a purist in language and Italian customs. He regarded Goldoni as a corrupter of the drama, declaring that the *Commedia dell' arte* was the glory of Italy—its distinctive drama. He bitterly resented Goldoni's attempt to substitute his inventions for this popular institution. He opened fire upon Goldoni with a series of coarse and bitter satires which the dramatist, always a man of peace, endured as long as he could, being forced at length to reply in kind. Finally the quarrel reached a stage where Gozzi boasted that he could fill a theatre with a play after the manner of the *Commedia dell' arte* written about an old wives' tale. He fulfilled his boast with *The Love of the Three Oranges*. He thereby invented a type and he

continued to delight Venetian play-goers with theatrical favors until Goldoni understood that his own star had waned. At the moment of his discouragement he received an invitation with many circumstances of honor to come to Paris as playwright to the Comédie Italienne, under a two years' contract. In 1762 he made the long and complex journey to France, whence he was destined never to return. In France he fulfilled his contract with the Italian company, producing for them, among other comedies, *Le Bourru bienfaisant*, one of his most signal successes. Becoming court tutor in Italian, he received a comfortable pension. While in France, too, he met the aged and famous Voltaire, with whom he had long corresponded. He describes amusingly a visit he paid to Rousseau, some of whose democratic doctrines he had forestalled in certain of the comedies—notably one he had based on Richardson's *Pamela*. His *Mémoires* reflect no knowledge of the titanic agitations leading up to the Revolution and accompanying it, but his personal experience was, however, closely affected by them—in July, 1792, when the King's civil list was suspended, Goldoni's pension from the court ceased. On the seventh of February, 1793, Joseph Marie Chénier moved, in an eloquent speech in the National Assembly, that Goldoni's pension be restored. The motion was unanimously and enthusiastically passed, but it was too late, since Goldoni had died the day before—February sixth, 1793.

This fascinating story, together with a somewhat detailed account of each of the most important plays, constitutes the bulk of Mr. Chatfield-Taylor's book. Whatever digressions there are, are necessary and valuable. Such are the pictures rich in color and movement of Venetian society contemporary with

Goldoni; the invaluable chapter on Improvised Comedy; the account of the fantastic republic of letters, *L'Accademia dell' Arcadia*, the best thing in English on that subject. It is in fact a satisfyingly amusing account of the pastoral occupations of fat abbés and stout duchesses, shepherding their lambkins and piping on the syrinx amid the shady groves and green meadows back of the castle of San Angelo or inside a walled garden of Pisa.

One is inclined to question the value or interest of so many analyses of the comedies, feeling that perhaps a rather detailed account of a few typical ones would have been sufficient and would have left room for more genial criticism. Every reader should feel grateful for the excellent translations of the passages quoted from the originals—comedies, memoirs, or poems—a thing so rare as to be most noteworthy. We have suffered untold afflictions in the shape of inherited translations, handed down to us reeking with the psychology of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and entirely alien to our own. We hunger for modern translation, giving the sense and spirit of the original as they appeal to the modern consciousness. Such translations Chatfield-Taylor gives—racy often to the verge of slang, but representing Goldoni's popular, often dialect speech, as: "Some have attempted to bring good taste back to the theatre by producing comedies translated from the Spanish and French; but mere translations could not *make a hit* in Italy." The verse renderings of the poetic comedies are excellent, in some cases improving on Goldoni's pedestrian Martellian verse.

Mr. Chatfield-Taylor uses a phrase in Chénier's eulogy of Goldoni in the National Assembly as a text for a somewhat exhaustive comparison of Molière and Goldoni. It must have been a somewhat common

comparison, used as it was by Casanova as early as 1760, and by Favort a year and a half before Chénier's speech. Indeed, it seems to have been a sort of proverbial comparison. And is it not possible that Mr. Chatfield-Taylor takes it too seriously, regarding what was only current and figurative as if it were permanent and critical? One could call Goldoni the Molière of Italy, and mean only that he was a representative comic dramatist, Molière being a representative comic dramatist in France. However this may be, we must rejoice that Mr. Chatfield-Taylor took it so seriously, since it furnishes occasion for a most interesting and illuminating parallel study of the two dramatists. Goldoni, he says, was an Italian, specifically a Venetian of the eighteenth century. Molière is for all time. Goldoni has not the overwhelming universal genius of the Frenchman. It must be remembered that Molière made somewhat extensive studies in philosophy, was a pupil of Gassendi, a disciple of the doctrine of *Le bon naturel* and at the same time a bitter satirist—the prototype of his own Misanthrope. Goldoni was no philosopher, only a gentle satirist, content to let the sinner and his sin off with a gentle admonition, instead of crushing both the fool and his folly with a thundering denunciation. The relation between the two proves very fruitful and interesting in study.

Though the book very wisely and skillfully confines itself to the biography of its subject, flowing along in the manner of most humane narratives, the footnotes and references bear testimony to the scholarly habits of the author, and testify to his special studies for his task. One sees, too, the most fascinating vistas opening in every direction: such as the whole history of the improvised and erudite comedy in Italy; Richardson in Italy; the curious

paradox of the classical and the romantic as developed in the quarrel between Goldoni and Gozzi; the relation of the improvised comedy and of Goldoni's reformed comedy to modern drama, and the like.

Mr. Chatfield-Taylor's well-known fondness for studies in the eighteenth and seventeenth centuries has left some marks upon his own style. One detects a few *préciosités*, such as the constant personification of comedy, tragedy, and history, the frequent introduction of Thalia and Melpomene and their shrines; the naming of many of the exploits of Goldoni's early career, "a chase of the Muses." A fastidious and annoying play on words is this: "The fawning of these geniuses of comedy is more venial than venal." This conceit concerning the situation in the *House Party* is quite Marinistic in its convolutions: "a triangle of domestic infelicity similar in outline to the conventional framework of the plays of modern Europe; yet he has so tempered his situations that the apical angle describing his story of marital incompatibility, being neither viciously obtuse nor insinuatingly acute, may be justly termed right."

A few details of usage and punctuation one would mention merely to get them off his conscience, such as "*the hoi polloi*," page 175. Tut! Tut! Nobody elects Greek any more! On page 137 the omission of a comma after the second word in the sentence, "Years after when he had traveled," etc., forces us to read it twice over. The use of the word *verisimilitude* in the footnote on page 259 is puzzling. La Champmeslé is mentioned as belonging to the troupe of the Comédie Française in 1763—she died in 1698.

The invaluable biographical chronology, the bibliography, and the catalogue of Goldoni's plays were prepared by Prof. F. C. L. van Steenderen. They



are a perfect mine of information for the student. The bibliography, though not making pretense to being complete, is nevertheless one of the best ever collected upon the Italian dramatist. Prof. van Steenderen might have included two articles which, though short, are excellent: one by J. Dornis in his *Théâtre Italien Contemporain*, and the other, somewhat longer, of N. H. Dole in his volume entitled *A Teacher of Dante*.

On the material side, the book is a handsome volume—the reproduction of the pictures by the two Longhis adding a quaint and pleasant touch. One feels sure that so readable a book, with its array of learned material, will greatly stimulate those already interested, and awaken the interest of those who are not acquainted with the work of “Italy’s greatest dramatist.”

LANDER MACCLINTOCK.

## THE NEW STAGE ART: FORTUNY



CHANGE amounting to a quiet revolution in technical modes and aims is at this moment occurring in modern stage art. A new impulse is astir in the brains and the eyes, the designs and the models of the most original and expert stage producers and workers. It is an impulse belonging with the dawn of this marvelous new century of ours. It has inspired a remarkable change in stage technique within barely more than a dozen years. Of this new impulse some of us have heard vaguely. Yet we have scarcely guessed how revolutionary it is, nor considered whither it is taking us. Moving pictures, on the one hand, at the popular end of the scale, and "little theatres," on the other hand, at the anti-popular or exclusive end, are about all we have many of us grasped as fresh facts. Interesting as these are, each in its own line of significance, they are but fashions of an external sort as compared to this new impulse. They go but skin-deep. Possibly they are of the symptomatic nature of a dramatic skin disease. But this new impulse is penetrating and reanimating the very heart of the modern dramatic body. It is prompting the theatrics of the stage to be as true to the transforming spirit of the times as the true dramatic author is. It seeks even to fit the stage to be able to follow him as he may yet become!

Another marvel about it: it is closer in spirit and promise than any other movement has been to the great magical moments of dramatic activity and accomplishment. I mean that of the Greek stage for

one of those moments, the Shakespearian, for the other. If you ask me, "Why is it closer?" I will say: "Because the new-born spirit now vividly manifest in several quarters in Europe is bent upon ways to substitute the imaginative for the imitative in the visualizing of the realistic, the mobile and humanly intimate for the remotely postured in stage action." Instead of uniformly mechanical methods of attaining prescribed effects, it ventures upon discovering fresh methods of simplifying stage realism and reconciling it to the natural. Instead of demanding that the author subordinate life to scenic conveniences conventionally established, it seeks to adapt scenic methods to the author's inner design, making them pliable to that supremacy.

I here attempt to sum up and characterize broadly. Nothing so complete has actually been realized in any one quarter. But the tendency, as a whole, clearly is two-fold. On the one side, it is bent upon repossessing objective Nature herself; on the other, upon giving dominant play to the human spirit within man. As exponents of this two-fold tendency, I shall select the work of two of the most revolutionary of recent reformers. They are also, perhaps, the least known as yet in this country of the group of earnest men in Germany and elsewhere in Europe who are seeking the renovation of stage art. In this article I shall attempt to describe the result of the very practical work of one of these men; in another, to characterize the very radical standpoint of the second. And in this manner I shall be enabled, perhaps, to put before you, here, these two supplementary tendencies more tersely and strikingly than if I tried to indicate all those whose work and ideas are running in the same new parallel directions along the same new road.

The aim of Mariano Fortuny's ingenuity is to apply the essentially modern means of electrical and mechanical science toward the attainment upon the scene not of an artificial but of a natural physical light. His inventive study has been to discover how to give back to the modern indoor stage those pure radiances of external Nature herself that were a matter of course upon the outdoor stage of the Greeks and the open-roofed stage of Shakespeare.

In the new warfare upon the unsightly "borders," the garish footlights, the squealingly false spotlight of the old-styled stage, Fortuny holds a most influential place. He may be said to have gathered up in his theatric sky and lighting system about all the sporadic attempts yet ventured upon or desired along this line. The reform his system has brought about may well represent, therefore, the various reforms that have been carried on toward clarifying and simplifying the hitherto disjointed scenic effects sought by elaborate stage machinery. The gist of the reformation brought to a climax by his unified contrivances is to make the artificial potent enough to present the natural.

By mechanism itself, then, at last, stage machinery has been, as it were, out-machined. The cumbersome complexity, the roundabout minutia of the crudely spectacular, hitherto standing in the place of the comely and unobtrusive aspects of Nature herself, have been reduced or altogether banished. And by Fortuny's inventive genius more than by any other one means may it now be said that the ugly footlights barrier, the ragged borders, and any need for the will-o'-the-wisp spotlights ghosting it about hither and yon at utterly unnatural cross-purposes, have been swept from the boards of the well-constructed theatre.

A present sign of the truth of this statement is an occurrence in theatre-building of to-day. For during this very autumn, while I am writing this, has not the opening of the New Royal Theatre of Dresden furnished a notable proof of it? In the stage equipment of this princely new theatre, the most expert technicians have studiously intended to embody all results of attested value in stage progress in Europe to date. And now this latest of houses, like the Deutsches Theatre of Berlin before it, approves Fortuny by adopting his Dome and Lighting System, or, to be exact, a variety of it fitted to his special purposes by this theatre's technical head—Herr Adolf Linnebach.

It is surely, then, merely a question of time, before all stages seeking the approvedly valuable in mechanism for scenic effects,—as long as such effects are sought by mechanism,—will abandon the old-fashioned lighting appliances, together with the whole paraphernalia of wrinkled “drops” and pieced-out flapping “borders.” Instead, the up-to-date stage will be permeated with the enlarging and transfiguring light, capable of all grades of brilliancy or shadowiness, that is shed upon it by Fortuny's *Voûte Céleste*, or as the Germans call it, the *Kuppel-horizont*.

What, then, do Fortuny's inventions accomplish that at one stroke they can supersede time-honored dynasties of staginess and the most intricately improved of modern electrical switchboards?

What they do is to place at the service of the stage-world a single complete mimic sky. Like the real sky over the real world, this mimic sky is made capable of shedding forth in the most sensitive diffusion, or of semi-withholding, a light having the sincere quality of daylight.

How Fortuny went to work with the idea of attaining such a light, is one of the modern instances of the mechanician proceeding by means of the appreciating eye of the artist. The principles behind Nature's beautiful susceptibilities of light and shade inspired his processes and results. By an applied analysis of the fundamental principles to be observed in the phenomena of sunlight, he devised the principles of a corresponding reproduction of its quiet candor and tender color. He noted that Nature had two ways of lighting: by direct sunlight going out in parallel rays, and by diffused light spread afar from the sky. By these two ways made one, or by diffused light alone, all space is lighted. For direct light can only penetrate. It does not pervade without reflection from objects responsive to light. When sunlight illumines all parts of an enclosure completely, it falls upon surfaces giving out again a diffusion of its luminous quality.

A room hung with black may receive through a crevice a ray of sunlight, but will not be all pervaded with light unless the ray falls upon a light-colored wall or some clear dull surface—that is, upon any dull unpolished surfaces, not reflecting like a mirror. Then, the whole room will be lighted by a diffused radiance. The relations of light, color, and responsive surfaces have all; then, to be heeded if a similar natural beauty joined with gradation and unity of effect is to be attained. This relativity and indirect quality in natural atmospheric illumination and in the beauty of permeating color and this continual shifting of light and shade constitute the foundation principles upon which Fortuny built up his system.

The effect desired was to be secured, then, not in the usual way by crude light, however powerful, manifold, or ingeniously colored, directly thrown

upon the stage from footlights, borders, or flies. Direct light from the lamp fixtures used by him was absolutely prevented from reaching the stage at any point by slides shutting it out. Instead, the light he used was cast first upon the light-colored dull surface of an arc or horizontally stretched dome, completely over-arching the rear and top of the stage, and thence it was indirected or diffused everywhere at once over all the stage. Moreover, the light directed upon the neutral-tinted surface of this dome, in order to shed over all the stage only its diffused radiance, could be given in addition a suffusion of any degree of varied color, light and shade, and sensitive mobility, by first passing through certain intermediary contrivances specially devised for these three purposes: namely, to imbue the light that was intended to be diffused with any desired colors, or any gradation of shade or brilliancy, or any degree of swift or slow mobility.

To make the general plan of this at all clear, yet without going into technicalities, let us discuss first the light used, then these three additional accompanying contrivances for color, shade, and motion effects, and, finally, the dome.

The color and quality of the source of light whence the diffused light was to be derived had to be true artistically in order to match the capacities of pure sunlight. Compared with sunlight, incandescent light is a reddish yellow. The bluer yellow of the arc light more nearly approaches the white light of the sun. Fortuny's source of light is preferably the electric light produced by the white arc light elicited from pure carbons. His source-lights are arc lamps throwing light upon the dome from the front at the top and from below at the back. The dome, like the sky, is the receptacle of the light

it diffuses, and it receives its light quite independently, by this arrangement, of any other light that may be thrown upon the scenic decoration.

From the arc lamps the light passes through the adjunct contrivances already mentioned that accompany each lamp. The apparatus for light and shade consists of fittings of transparent blue and opaque glasses by which the light transmitted may be modified, the transparent plates letting it pass in full brilliancy, the somber blue ones shadowing it, the opaque ones cutting it off. By a second applied contrivance of noiseless electric motors, movement of these glasses separately or together at any degree of velocity is arranged and the equally sensitive mobility of the light and shade effects transmitted by them is attained. By the third adjunct apparatus equipping each lamp, the white light from the carbons, thus made capable of any degree of intensity or shadow or of any degree of mutability, is diffused with any degree of color. This color contrivance consists of two superimposed screens of luminous reflecting stuffs, or ribbon-like bands of silk revolving on endless cylinders above and below each screen. These screens are set before each light, so that all the light passes through these rolling screen bands of color. The inner one of these endless screen bands of silk ribbon stuff is vari-colored for a third of its length in blue, the second third in red, the rest in yellow. The outer one is vari-tinted, one third in black, the second in white, and the rest open. The color scale is supplied by the inner ribbon, a scale of shading tints by the outer one. These cylinder-mounted ribbons revolve in opposite or similar directions independently or together and at any desired velocity in front of the lamps.

These moving streams of flexibly shaded or in-



tense, continually mobile, vari-colored and vari-tinted light flow unceasingly from the luminous surfaces of clear and shaded glasses and soft colored silks toward the neutral responsive surface of the *Voûte Céleste* or dome. Thence these streams of light are deflected as a unified, indirect or diffused light softly flooding the entire stage. A faithful mimicry of Nature's continually changing but unified lighting, capable of brilliancy and subdual of shade and color, on virtually as infinite a range and scale as her own, is thus commanded by means of the dome and this mobile and variable yet unified combination of color and shadow contrivances in glass and silk. The entire system is brought to a centre of control by conducting wires and regulators and may be manned and managed by a single person.

The dome itself, the office of which is to unify and diffuse this mutable flow of soft light, is ingeniously fashioned for its purpose. The carcass, so to speak, of the dome is a curving dirigible network of iron filaments capable of collapsing or folding in on itself like a carriage-top. It carries along with it, either taut with the frame when in place or collapsed with it when folded, an outer and inner skin, or double envelope of cloth. The office of the inner cloth envelope is to represent to the eye the vague arching contour of the sky. The whole shape appears much like the inside of a sphere and it simulates the air space surrounding us under natural conditions out of doors. The entire dome is collapsible within about a yard square of space and when demounted leaves the stage so completely open at the back that a swifter resetting of the scene can proceed from all sides than on the ordinary stage.

In the New Dresden Theatre, however, as in the Berlin Theatre, the dome is built up over the iron

framework in solid plaster. In the Dresden Theatre it extends some forty feet into the basement, arching up over the stage about twelve feet from the floor level. But the topmost part of it is movable here, too, and may be slid over out of the way when bulky scenery needs to be brought in at the rear of the stage.

To the eye of the spectator, the Fortuny dome in any of its forms of construction does not seem to be anything so substantial. It seems rather to be an actual sky space with limitless illusive effects of atmosphere and aerial vista. By means, also, of mirrors of diverse shapes and sizes, beams of light can be projected from overhead downward, reproducing the aspects of luminous cloud-fleeces and variable openings of light.

It is easy to see that, apart from the invention itself, the mere new conception of the superiority for the stage of natural conditions of light, such as is involved in Fortuny's inventive processes, is a conception alone influential enough to work a reformation in the theatre.

Although no English\* or American stage has been alive enough or advanced enough to adopt the Fortuny aerial stage-dome and unified diffused lighting system, where is there not beginning to be evident the same critical attitude toward the old "stagey" conditions, never questioned before, which inspired Fortuny's inventive ingenuity? Such a critical attitude toward the old-style artificialities in house decoration ushered in, not many years since, the arts and crafts reformation. The change in taste Fortuny's work betokens is one of the signs of the

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\* It is a pleasure to add in qualification of this, that the new Repertory Theatre of Birmingham is now equipped with a Fortuny dome.

advent of the new stage art. We have become sensitive to the ugliness of unnaturalness.

The attainment merely of a natural light must modify the whole atmosphere of the stage-world. The scenic effects will first be modified. Human effects will follow. Scenic decoration will perforce become less "stagey." Next the actors, too, no longer needing to be subjected to the harsh and pitiless glare of artificial direct lights from foot to head, will no longer daub and disfigure the lineaments of the face with outrageous unrealities of exaggerated "make-up" to outmatch and overshoot the scenic circumstances they have had to cope with.

Here, in the effect upon the actor, is exposed one of the links connecting Fortuny's scenic reformation with the more psychical reformation accompanying it. Fortuny represents the objective side of the two-fold new tendency. The human side of the tendency will be represented in another article.

CHARLOTTE PORTER.

## MR. SHAW—AND OTHERS

*European Dramatists*, by Archibald Henderson  
Stewart & Kidd Company, Cincinnati, 1913



BOOK such as Professor Henderson's collection of biographical criticisms should either present new material or make illuminating and fresh use of old. Of the six men treated in this neatly made volume, four, Ibsen, M. Maeterlinck, Wilde, and Mr. Shaw, have been of late much discussed—indeed, what many critics are disposed to regard as temporarily definitive work on Mr. Shaw has been done by Professor Henderson himself. The two remaining writers, Strindberg and Mr. Granville Barker, are less known in detail to American readers. Professor Henderson thus links together the names of six men whose influence upon present-day drama is just now incalculable.

Precisely what artistic excuse the author can plead for the choosing and ordering of his larger groups of material it is difficult to divine. Few writers would care to include in such an august list the name of Mr. Barker; fewer still would wish to give him the emphatic and honorable task of ending a volume. As plays or social studies, *Waste* and *The Voysey Inheritance* are not to be mentioned in the same breath as *Man and Superman*, *An Enemy of the People*, or even the first essay of the delectable Fanny. Alas that we have so far outgrown the "pseudo-social and imperfectly truthful drama of

Pinero"! Alas, that *The Madras House* should represent "originality . . . and the scope of . . . vision as an interpreter of life"! *O temp*— Is up-to-dateness always truth? As producer, Mr. Barker has won his spurs; but as dramatist he is still less advanced in bachelorhood than the late Stanley Houghton.

From the point of view of interpretation, *European Dramatists* gives one the impression that there is still something in the modern drama besides sex. Strindberg, rugged to some, decadent to others, is handled with skill and tact. To him Professor Henderson surely gives all the credit that is his due. Indeed, he looms something like a present-day Ibsen on the dramatic horizon. The treatment of Oscar Wilde, though comparatively undistinguished, is temperate and well balanced. But it is in Professor Henderson's estimate of Ibsen and Mr. Shaw that his work is at its best.

The *raison d'être* of this discussion of the greatest Scandinavian dramatist lies in the author's interpretation of the *Nachgelassene Schriften*, which have but recently become accessible. With them he opens the life of the "little buttoned-up man" in a way that shows strong biographical power. It has long been tentatively recognized that to interpret Ibsen by his works was to all intents and purposes impossible. These intimate glimpses in the the letters of the man who gave to Europe, even to the world, a new drama are the keys to his life. The first biographer to make use of them, Professor Henderson has performed distinguished service.

It would not be too much to credit Ibsen with the invention of a new tragic motive. Georges Polti could make no mention of that essential trait of Hedda's character which sets her apart from the

body of nineteenth-century heroines, the desire for power over men, the wish to be an "influence" in their lives. It is this which actuates her and which, aggravated by her melancholy and tigress-like despair over the results of her marriage, acting upon the inherited elements of her character, makes the tragedy. As her influence over each man wanes and she sees the winter of her days approaching, existence for her becomes impossible, and death is the only solution of the life-question which fate has asked her.

Well done as the Ibsen is, Mr. Shaw's biography excels it. Of the meteoric Irishman, Professor Henderson knows more and understands more than any other man living, including Mr. Shaw himself. The biographical material is, of course, authoritative: even more necessary, the judgment on this "literary Peter Pan"—perhaps one should say, "literary Struldbrug"—is sound.

Far too often we think of Mr. Shaw only as dramatist and wit, and forget that there was once a generation that knew him not. He began his career not as critic but as novelist. Yet even then Socialism was in his system. To his earlier period belong those important if relatively uninteresting novels—*Love Among the Artists*, *Cashel Byron's Profession*, and *An Unsocial Socialist*. They are characteristically Shavian, but Cashel Byron, with his gospel of "Life is a fight," alone of the heroes stands in true relation to later development; the prize-fighter is only John Tanner in nonpareil. The wisest thing Mr. Shaw ever did was to shift his allegiance from the novel to music and the play, for music brought him into touch with the work and thought of Richard Wagner, and the drama showed him Ibsen. *The Perfect Wagnerite* may have had its day, but as daring

impressionism in criticism it owns no superior in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Professor Henderson strangely enough fails to draw the parallel between certain Wagnerian-heroic qualities and many later Shavian developments. The music was little; the thought was much. *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* may be more Shaw than Ibsen, and, in spite of Professor Brandes, Mr. Shaw may have dealt in Ibsen material and motives long before he came into contact with the great little man; but the book performed a unique service in literary history, for it gave Ibsen English ears and made it possible for Mr. Shaw to abandon criticism and ride into the arena of the drama in the chariot which he himself had fashioned.

In spite of these influences, it has been always with Mr. Shaw as with Cashel Byron, "Socialism or smash." His preface to *Fabyan Essays* and his own chapters in the book, his brilliant controversial pamphlets which are both entertaining and logical if once their major premises are admitted, and the introductory material for his plays, notably that to *Widowers' Houses* and *Getting Married*, are redolent of Socialism. There is political satire a-plenty in almost every work the Irishman turns out, even if it is not always so trenchant as that in *Press Cuttings*. Indeed, it quite overshadows the important social satire of *Fanny's First Play* and *The Doctor's Dilemma*. Professor Henderson is to be thanked for insisting that Mr. Shaw's mainspring is and always has been Socialism. Only by viewing him in relation to that actuating force can one arrive at a proper comprehension of his life and writings.

The plan of *European Dramatists* and the treatment of Wilde and Mr. Barker are its weakest points. Perhaps unity and evenness are hardly to

be expected in a collection of reprinted pieces; yet it seems as if adequate revision and wise substitution might have rid the book of even these faults and brought the whole up to the excellence of most of the parts.

JAMES S. HOWARD.



## THE NEW YORK CONFERENCE ON PAGEANTRY



THE Second Annual Conference on Pageantry of the American Pageant Association was held in New York City on Saturday, Sunday and Monday, February 21, 22 and 23, 1914. The Conference was held in connection with the Columbia University Institute of Arts and Sciences and the Saturday and Monday sessions met in Havemeyer Hall. The Sunday afternoon session was at the Unitarian Church of the Messiah, and the dinner was at the National Arts Club.

At the first meeting on Saturday afternoon, which was devoted to some of the larger aspects of the pageant and festival movement, the president, William Chauncy Langdon of New York, delivered an address on the subject, Will the Pageant Last? restricting his discussion to the community drama type of pageant, contrasting the character and the conditions of the thirty English and sixty or more American pageants of this type, and expressing the opinion that the permanence of the pageant in this country depends upon the quality of its artistic development, its self-support in business management—freeing it from commercialism—and its vital significance in reflecting the growth of virile American community life. Dr. William E. Bohn of the Ethical Culture School, New York City, in his address on The Status of the School Festival, defined the festival—as distinct from the pageant—as any beautiful celebration of a noble idea by a group of people

old or young, and as one of the highest forms of the play spirit. Accordingly there is no audience, or certainly need be no audience, but all, teachers and pupils, contribute spontaneously and democratically to the making of their festival, producing thereby for themselves and for each other a worthy expression of the joy of the school work. To the end that the school festival may ripen into its best possibilities there is need of teachers who have the creative spirit, the artist spirit, and Dr. Bohn made an appeal to all pageant workers, community teachers and community artists as they are, to help spread the creative spirit through the schools. Prof. Charles H. Farnsworth of Teachers' College, who was introduced to speak on *The Educational Value of Festal Music*, at once freed his subject from the imputation of the word "educational" in the narrower sense, calling for devotion to music for its own sake without any solemn ulterior design. He emphasized the point that the festival, by putting up a live situation with reference to the selection, composition and production of music, induced aesthetic activity of the most valuable sort. Music thus became a necessity and people gave thought to the effectiveness of its application and purpose. While in this country, differing from the European and Oriental countries, we have not an elaborate system of holy days and special occasions with all the accompanying music, story, poetry, costume and tradition, the modern interest in the festival is going to give us the needed vital occasion for the production of artistic work and the education of true appreciation. Mr. Frank Chouteau Brown, of Boston, in his address on *The Writing of the Pageant Book*, suggested the desirability, in addition to the development of pageant technique as a fine art, of safe-guarding the non-professional ele-

ment in pageantry, even to the extent sometimes of preferring the untrained local writer who is familiar with the local history as author of the pageant book. He asserted that one of the important values of pageantry, with its lack of established technique, resides in its experimental opportunities, which are more likely to be developed by the new rather than by the trained writer. In order not to lose all certainty of sequence and of dramatic unity in the pageant book, Mr. Brown also suggested the possibility of combining both the experienced and the experimental ability by having a pageant book written in part by the local amateurs under the guidance of the Master of the Pageant.

The annual dinner of the Association, Saturday evening, enjoyed the hospitality of the National Arts Club. The dinner was held thus early in the Conference in order that it might serve to acquaint all the members of the Association and attendants at the Conference with each other and spread a cordial informal pageant atmosphere over all the sessions. This purpose was gratifyingly fulfilled. One of the most valuable features of the conference was the good-natured hostility that was developed in the discussions, the confident frankness with which everyone advanced his own opinion without fear of offending the prejudices of others, and the equal frankness with which others replied. In a field so new as pageantry, where there is so much originality and in which few principles are as yet well established, this was especially desirable. Mr. John W. Alexander, who was an early worker in the free form of festival, was to have spoken on *The Opportunity of Art in Pageantry*, but sickness confined him to his house and deprived the members of hearing him. Mr. Percy MacKaye spoke on *The Form and Value*

of the Masque, characterizing the typical possibilities of festival work as a line with the pageant at one end and the masque at the other. In the pageant he would include the processional and the realistic historical type of work, while the masque he regards as the more symbolic and dramatic, the conflict inherent in the progress of civilization being therein more clearly evident. Any particular pageant or festival might be located anywhere along this line according to the proportions of these typical elements entering into its construction. He illustrated his points by references to his Bird-Masque, *Sanctuary*, and the masque which he is writing for St. Louis. Mr. Thomas Wood Stevens gave an account of the work in festivals that has been done by the Art Institute at Chicago, and discussed some of the technical conditions with which he finds himself confronted in writing the Pageant of St. Louis, closing with a virile and absorbing description of the episode of The Mound Builders in that pageant. Mr. Charles R. Lamb greeted the Pageant Association in behalf of The Older Arts and called attention to the great field of opportunity in public holidays and celebrations for coöperation between the arts. Mrs. Anne Throop Craig outlined certain of the theories that guided her work in writing the Irish Historical Pageant, and Miss Margaret MacLaren Eager gave some reminiscences from her pageant experiences with a description of one of the scenes in her Pageant of Utica. Dr. Ellis Paxson Oberholtzer gave a very entertaining and trenchantly practical discussion of The Large Pageant, citing instances in point from his two Philadelphia pageants, and enlarging on the municipal value of a series of adequate pageants under the direction of a permanent pageant association. Frank Chouteau Brown, as the newly

elected president, spoke of the future of the Association.

The pageant service, with its addresses on Sunday afternoon at the Unitarian Church of the Messiah, centered the interest upon the significance of the pageant and festival movement. The minister, the Rev. John Haynes Holmes, conducted the service and in speaking on *The Social Need for Festal Expression*, welcomed the conference to the church. Responding for the Association, William Chauncy Langdon spoke briefly of the relation of the church and art, and then introduced the other speakers. Arthur Farwell spoke of pageant music partly as a new form in technical development and partly as an expression of the instinctive religion of American life. Pageant hymns, he believes, will soon evolve a new kind of song for the people, broad and simple in melody, of range suitable for unison singing, rich in harmonic effect, and vitally related to the needs of the present and the increasing spiritual unity of community life. T. Tertius Noble, organist of St. Thomas's Church, New York, and formerly of York Minster, England, played on the organ his *Triumph Music* from the Pageant of York, and Clifford Demarest, F. A. G. O. organist of the Church of the Messiah, played a group of pageant hymns composed by Arthur Farwell for the Pageants of Meriden, N. H., and Darien, Conn., and others by Brookes C. Peters for the Pageant of St. Johnsbury, Vt. The Rev. Arthur Ketchum, the poet, rector of St. George's Episcopal Church, Williamsbridge, New York, spoke of *The Religious Significance of Dramatic Festivals*, declaring one of the triumphs of Christianity to be the consecration of human instincts, not only the religious emotions of worship and prayer, but all the instincts that pertain to

human expression in work or play, in drama and the dance, color, sound and motion. In turn he declared the need of the Church in its work for the vital human expression of the drama and the festival, and spoke of the great value the mystery and the play and the festival had proved to have for him in his work as a parish priest. John Collier of the People's Institute, New York, under the title of *The New People and the New Festival* discussed the value of the pageant and of other types of festival for socializing the people of our great cities, for the true assimilation of the immigrant peoples into American life, for conserving the folk-art and folk-culture that they bring with them, and for unifying all the elements of our civilization in a joyous citizenship. Illustratively he told about the preparation under the auspices of the People's Institute for a pageant of a number of the nationalities that gather in the new social center at Public School 63 on the East Side. Miss Lotta A. Clark of Boston considered *The Educational Significance of Pageantry*, its relation to the growing young people and the value of the prophetic pageant showing the vision of ideal possibilities in the future. Miss Langdon, the missionary from the interior of Alaska, gave a simple and very moving account of a Christmas mystery play given by the Indians at Nenana in the little log mission church, a play of Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and the three kings, all in Indian dress, and the words spoken in Indian, and of its effect upon her and upon the Indians of Nenana; and of a hostile tribe who had come two hundred miles over the mountain to hear and see the stories that their old enemies were learning.

At the Monday morning session at Columbia University attention was given to technical and prac-

tical aspects of pageant and festival production. As two speakers had been prevented from coming at the last moment, Mr. Langdon substituted with an address on acoustics, giving some of the results of his study of this side of pageant producing with relation to the choice of pageant grounds and the employment of dialogue and of vocal and orchestral music in pageant construction. Durr Friedley of the Metropolitan Museum of Art spoke of the visual aspect of the pageant, urging regard for a significant color scheme in the planning of the episodes and for an artistic treatment of the whole general aspect of background and of costume, giving many specific practical suggestions for work along this line. Prof. La Mont Warner of Columbia similarly discussed the subject of pageant properties, giving many helpful suggestions for the construction of scene buildings and properties alike, drawn from the Pageant of Westchester County at Bronxville, N. Y., where he had charge of these matters. Miss Mary Porter Beegle of Barnard College, talking about the element of lyrical motion, distinguished festival dancing from in-door dancing as consisting of rhythmical motion of the whole person and of the group of dancers rather than of a step or motion of the arm and the leg, showing the different requirements of the out-door conditions and the peculiar expressiveness of this kind of dance. Miss Virginia Tanner of Boston took up the use of the historical dances in the pageant, the uses they subserved, and the way she had used these dances, the folk and country dances and the interpretive dances, in pageants in which she has taken part.

The Monday afternoon session was given up to a lantern slide symposium, in which various pageant directors took part, illustrating their remarks by pic-

tures from their pageants and festivals. In the evening the Association was the guest of the MacDowell Club, where Arthur Farwell delivered an address on Music and the New Spiritual Awakening, presenting the broad revolutionary principle of musical progress as seen in the New York municipal music, and citing the pageant or community music drama as the natural vehicle for the spread of the new spirit among the people. On Tuesday many of the members attended the Conference on Bird Conservation and the performance of Percy MacKaye's Bird Masque, *Sanctuary*, at the Hotel Astor.

During the Conference an exhibit of pageant material, consisting of pageant books, circulars, posters, costume designs, photographs, models, and music, was on view at the Avery Library of Columbia University. The exhibit comprised twenty-four cases, besides a number of screens. At the request of the librarian, Mr. Edward R. Smith, whose interest was most cordial and helpful, the exhibit remained at the library for two weeks after the close of the conference. The members of the association and many of the public as well showed great interest in the material thus submitted for their examination.

At the business meeting of the Association, Saturday morning, the officers for the new year were elected as follows: President, Frank Chouteau Brown of Boston; Secretary, Miss Mary Porter Beegle of Barnard College, New York City; Treasurer, Howard H. Davenport of Somerville, Massachusetts. A constitution was adopted, which provides for five classes of membership, Active, Guild, Associate, Sustaining, and Life. Active members are elected by the Board of Directors on proof of meritorious service as a director in one or more pageants or festivals. Guild members are those who have taken part



in a pageant or festival; they must be nominated by the Master of the pageant or Director of the festival in which they took part. Associate members are those of the public who desire to help support the work of the Association and to receive the bulletin and other service; they are enrolled without election on payment of annual dues of \$1.00. Applications may be sent with check or money order to the Secretary, Miss Mary Porter Beegle, Barnard College, 119th Street and Broadway, New York City.

A committee was appointed, consisting of William Chauncy Langdon, chairman, Miss Mary Porter Beegle, and Miss Hazel MacKaye, to prepare a *Who's Who in Pageantry*, which shall give concise information in regard to people who direct pageants and festivals, whether members of the American Pageant Association or not, the expense to be met equally by those who are registered. Such information may be sent to the chairman of the committee at 1 Madison Avenue, New York City. A committee on finance was formed, consisting of Dr. Ellis P. Oberholtzer, chairman, Miss Margaret MacLaren Eager, and Mr. Frank H. Brooks; and provision was made for the appointment of a special committee on membership. With the very considerable and unforced growth in membership during the first year, it seemed probable that with a little assistance from active members in interesting people who take part in their pageants and festivals, an increase of membership of at least one thousand could be obtained during this second year.

WILLIAM CHAUNCY LANGDON.

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# THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature

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August, 1914

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A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature

Editor, THEODORE BALLOU HINCKLEY

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Published by

The Drama League of America

Chicago

75c A Number

\$3.00 A Year

Copyright, 1914, by Drama League of America.

Entered as second-class matter February 25, 1911, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under the Act of March 3, 1879.



# THE DRAMA

Number 15

AUGUST

1914

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*"THE CIVIC THEATRE IDEA."*

*"Fundamentally then the civic theatre idea is concerned with the problem of leisure: to extirpate the most baneful habit of mature human beings—the habit of 'killing time.' Its object is to fill time, not to kill it; to refill it to overflowing with that quality of charmed eternity which it always possesses in normal childhood—when a summer's afternoon may pass like an instant, yet seem an eon of joy in retrospect. For to unfettered childhood, the age of imaginative play, all time is a garden of leisure for the transplanting of wild flowers from Elysian pastures."*

[Quoted from *The Civic Theatre* by Percy MacKaye.]

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## PAPA GOLDONI AND HIS VENETIAN COMEDIES



HE sunshine laughed in a thousand hues on the Venetian Carnival one February afternoon in 1751 and the rollicking, gesturing, swarming crowd laughed back with great clamorous, myriad-tinted joy. St. Mark's Square was a tossing sea of color and uproar from the basilica, rising in gold and purple at the one end, to the water gleaming and sparkling at the other; from banner-tossing palaces on the right hand to banner-tossing palaces on the left. It was one great circus aswarm with grown-up children. Along the sides tents gleamed, booths glittered, flags fluttered; in the midst, white masks, black hoods, gold-laced hats, white dominoes, blue dominoes, green dominoes, red dominoes, Harlequins, Turks, Columbines, giants, fairy queens, cavaliers, bears, monsters; and all mingling, crossing, collecting, dispersing; amid a crazy imbroglio of gesticulations, bladder-whacks, skips and tumbles; amid a great joyous roar compounded of all the shrills and peals of mirth, of all the dialects of Italy, of half the languages of

Europe and the East; the mad, meaningless, happy carnival jargon of Venice, festive Babel of the world!

Standing by the sheltering column of an arcade, a plump, middle-aged man—of the upper bourgeoisie, to judge by his wig and ruffles—observed the surging spectacle with smiling keenness. His pleasant round face was lighted up by alert, sunshiny eyes, and was made boyishly lovable by a large, smiling mouth that expressed amiability and frankness in every curve. It was a face that seemed made for smiles and laughter, and, in fact, every now and then the kindly spectator shook all over with a hearty “Ha, ha,” at some unusually ludicrous bit of farce which his quick eyes had discerned in the tumbling confusion before him; but yet—yet in the intervals a worried wrinkle appeared between his brows, and his glance roved more and more restlessly here and there as though in search of something. “Eh,” he presently hummed, in a tone half plaintive, half whimsical, “this afternoon,—this afternoon I have no luck; nothing good turns up. And you understand” (the worried wrinkle deepened, and for a moment the boyish face looked tired and anxious), “you understand, there’s no joking here; only ten days left, and not so much as an idea—Bah! Let’s walk a bit; a fine new subject will meet me on the way.”

Suiting the action to the word he unfolded arms and cane from behind his back, stepped out into the crowd, and began gently shouldering his way into the open square; pausing every moment, now to make way for some fantastic figure, now—with a smiling, “Co’ so’ bon permesso, Sior Maschera” (“By your good leave, Master Mask”)—to solicit passageway for himself, now to return a laugh-

ing tit-for-tat to some facetiousness, now to deftly dodge a bladder aimed at his three-cornered hat. All the while his eyes searched right and left with quick attentiveness, but evidently without finding what they sought, for when at last he reached the further end of the square—there where the low archway with the blue clock above it leads away into the narrow streets—he stopped still in a discouraged manner, and gazed up almost apprehensively at the time. Suddenly two impudent little hands were placed upon his shoulders, and two bright eyes sparkled mischievously up at him through the eye-holes of a mask: “Varé, caro el me panxon!” trilled a mocking voice in soft Venetian, “See him, my dear old big-paunch!”

“A chi panzon?” demanded our friend, with a frown that a smile broke up into a comical grimace.

Then his eyes, dancing with answering roguishness, he quickly pointed to a figure under the archway: “Varé, el to caro novizzo!” (“Behold your own dear sweetheart!”) he retorted.

“Vero gnente!” (“Not a word of it true!”) snapped the audacious one, as she recognized in the hideous old tatterdemalion peddler the bugaboo Venetian girls were teased with. “Vero gnente, Sior Panzon!” And she bounced off, strangling with laughter.

“Eh, eh, that she didn’t expect,” chuckled the good-natured victor; “there was just her answer waiting for her, there! Eh, she was just a little bit vexed, too. No wonder—even the idea of it! Notice that beard, there,—all grease and blackness! Look at those eyes! Two bleary caverns! And those claws! Ha! Ha! Ha! He settled her at once. It’s useless; say ‘Abagiggi, the Armenian’ to a Venetian girl and she goes off the handle. Ha!

Ha! Ha! 'Vero gnente.' If, Heaven forbid, a woman had said it to her, good night, my combs! Whoever thought of it first was a genius. Could you imagine a worse one to suggest? Dirty, greasy, hairy—And then the age of him! As I see him now, so I saw him when I was a lad. Are his children and grandchildren as ugly as he is, I wonder. I never heard of them; and I should have, don't fear! Can you—Ha! Ha! Ha! Can you imagine what fame it would mean to be Abagiggi's daughter? Oh the poor girl! Why, she couldn't live here; they'd chaff her to death, neither more nor less. She'd never get a lover, if she lived to be a hundred. Why the mere imputation of having him for a father—"

He stopped short, his eyes, and his mouth almost, wide open. Then a beaming smile overspread his whole countenance. "I have it!" he cried aloud. "I have it!" He turned and hustled his way back through the crowd, chuckling as he went.

Half an hour later he hurried into a pretty little sitting room—with its spindle-legged chairs, its gilded mirror, its figurines on the mantelpiece—and quickly seated himself at a desk by the window. With joyous impatience he sharpened a quill, drew out sheets of paper, and across the top of one of them wrote:

#### WOMEN'S TITTLE-TATTLE

And below, this:

##### PERSONAGES

- CHECCA, *supposed to be the daughter of Abagiggi.*  
 MUSA, *an Armenian peddler, nicknamed Abagiggi.*  
 OTTAVIO, *a Roman, the real father of Checca.*  
 BEPPO, *Checca's sweetheart.*  
 CAPTAIN TONI, *captain of a tartane.*  
 TOFFOLO, *sailor on CAPTAIN TONI'S tartane.*

PANDURO, *a sailor.*

MOC.COLO, *a sailor.*

PANTALONE, *a merchant.*

He paused, looked out of the window a moment with laughing eager eyes, and then continued:

LELIO, *an impoverished dandy.*

HARLEQUIN, *servant to LELIO.*

BEATRICE, *a Roman.*

ELEONORA, *BEATRICE'S friend.*

SERVANT TO ELEONORA.

DAME SGUALDA, *a vendor of second-hand goods.*

DAME CATTE, *a washerwoman.*

ANGOLETTA, *a sempstress.*

MERLINO, *a Neapolitan street-Arab.*

CHECCINO, *a servant.*

A WAITER AT AN INN.

A PORTER.

*Scene: Venice.*

He threw down his quill, and beaming with satisfaction, exclaimed in his pleasant dialect: "Oh, blessed be you, Master Abagiggi! If I hadn't seen you, I'd have been floured and fried. Thanks to you, it's going to be a fine comedy. Yes, sir, a fine comedy!" And he caught up his quill again.

A comedy? All improvised in half an hour? All due—with its twenty-one different characters—to the sight of one Armenian peddler? Was this plump, smiling man an amiable lunatic? No, he was Carlo Goldoni, playwright of the Sant' Angelo Theatre, who, during the previous twelve months, and while in steady attendance on his company, had written fifteen plays, thirteen of them successes; Carlo Goldoni, now famous as the founder of Italian comedy and the "pioneer naturalist in the drama of the world."

A great genius, then? No, not even that; rather

the favored godchild of a consensus of circumstances.

Born with the tendencies of a play-loving family, and amid the means of gratifying them, offered by his father's library; born with the observant, humorous, flexible temperament of the true writer of comedy, he had been a playwright from childhood, making his first attempt (which his uncle refused to believe a child's work) at the age of eleven. Placed in a monkish school at Rimini, he had naturally turned to what he could find within it least boresome—Plautus, Terence, Aristophanes, Menander; to what he could find without it most attractive—the performances, and presently the caresses of a troupe of actors, with whom he had finally run away. Entered as a *petit abbe* in the fashionable Papal College of Pavia, he had (besides indulging in a variety of escapades, amorous and other) learnt his first lessons in that great school of satire, society, and put them to such good use as to be expelled for a dramatic satire of his composition: a calamity which had led to further academic wanderings, further adventures—mostly amorous—and further lessons in the great dramatic school of life. Induced to adopt the legal profession by an amiable desire to please his mother, he had entered into a new series of wanderings and experiences as student of law, assistant criminal coadjutor, criminal coadjutor, lawyer, *gentilhomme de chambre* to a Venetian minister, secretary to the same: wanderings which led him all over northern Italy; experiences which had varied from the sight of a great battle to a multitude of love-affairs, one of the latter being the cause of his finally, though not definitely, entering the profession for which he had been born, and putting to practical use the talents which he



had been exercising more and more frequently as an amateur. Finally, but not definitely, his easy-going, optimistic tendency to accept whatever was offered him as good, had, not long after his marriage, landed him in a briar-bush of disagreeables as Genoese consul at Venice. For this mishap he had consoled himself, in his comfortable way, by making it and another which befell him at the time the subjects of two good comedies, and by taking his wife on a trip to Tuscany, which had ended in a stay of several years, during which he had amiably taken his place in Arcadia, alertly resuming work at the bar. Then had come the offer from the Sant' Angelo Theatre and the return to Venice. Now there he sat, in the quiet little parlor which the gilded mirror was suffusing with a soft sunset glow, writing his sixteenth comedy for that season;—pausing to rest, just now, his quill suspended; his face lifted into the pleasant, rosy light, and touched with a pleasant smile of reminiscence. Checca? Beppo? Beatrice? Lelio? Improvised them in half an hour? Heavens, no; he had seen them act, had acted with them, hundreds of times in the long, long, myriad-scened comedy of his life.

And Pantaloon? And Harlequin? Had he seen them act, too? Yes, often: them, and Brighella, and Il Dottore, and Fracasso, and all the other Merry Andrews of the Improvised Comedy; for with the exception of Metastasio's and Zeno's melodrama, theirs was the only drama on the stage. Indeed, to having seen so much of them he owed not a little of his ability, not a little of his sleight-of-hand rapidity in the construction of his plays. To them he owed it, if in half an hour he had been able to sketch out the plot of this *Women's Tittle-Tattle* on which he was working now, for that plot, based

on a giddy maze of quid pro quo's and surprises, was of a kind he had learnt by heart from them. To them he owed it if he could so rapidly transform a mere rough outline into a play: in great measure, he was improvising as he went along; just as they, past masters at it, had taught him to do. To them he owed that thrust-and-counter dialogue in which Arlecchino answers Lelio's dainty sighs for his mistress with comically material sighs for a good dinner. To them he owed his quick decision as to the number of acts: three—exposition, intrigue and dénouement. Finally, to them he owed themselves:—owed Pantaloon, and Harlequin, in this case. No, he did not owe themselves entirely to them; rather they owed these clean and natural selves in which they appeared in his comedies to him. He it was who was teaching them that there is no real mirth in filth, and no real art in unnaturalness; he it was who had grieved over their abject state, and had sworn to regenerate into real, happy, natural comedy that painted, foul-mouthed, worn-out drab the *Comedia dell' Arte*. Once she had been the wittiest representative of a witty populace, from whose frolics, and gossiping, and market-square imbroglios, from whose quick, shrewd repartee and boy-like gift of ridicule, from whose quaint sayings and proverbs she had sprung. Once she had made it laugh with her mimicry of dress and speech in the surrounding towns. Once she had delighted its ingenuous imagination with fairy tales and wonders. Once she had been the cleverest, maddest thing in the crowd. Now she was a broken-down hag, despised and browbeaten, who sold her weary old self to infamy in order not to starve. And good Goldoni, good Papa Goldoni, as he was to be lovingly called in future years, felt the pity of it.

She should return as she had been. No, she should be better than she had been, for she should cast aside unreasonable mockery and ignorant wonderment; she should become a real, bright representative of the people as they really were. Perhaps, with time, she might even become as perfect as the comedy of the great Molière; who knows? Lovably sunshiny, gently obstinate, boyishly confident in the future, he was working at his kindly task. Again and again, the hag had become a happy maiden in his pages; again and again she was to do so in the future. Youngest and truest-hearted and most graceful she will remain forever when, draped in the dainty Venetian shawl and speaking the pleasant Venetian dialect, she appears in those sprightly comedies of the populace and bourgeoisie of Venice "which, perhaps," says Papa Goldoni, modestly, "do me the greatest honor."

Yes, it is to these charming Venetian comedies that Goldoni owes his fame. During his long life he wrote over two hundred and fifty works—tragedies, comedies, melodramas, opéras bouffes;—he wrote in Venetian, in Tuscan, in French; he wrote in prose and in verse; he pictured Italians and foreigners, the aristocracy, the bourgeoisie, and the populace; he attempted every style and every subject, as he tasted of almost every aspect and experience of life; but the Venetian comedies are the best of all. And it is natural that they should be. The Venetian dialect was Goldoni's native speech; literary Italian was for him the language of books, the formal language of grammars and primers; whence it is that the characters of his Tuscan comedies talk like school-ma'ams, and are constrained and ill at ease. The people of Venice were his own people, closely familiar to him as only love could

make them. The bourgeoisie was his own class—just enough withdrawn from him, by virtue of his superior mind and more varied experience, to appear in a clearly objective light to his eyes. The populace was the spectacle he loved best and saw most often; it was ever before him in those lively streets where he liked so well to stroll. As for the aristocracy, it formed no part of the Venice he loved and understood; it frequently condescended to admit him to its gilded drawing-rooms, but he never felt at home there; he disapproved of its viciousness, he disliked its cold-bloodedness, and he failed to grasp the artificial daintiness of its refinement. In his plays it appears as the outsider, and, so far as he dared, the villain of the piece; it speaks literary Italian—the language of outsiders—and both speech and speakers lack the easy elegance characteristic of both. No, it was among the real people, speaking the people's tongue, that he felt at home; in them he felt his own dear Venice of merchants, and sailors, and gondoliers; in them—untrammelled by etiquette, and affectation, and French fashions—he felt that genial Venetian temperament which was also his own.

The genial piquant Venetian, how real he becomes for us as we read! Brown and handsome; with glossy black hair and curled moustachios; with quick, luminous, laughing dark eyes; with pleasant voice and ready quip, and boyish laughter. How various he is, how carelessly sunshiny, how divinely exempt from the deeper thoughts and feelings of northern manhood! He loves, forgets, hates, forgives, with the impetuous irresponsibility of a boy; a word, and his eyes are blazing, his hand is on his knife; a pleading caress, and his eyes are brimming with remorseful tears, his arms are wide open;

an hour later, and he has forgotten the whole matter. Like a boy he dreads ridicule above all things; like a boy's his mind is never quiet an instant; like a Venetian's alone it is intelligent and witty in a way that laughs training to scorn. Of training he has had none, perhaps; but, standing erect and graceful on his gondola, he can sing as his foreign master cannot, and can spontaneously appreciate the marble tracery of a window as his master has learnt to do from books. His dialect—that vivacious, colorful, musical dialect “qui zézaie” like the breeze amid the leaves—he has learnt in the streets, perhaps, but it is as dainty and flexible as a bird's song. Self control he has never troubled his head with; his moods change with the weather; but then the weather is almost always sunshiny in Venice, and the wind almost always blows in from the sea, bringing with it a little crisp saltiness which perhaps gives sunshiny Beppò that curious little crisp resoluteness of his. Yes, crisp resoluteness,—it is as characteristic of him as his careless lightheartedness and irresponsibility; for Beppo is no basking lizard—not after his siesta, at least—and if he lacks enduring fortitude, he does not lack spirit and courage: “In this country,” he exclaims in *The Respectable Girl* (and she is a fearlessly respectable girl, even though she thinks it wisest not to trust herself alone with her sweetheart), “in this country we boatmen constitute a body of men the like of which is not to be found elsewhere in the world. We serve, it is true, but ours is a noble service which does not soil the hands.....above all, we are so loyal and so warmly attached to our country that we should shed our blood for her, and fight the entire world, if we heard our Venice slandered, for she is the queen of the sea.” Voluble boasting? No, in 1848.

when the hated Austrian was starving and bombarding Venice, Beppo rowed his boatloads of powder from defence to defence, singing as he rowed, though he had had not even a slice of roast pumpkin to eat, and the shells were bursting on all sides.

“But all this,” you may say, “is true only of Beppo the gondolier, with his short jacket and broad sash and red liberty cap; or of Beppo the sailor, on board his fishing-tartane with its heavy bison shoulders and its painted butterfly wings; or of Beppo who goes crying “Hot pumpkin to sell!” or “Ribbons and buttons!” This is true of Beppo of the careless populace. But what about Sior Pantalone, the cautious, staid, crusty merchant of the bourgeoisie? If Beppo is Goldoni’s typical Venetian, what about this other type? “Yes, Beppo is the typical Venetian; Sior Pantalone, despite appearances to the contrary, is merely a variety of Beppo. To begin with, Sior Pantalone is no longer young—he is Beppo’s uncle, perhaps—and unrestrained temperaments are very apt to become unrestrainedly grumpy in old age. Secondly, he is a merchant (see his distinctive black cloak, red trousers, and black skull cap), and the counting house knows no temperaments,—it sobers all alike. Thirdly, his impassiveness is not as real as it looks.” When his wife (see *The Jealous Women*) somewhat irrationally nags at him about his supposed infidelities, he suddenly flies into a tropical passion, beats her, I am sorry to say, and when she bursts into tears, poor soul—begins to sniffle himself! The very crustiest of all Goldoni’s old merchants—the four old bears in *I Rusteghi*—are delightfully explosive in their domestic tyranny; in a fit of passion they plot all sorts of iron-bound hardships for their wives—and in the midst of it all are shamed into complete

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submission by one of those very dames. No, Sior Pantalone is a merchant, and an old-fashioned merchant, who truly disapproves of the ever-increasing laxity he sees around him,—but he is a Venetian, like Beppo, just the same.

And what about those aforementioned dames? What about the women? Are they also sunshiny and irresponsible, yet crisp withal? Ye gods, are they not! What a mingled chattering, and whispering, and laughing, and scolding, and laughing again rises up from those magic pages!

Gathered on the little square, making lace and mischief with about equal dexterity; or standing on their little flower-brightened terraces, shrilling tasty bits of hearsay back and forth across the narrow street; or (to pass from plebs to bourgeoisie) paying each other ceremonious, bourgeoisie little visits in Sior Pantalone's stuffy parlor, and there telling on each other's husbands; or (to unite them both where both loved best to be) tripping in and out of masked pandemonium, bent on pranks and mischief without end: in the squares, in the streets, in the houses, in the gondolas—everywhere they are, and always talking, and almost always making mischief. Ah, the fascinating little demons, with their dainty black shawls draped over pretty head and shoulders, with their coquettish little feet peeping from under the "donzelon," with their devil-possessed tongues never still an instant, how many plots they tangle, how many times they get their men by the ears, how many times they upset every benevolent attempt to make peace! And when at last the storm bursts, and it is: "By Gog's sea, now I'll do for you!" and "By Gog's blood, now I'll rip out your guts!" and knives glitter,—then, then what screams, what brave little rushing in, and pleading, and pushing,

and pulling, and dragging into the house, amid a torrent of picturesque invective! Or perhaps jealous, hot-blooded Beppo is so worked up by persistent chit-chat that with a curse and, alas, with a slap, even, he breaks off with Lucietta; then there are tears, heartbroken, scalding tears, for Lucietta is a devoted sweetheart, even though she is a gossiping, spiteful little demon. But the squabble is not to end in tragedy: presently everybody is crying; then, after infinite vociferation, everybody is embracing and kissing, and all is sunshine again.

I have said "everybody is embracing and kissing," and the average reader will imagine that the first to embrace and kiss are Beppo and Lucietta. The average reader will be wrong; if he reads these plays, he will find the love-making therein a sore puzzle. Beppo has never once kissed Lucietta, though it is two years since, after a preliminary course of love-looks in the street and a few whispered words, he obtained "*Sior pare's*" consent to the match, and with it permission to call on the girl in the house (strictly tabooed before),—a permission of which he might avail himself only when *Siora mare* was by. He has not kissed her once, although, probably, he has already given her "the sign,"—the betrothal ring. He will not be free to kiss her until, after the preliminary ceremony of taking hands and saying, "Husband," "Wife," they are finally married in church: such was popular love-making in Goldoni's Venice; such, very nearly, it is today. Byron says something about its being altogether the fault of that confounded hot sun that warms 'em so. In great measure it is altogether the merit of that crisp little resoluteness which I have mentioned before. "*Mi son una putta daben*" ("I am a respectable girl") was the credo



and war-cry of those lasses, and against it no pleading of ardent lover, no wheedling of enterprising, bewigged snob could avail. The noble dames of the aristocracy might receive cavalier servants in their chambers, and do worse in their boxes at the theatre; the lasses of the people were honest girls. And so the love-making was a strange, dangerously repressed affair, made up of looks, and sighs, and sudden bursts of jealousy.

The honesty of these Luciettas, the patriotism of these Beppos, the testy sobriety of these Sior Pantalones, the clean sportiveness of those one hundred and twenty jolly burghers in *The Merry Men* who club together to enjoy a fine spread on the Giudecca,—all these examples of moral soundness constitute a notable mass of evidence to the credit of Venice's populace and bourgeoisie; for the comedies in which they occur show us a putrid sea of corruption lapping at these solid islands on every side, soaking in by every unguarded crack and cranny. Everywhere one meets with titled rakes in search of victims, broken-down gamblers in search of cowries, penniless knights in search of dowries, go-between servants, pawnbrokers, and usurers. Everywhere one sees a plague of gambling, a cloud of conjugal suspicion, and the idiocy of folly in old age.

As I have said elsewhere, the aristocracy and gentry do not cut a pretty figure in Goldoni's plays, though frequently—with a suddenness more in keeping with the fantastic surprises of Improvised Comedy than with truth to life—they reform at the eleventh hour. In *The Respectable Girl* the heroine is forcibly abducted by a marquis and rescued barely in time by the rake's wife, who, on her side, is a reckless gambler. In *The Squabbles of Chioggia* the ex-

cellent magistrate's purpose in finding a husband for one of the village girls is more than broadly hinted to him by a youth to whom he broaches the subject. In *The Public Square* we see a *cavaliere*—another good-natured but dissipated person—looking about for a dowry, and presently finding it. In *Women's Tittle-Tattle* we admire Lelio, a penniless fop who, despite the dirt-colored ruffles which he has to explain away as a new French fashion, sighs but for a mistress. The only gentleman who does not disgrace himself in these comedies is a delightful young wag in *The Merry Men*, whose pranks upon a doltish friend are portrayed with a charming, light irony that might be Addison's. The rest are a bad, abject crew, and the sturdy people turn on them with startling frankness. Indeed there is throughout these comedies a tone of aggressive democracy which smacks of the Revolution, and makes us quite ready to believe that Goldoni died proclaiming himself a republican. His Lordship talks haughtily, but gets back as good as he sends. "More plebeian is he," retorts the Sior Pantalone of *The Cavalier and the Lady*, "who, having inherited a title and a little land, spends his days in idleness, believing himself privileged to trample everyone under foot, and live a life of domination."

The go-between servant was an evil neither new nor especially Venetian in Goldoni's time; Brighella, one of the two Bergamask valets of the Improvised Comedy, had long played that honorable rôle. It is not his presence in Goldoni's comedies that impresses one; it is his extreme frequency. Valets, waiters of inns, servant-maids,—they all murmur at the job, but they all do it: "When a patron commands," philosophically soliloquizes the waiter in *The Public Square*, "there's nothing for

it; one must obey." And so messages, and notes, and presents find their way to wives and maids. Sometimes these presents go astray and give delightfully unexpected turns to the plot; when, for example, Signor Raimondo, of *The Maids-of-All-Work* fame, entrusts a tempting ring to the careful hands of Signora Dorotea's maid, and that canny lass sells it to her mistress instead of giving it to her, and her exemplary mistress (having gambled away all her money) offers it as a pledge to Signor Raimondo's wife, in exchange for the trifling favor of a slight loan, a very pretty kettle of fish is set a-boiling. The original of this particular maid-of-all-work, however, happened not to be a Venetian; she was a fair native of Udine, where Goldoni himself, then a youth of eighteen, had played the part of Signor Raimondo.

I say that this particular maid happened not to be a Venetian; judging by the comedies, she might easily have been one, for a more egregious sisterhood of minxes than these *massere*—whether go-betweens or not—never fooled masters and mistresses. How vivaciously do they discuss the private concerns of "the old dotard" who employs this one or "the shallow-brained chit" who thinks herself mistress of that; how generously do they lend each other their mistresses' dominoes; how hospitably do they invite a favored gentleman to taste of their master's good cheer; and, interrupted in the midst of the feast by that wandering old fool, how diplomatically do they send him off again, happy in the persuasion that his sister invited the guest! And we dare to complain of our servants! What if they were like these?

Brokers and usurers are thick and plenty. In *The Respectable Girl*, one of the latter, caught by

My Lord the Marquis in the act of plucking My Lady the Marchioness, genially comes to an understanding with His Lordship, whereby they both pluck her together. Of the former I remember none worth particular mention—but who could forget Dame Lugrezia of *The Jealous Women*? She, canny widow that she is, unites in herself the gifts and merits of both. Indeed, Dame Lugrezia is a woman of wonderful versatility: she is a broker; she is a usurer; she is a professional sibyl, who can sell you lucky numbers for the lottery; she is, thanks to the pledges left with her, a haven of salvation if you wish to hire a domino or a suit of clothes; she is an expert at bargains; she is a genius at retaining the change. That vexation, straying property, and that brooding cloud, conjugal suspicions, combine to get this brisk dame into trouble; suddenly she finds herself in a hornet's nest of angry wives. But hers is no faint heart; she scathes right and left with her tongue, and when presently she perceives that the jealous wives mean to beat her, she simultaneously realizes that her virtue is being questioned, and presto!—a dagger is gleaming wickedly in her hand, and undisturbed retreat is insured. That evening good Dame Lugrezia goes, duly masked, to the *Ridotto*, there to gamble with the money of a certain clever youth; the sinister undertone which she introduces into that gay resort, and which is answered in muffled echoes here and there, contributes not a little to make *The Jealous Women* a rather sinister little comedy, to my mind,—full of ambiguous masks, and furtive gestures, and dark whisperings.

Gamblers and gambling: alas! now we come to one of those unguarded crannies in the solid islands lapped by the putrid sea;—a broad, deep cranny, this, and soaking full. Like an all-pervading dis-

ease, the passion for gambling has infected every class, in these plays. Lords and ladies are not the only ruined gamblers that appear: the Sior Pantalone of *The Bankruptcy*, and his wife, are both of the number;—both ruined, and both eager for a chance to ruin themselves again. We do not soon forget this shamed, shameless old merchant; Mr. Chatfield-Taylor truly says, his “weak, old vice-ridden features haunt the reader long after portraits less cruelly true have been forgotten.” Nor are these two the only ones to show us that the sturdy thriftiness of their class has already begun to decay: the husbands in *The Jealous Women* have come off winners, this time; if they had not, there would have been two more wrecks to swell the list, for the goldsmith’s stock was what he had in his show-window, and the mercer’s was already forfeit to his creditors. And the wives of these two men rejoice at the good news as if they had heard of a successful transaction, instead of a reprieve from pauperism. Why not! Their husbands have cast together business and gambling, industry and chance, respectability and shame. Nor are the aristocracy and the middle class the only two stricken: even the populace gambles away its little savings; *The Public Square* opens with a game of chance and closes with another. No, the infection is everywhere and in a thousand forms: cards, roulette, private lotteries, state lottery—ruin within the means of all. Alas, alas, that festering gap was not closed in Goldoni’s time; and, though much has been done, though Italian papers are full of accounts of raids, it is not closed yet,—at Venice, or elsewhere in beautiful Italy. Still society whispers about the heavy losses of the aristocracy; still the beautiful avenues are befouled with the curses and oaths of men, boys, children, gam-

bling away their few sous; still, worst of all, a public lottery, maintained by the state, adds to the misery of the poor. And the evil plant bears the same fruit as in Goldoni's time: ugly sibyls like Dame Lugrezia still lurk in wait for victims; old men sell lucky numbers in the street; dreams and omens still cloud the mind of an intelligent populace. Of how intelligent that populace is, I had a startling proof, years ago, when I discovered that my gardener's method of determining the lucky numbers consisted in the application of a home-made science of probabilities identical in principle with that known to higher mathematics.

One more social disease remains preserved in the Venetian comedies; one more disease dragging old Venice down into the grave: the giggling, simpering idiocy of tottering mashers and toothless, white-haired flirts. Like the last, it bites deep into bourgeoisie and populace; in fact, it bites deeper: the old merchant in *The Respectable Girl* earns a stern warning from the girl who has been trusting him as a kindly old friend; the merchant in *The Bankruptcy* is a debased old rake; in *The Maids-of-All-Work* there are two of these ghastly old men, who accost masks, and try to drive each other away, and shake trembling fingers in each other's faces. In *The Merry Women* it is an old lady who decks herself out in mask and ribbons and insists on accompanying her nieces to the Carnival. When the damsels finally manage to shake her off, she gads off to a coffee-house and indulges in a pitiful flirtation with a man whom she meets there and who is stricken dumb with horror when the poor old crazy thing presently removes her mask. In *One of the Last Evenings of Carnival* it is old Madame Gatteau who simpers drivell about her relatively youthful age, and

paints her face, and sets her cap for a young man, who, to save himself, has to tell her in plain terms what she ought to know herself. In *The Public Square* two old toothless crones quarrel because each calls the other old, make pitiful evasions about their ages, and finally confide to each other that they mean to get married again. And always it is: "Of course, I'm a little older than such a one, but dear me! that doesn't mean that I'm really old." "Of course, I'm no longer a child, but I'm as straight as a trivet, and I can walk quite fast; I'm still young." "Old! Those who are dead are old. I want to have a good time, and see the girls, and not think about such gloomy things as being old."

Poor old things! they must have had good reason to dread being called old; there can have been but little thought for them in butterfly Venice: "I don't want to be left in a corner with the old folks," says one of them. Poor old things! But it was not so much dread of being abandoned that actuated them as reluctance to abandon the pleasures and follies of their youth; again and again it is: "I haven't yet had my fling! I'm not satiated yet!" Many a reader of these plays, feeling within him a growing need of rest, must wonder at these strange old people; but then, ours is an age of work, while theirs was an age of play. Even so, the spectacle must have been a remarkable one: all those decrepit old things, half feigning, half believing themselves young; still painted, still masked, still beribboned; tottering after follies of long ago; living in a vague, fading dream till at last they sank down dead of extreme old age in the midst of a Carnival rout of ghosts.

They were the weakest of the weak ones. Born in a sunny clime, brought up amid a perpetual Carni-

val, misguided by rulers whose character was weakness and whose strength was cajoling diplomacy, they died weak old children. But they did not constitute the whole populace nor the whole bourgeoisie. Let us not forget the many sober Sior Pantalones, the many spirited Beppos, the many honest and high-mettled Luciettas; let us not forget the healthily jovial *Merry Men*, nor, for that matter, most of the *Merry Women*, whose merriness is giddy, but full of roguish nerve; above all, let us not forget those sturdy fisher-folk of *The Squabbles of Chioggia*, who want to "dance, and sing, and have a good time," as Lucietta says, but who cheerfully risk their lives at sea to earn their daily bread. They squabble, but when the trouble becomes at all serious, the men face each other on the open square, disdaining all scheming and subterfuge; and if the women gossip, and tittle-tattle, they, too, when the matter becomes serious, can bravely force back the tears, and take harsh consequences for the common good. Impulsive, excitable, unrestrained, they vivaciously thread one of those delightful mazes of trifles which good Papa Goldoni loved so well; but still the sea breathes deep and strong before them, and the tartanes, spreading their orange-colored sails to the crisp, salt wind, wing bravely out into the open for an honest, rugged day's work.

CHARLES LEMMI.



## “ENTER THE ARMY”

*“That’s a stage direction and that’s a drama.*

*“I sometimes live in Trafalgar Square, where all sorts of undramatic things go on all day long, but when I hear a band in the distance, and I see the troops coming along, I feel that although it is merely a regiment of men, it is dramatic. What you may say is, that it is theatrical. Strange, that troops marching so trimly should be called theatrical! Is the effect theatrical? I do not think so. I think the effect is dramatic. That the army may be General Booth’s army, and that they are carrying his coffin to the grave, does not seem to me to make it more dramatic, but the fact that it is a body of men in uniform and that it is marching in unison, that seems to me very dramatic. If they were all divided and split up, in what way would they differ from the ordinary? In the entrance of the army we return to the old feeling that was in the entrance of the chorus in the Greek drama or the entrance of the choir in medieval drama. The idea of the chorus may be old-fashioned to some people. Certainly the spirit of harmony and uniformity is not a very modern spirit, and except in the army, or among the police, or in a cricket match, we seldom are aware of its presence. But in art, it seems to me entirely forgotten, and yet it is the one essential thing that should be remembered.*

*“Well—‘exit the army.’”*

[Quoted from the critical notes of Edward Gordon Craig in his book of designs called *Toward a New Theatre.*]

## THE SQUABBLES OF CHIOGGIA

A Comedy in Three Acts by Carlo Goldoni

Translated from the Italian by Charles Lemmi

### CAST OF CHARACTERS

CAPTAIN TONI (Anthony), *captain of a fishing tartane.*

DAME PASQUA, *wife to CAPTAIN TONI.*

LUCIETTA (Lucy), *a maiden; sister to CAPTAIN TONI.*

BEPPPO (Joseph), *a youth; brother to CAPTAIN TONI.*

TITTA-NANE (John-Baptist), *a young fisherman.*

CAPTAIN FORTUNATO, *a fisherman.*

DAME LIBERA, *wife to CAPTAIN FORTUNATO.*

ORSETTA (Ursula), *a maiden; sister to DAME LIBERA.*

CHECCA (Frances), *a maiden; sister to DAME LIBERA.*

CAPTAIN VICENZO (Vincent), *a fisherman.*

TOFFOLO (Christopher), *a boatman.*

CANOCCHIA (literally, Spindle-Shanks), *a seller of roast pumpkin.*

ISIDORO, *Coadjutor to the Criminal Chancellor.*

*A man-servant in the service of ISIDORO.*

*An usher of the Criminal Chancery.*

*Sailors on board CAPTAIN TONI'S tartane.*

*Scene: Chioggia, a fishing-village near Venice.*

# THE SQUABBLES OF CHIOGGIA

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

BY CARLO GOLDONI

## ACT I

*Scene I. A Street with Various Small Houses*

[PASQUA and LUCIETTA sit on one side of the street; LIBERA, ORSETTA, and CHECCA on the other. All, resting on straw-bottomed chairs, are working at pieces of lace, which are attached to cushions placed on appropriate stands.]

LUCIETTA. What do you think of it, souls,—this weather?

ORSETTA. What wind is it?

LUCIETTA. Shall I tell you? I don't know myself. Oh, sister-in-law, what wind is it?

PASQUA. A puff of sirocco, and a good one, too; can't you feel it?

ORSETTA. Is it well for it to be blowing from the sea?

PASQUA. Why, yes, child, yes; if our men come home, they'll run in before the wind.

LIBERA. Aye, aye. They should make port some time to-day or to-morrow.

CHECCA. I must hurry up, then; I should like to have this lace done when they return.

LUCIETTA. Hey, Checca, how much more have you to make?

CHECCA. I have—it lacks just a yard.

LIBERA. Little enough you work at it, child!

CHECCA. Oh, really! And how long is it, please, that I have had this lace on this cushion?

LIBERA. It's a week.

CHECCA. Well! A week!

LIBERA. There, there! Hurry up, if you want the skirt.

LUCIETTA. Hey, Checca, what skirt are you going to make yourself?

CHECCA. A new calico skirt.

LUCIETTA. My! Say, Checca, really? You're not going to begin wearing the *donzelon*, are you?

CHECCA. *Donzelon*? What does that mean?

ORSETTA. Oh, what a ninny! Don't you know that when a girl's grown up they make her a *donzelon*; and when she's got the *donzelon* it's a sign that her folks mean to give her a husband?

CHECCA. Oh! [*To LIBERA.*] Say, sister!

LIBERA. Well, my child?

CHECCA. Are you really going to give me a husband?

LIBERA. We'd better wait till my man comes home, to talk about that.

CHECCA. Oh!—Dame Pasqua, hasn't my brother-in-law gone fishing with Cap'n Toni?

PASQUA. Aye, Checca; why, don't you know that he's aboard the tartane with my man and his brother Beppo?

CHECCA. Isn't Titta-Nane with them, too?

LUCIETTA. What's that? Yes, he is, Checca; what do you mean by that? What might you want with Titta-Nane, please?

CHECCA. I? Nothing.

LUCIETTA. Well, I should say so? Don't you know that it's two years that we've been keeping com-

pany, and that he's promised to bring me the ring this time?

CHECCA. [*To herself.*] Mean thing! She wants them all for herself!

ORSETTA. Eh, sirs! Don't get so hot, Lucietta. Before Checca gets married, *I've* got to get married; don't you forget it. When the boat comes in, your brother Beppo will marry *me*; then, if Titta-Nane wants you, you, too, may get married. For Checca there's plenty of time.

CHECCA. Indeed, miss! You wouldn't ever have me marry, would you?

LIBERA. That'll do, girl; attend to your work.

CHECCA. Oh, yes, of course. But if my mother were ali—

LIBERA. Hold your tongue! Do you want this cushion in the ribs?

CHECCA. [*To herself.*] But I want to get married—I want! *Will*, too,—even if I have to marry one of those shabby old things that go after crabs!

[*TOFFOLO enters.*]

LUCIETTA. Hey, Toffolo! Good day to you!

TOFFOLO. Give you good day, Lucietta.

ORSETTA. And we, Master Numbskull? Are we nobody?

TOFFOLO. If you'll have a bit a patience, if you'll have, I'll give you good day also.

CHECCA. [*To herself.*] I shouldn't dislike even Toffolo.

PASQUA. What is it, lad. Aren't you working to-day?

TOFFOLO. I've worked till now, I have. I've been down below the beach for a boatload of fennel; and I've pulled down to Brondolo with it, and sold it to the Ferrara carrier; and I've pocketed my day.

LUCIETTA. And aren't you going to stand us a treat, Toffolo,—with all that money?

TOFFOLO. Aye, that I will! What'll you have? Aye, sure; that I will.

CHECCA. [*To ORSETTA.*] Ugh! Isn't she a bare-faced thing, to talk so?

TOFFOLO. Leave it to me, Lucietta; wait a minute. Ho, there, pumpkin-to-sell!

[CANOCCHIA *enters, with various pieces of roasted sweet pumpkin on a board.*]

CANOCCHIA. Command me, master.

TOFFOLO. Here, let me see it.

CANOCCHIA. Here you are. Look!—it's just out of the oven.

TOFFOLO. Will you have it, Lucietta? [*Offers her a piece.*]

LUCIETTA. Sure I will! Give it here.

TOFFOLO. And you, Dame Pasqua, d'you care for some?

PASQUA. Gog's sea! Don't I, though. I like roasted pumpkin so much—give me a piece.

TOFFOLO. Take it. Aren't you eating it, Lucietta?

LUCIETTA. It burns; I'm waiting for it to cool.

CHECCA. Hey there, Canocchia!

CANOCCHIA. Coming! coming!

CHECCA. Give me a piece, too.

TOFFOLO. I'm here, I am; I'll give you a piece.

CHECCA. I'd rather not, thanking you kindly, master!

TOFFOLO. Why, what's—why not?

CHECCA. Because I don't have to accept things from every person who thinks he's free to offer them to me; so there!

TOFFOLO. Lucietta accepted.

CHECCA. Lucietta's easy about accepting; she's of the accommodating kind.

LUCIETTA. What's that, miss? Are you taking it ill, now, that I was the first?

CHECCA. I'm not talking to you, mistress, and I don't accept anything from anybody.

LUCIETTA. And I? What do I accept?

CHECCA. Yes, ma'am, you do! You even accepted chestnuts from the pretty, cross-eyed bachelor lad who pulls an oar in the middle-aged tier in the boat.

LUCIETTA. I did? That's a lie!

PASQUA. There, there! give over.

LIBERA. Aye; give over, give over.

CANOCCHIA. Does anybody want more pumpkin?

TOFFOLO. Go, and a good wind to you.

CANOCCHIA. Pumpkin to sell! Hot pumpkin to sell! [*He goes out, crying his wares.*]

TOFFOLO. [*To CHECCA.*] Keep in mind what you said to me, Miss Checca: I'm not good enough to offer you things! Keep it in mind—keep it, for I shan't forget it, I shan't.

CHECCA. [*To TOFFOLO.*] Go away. I'm not attending to you.

TOFFOLO. [*To CHECCA.*] Aye, Gog's sea!—it wasn't fooling I meant, either!

CHECCA. [*To TOFFOLO.*] About what?

TOFFOLO. [*To CHECCA.*] My godfather's going to put a deck over my head; want to marry me, when I'll be going trips like the others?

CHECCA. [*To TOFFOLO.*] Really mean it, Toffolo?

TOFFOLO. [*To CHECCA.*] Aye. But I'm not good enough for you, remember. I don't forget, I don't.

CHECCA. [*To TOFFOLO.*] Oh, don't keep saying that! I meant the pumpkin, not you, Toffolo.

LIBERA. Hey there! Hey there! What's this talk?

TOFFOLO. What? I'm just watching her work.

LIBERA. Clear from there, I tell you.

TOFFOLO. What harm am I doing you? Oh, well, I'll go; there! [*He rises and flings off to the other side.*]

CHECCA. [*To herself.*] Ugh! May something bad happen! There!

ORSETTA. [*To LIBERA.*] What's the good of that, dear sister? If he really wanted her— You know the lad he is; wouldn't you give her to him?

LUCIETTA. [*To PASQUA.*] Well, what do you think of that, sister-in-law? She's beginning early i' the day!

PASQUA. [*To LUCIETTA.*] If you knew how mad the chit makes me!

LUCIETTA. [*To herself.*] Just look at her,—Pertness, there! Long live the jackanapes! I want to see her blubber!

TOFFOLO. Don't tire yourself out, Dame Pasqua.

PASQUA. Oh, I'm not tiring myself; no, son; don't you see what thick thread I'm using? It's cheap lace, this.

TOFFOLO. How's yours, Lucietta?

LUCIETTA. Eh, mine's dear—thirty sous!

TOFFOLO. Makes a fine showing, too, I say!

LUCIETTA. Do you like it?

TOFFOLO. Well, rather! Just see how neat! I say, you've got pretty neat little fingers, I say.

LUCIETTA. Come here; listen.

TOFFOLO. [*To himself.*] Oh! Eh! Calmer sea, here! [*He sits down near LUCIETTA.*]

CHECCA. [*To ORSETTA, calling her attention to TOFFOLO.*] Hey! Look at that.

ORSETTA. [*To CHECCA.*] It's their business; don't meddle with 'em.

TOFFOLO. [*To LUCIETTA.*] Will they take a rope's end to me if I stay here?



LUCIETTA. [*To TOFFOLO.*] Oh, what a goose you are!

ORSETTA. [*To CHECCA.*] Well, really! Just look at her!

TOFFOLO. Have some snuff, Dame Pasqua.

PASQUA. Is it of the good kind?

TOFFOLO. Aye, Dame Pasqua; it's Malamocco snuff.

PASQUA. Let's have a pinch of it.

TOFFOLO. Aye, sure; willingly.

CHECCA. [*To herself.*] If Titta-Nane finds out, —poor thing, I say!

TOFFOLO. And you, Lucietta, want some snuff?

LUCIETTA. Give here; yes, I'll have some. [*Secretly to TOFFOLO.*] I want to spite her, over there. [*She nods towards CHECCA.*]

TOFFOLO. [*To LUCIETTA.*] By Gog, Lucietta! what a sly look you've got in your eyes, Lucietta!

LUCIETTA. [*To TOFFOLO.*] You've got it to a dot. My eyes aren't Checca's, are they, Toffolo?

TOFFOLO. [*To LUCIETTA.*] Whose? Checca's? Not in the least bit, they're not!

LUCIETTA. [*To TOFFOLO.*] Look at her,—how sweet and pretty she is! [*She nods derisively toward CHECCA.*]

TOFFOLO. [*To LUCIETTA.*] Aw, dip flag!

CHECCA. [*To herself.*] Never doubt it, they're talking about me.

LUCIETTA. [*To TOFFOLO.*] Really, now, don't you like her?

TOFFOLO. [*To LUCIETTA.*] Who? Checca? Not the least bit! Gog, no; not even a little!

LUCIETTA. [*To TOFFOLO, smiling.*] They call her Little Curd Pudding.

TOFFOLO. [*To LUCIETTA, smiling and looking to-*

wards CHECCA.] Little Curd Pudding, do they call her?

CHECCA. [*Loudly, towards LUCIETTA and TOFFOLO.*] I say! I'm not blind, d'ye know it? Will you stop it?

TOFFOLO. [*Loudly.*] Curd pudding to sell! Fresh curd pudding!

CHECCA. [*Starting up.*] What's that? What's this "Curd Pudding"?

ORSETTA. [*To CHECCA, rising.*] Never mind. Let be.

LIBERA. [*To CHECCA and ORSETTA, rising.*] Mind your work, there.

ORSETTA. Stare at your own good looks, Master Toffolo Runt.

TOFFOLO. What's this "Runt," by Gog?

ORSETTA. Yes, sir! Do you think we don't know it,—that they call you Toffolo Runt?

LUCIETTA. What pretty talk! What common sense, Orsetta!

ORSETTA. Oh, dear! Mistress Lucietta Bouncers!

LUCIETTA. What's this "Bouncers," please? Mind your own business, Mistress Orsetta Bran-Bun!

LIBERA. Stop knocking about my sisters, for, by Gog's sea, I tell you—

PASQUA. Talk respectful to my sister-in-law. [*She rises.*]

LIBERA. Oh, hold your tongue, Dame Pasqua Saucepan!

PASQUA. Hold your tongue yourself, Dame Libera Capon-Cock!

TOFFOLO. If they weren't women, blood of a watermelon—

LIBERA. Ho, but my man's coming home!

CHECCA. Titta-Nane's coming, too. I'm going to tell him everything!

LUCIETTA. Do. What do I care?

ORSETTA. Oh, dear, yes! what does she care? Isn't Cap'n Toni Fish-Basket coming? Eh, you'd better—

LUCIETTA. Oh, dear, yes! Mistress Orsetta! Isn't Cap'n Fortunato Mullet-Fish coming? Eh, he's a terrible—

ORSETTA. Oh, what a squall!

LUCIETTA. Oh, what a buzz-buzz!

PASQUA. Oh, what a gale!

ORSETTA. Oh, what a squabble!

[VICENZO enters.]

VICENZO. Ho, there! ho, there! easy, there, women! What the devil's wrong with you?

LUCIETTA. Hey! come here, Cap'n Vincenzo.

ORSETTA. Hey! listen to me, Cap'n Vincenzo Talk-adeal.

VICENZO. Calm down; Cap'n Toni's tartane's just made port.

PASQUA. [*To* LUCIETTA.] Hey, Lucietta! no more talk; my man's come in.

LUCIETTA. Oh, dear! I wish—Titta-Nane will be there!

LIBERA. Hey! there, girls, don't let your brother-in-law know.

ORSETTA. Aye, keep it quiet; then Beppo won't know.

TOFFOLO. Gog, Lucietta! don't worry; I'm here, Lucietta.

LUCIETTA. [*To* TOFFOLO.] Oh, go away, you!

PASQUA. [*To* TOFFOLO.] Clear out!

TOFFOLO. To me? Blood of an eel!

PASQUA. Go spin a top.

LUCIETTA. Go and play.

TOFFOLO. To me? Gog's sea! I'll go, I will, but

to little Checca—that's where I'll go. [*He approaches* CHECCA.]

LIBERA. Clear from there, you lubber!

ORSETTA. Take yourself off, do.

CHECCA. Go to blazes!

TOFFOLO. [*Angrily.*] To me, "lubber," is it? To me, "Go to blazes"?

VICENZO. Go swab deck.

TOFFOLO. [*Angrily.*] I say, I say, Cap'n Vicenzo!

VICENZO. Get clear, I tell you! [*Vicenzo cuffs him.*]

TOFFOLO. You're right, you are. I'd better go, I had; for if I get angry— [*He goes out.*]

PASQUA. [*To VICENZO.*] Where are they with the tartane?

VICENZO. There isn't enough to float her, in the canal; they've made her fast at Vigo. If you want anything, I'm going down to see what catch she's made; if she's brought in fish, I'm going to buy some to send to Ponte Longo to sell.

LUCIETTA. I say, though,—don't tell them—

LIBERA. Aye. I say, Cap'n Vicenzo, you wouldn't be for telling them anything, eh?

VICENZO. And who'd drown if I did?

ORSETTA. You wouldn't really be for telling them, would—

VICENZO. There, there! chattering! [*He goes out.*]

LIBERA. Come, now; let's not have our men find us squabbling.

PASQUA. Oh, as for me,—it boils up quick with me, but it cools off quick, too.

LUCIETTA. Checca, you still angry?

CHECCA. You're always doing mean things!

ORSETTA. Give over, give over! Come, are we friends again?

LUCIETTA. Oh, as for me, Orsetta,—haven't you said you want it so?

ORSETTA. Give me a kiss, Lucietta.

LUCIETTA. Take—my heart with it. [*They kiss.*]

ORSETTA. You, too, Checca.

CHECCA. My stomach's not good—especially when it comes to swallowing stones.

LUCIETTA. Come now, crazy-brains.

CHECCA. Oh, yes, "come now";—you're not more double-faced than an onion's double-skinned, are you?

LUCIETTA. I? Well, Checca, you can't know me very well if you say that. Come here; give me a kiss.

CHECCA. Take. Mind you, now; don't guy me any more.

PASQUA. Here's your cushion; let's go in. By and by we'll go aboard the tartane. [*She picks up the cushion and the stand, and goes out.*]

LIBERA. Let's go, too, lasses; we'll go and meet them. [*She goes out with her stand.*]

ORSETTA. I can't wait until I see him—my dear Beppo. [*She goes out with her stand.*]

LUCIETTA. Evening, Checca. [*She picks up her stand.*]

CHECCA. Evening; be fond of me. [*She picks up her stand and goes out.*]

LUCIETTA. Never doubt it. [*She goes out.*]

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Scene II. *A view of the Canal and various Fishing Vessels, among them CAPTAIN TONI'S Tartane*

[FORTUNATO, BEPPO, TITTA-NANE, and other men are on the vessel; TONI and, presently, VICENZO on shore.]

TONI. Like brisk lads, now, and all together: put that fish ashore.

VICENZO. Welcome home, Cap'n Toni.

TONI. Command and I'll do, Cap'n Vincenzo.

VICENZO. What luck?

TONI. Eh, we can't grumble.

VICENZO. What have you got aboard?

TONI. We've got a bit of everything, we've got.

VICENZO. Let me have a couple baskets of soles?

TONI. Aye, Bro' Vincenzo.

VICENZO. Let me have a couple baskets of gurnards?

TONI. Aye, Bro' Vincenzo.

VICENZO. Got any mullets?

TONI. Gog's sea! We got such humpers that, with good respect, they look like neats' tongues, they look.

VICENZO. Any skates?

TONI. Aye, we've got some of those, too, we've got;—'bout enough to cover the bottom of a barrel.

VICENZO. Might one have a look at it,—this fish?

TONI. Go aboard; Cap'n Fortunato's there. Before it's divided, have 'em show it to you.

VICENZO. I'll go see whether we can't strike a bargain, eh?

TONI. Take it easy, Cap'n. Ho, there, lads! Lend Cap'n Vincenzo a hand.

VICENZO. [*To himself.*] They're square folk,—they're square folk. [*He boards the vessel.*]

TONI. [*To himself.*] I'd take kindly to selling it all on board, so I should. If we're taken in tow by the middlemen, what do we get? They don't want to give us anything; they want everything for themselves. We poor devils go and risk our skins at sea, and these merchants, with their velvet caps, make 'emselves rich on our toil.

BEPPO. [*Descending from the vessel with two baskets.*] Oh, say, brother!

TONI. What is it, Beppo? What d'you want?

BEPPO. If you were content, I'd like to send this basket of mullets to His Illustrious Lordship, for a gift.

TONI. What you giving him things for?

BEPPO. Eh, eh, Cap'n,—hasn't someone told you that His Lordship is to become my friend, for time of need?

TONI. Well, send them to him, if you want to send them. But what do you think,—that, come to pass you needed him, he'd even get out of his armchair? When he meets you, he'll put his hand on your shoulder: "Good lad, Beppo; thank you; command me." But if you say to him, "Illustrious one, I'd have urgent need of this service, if it pleases you," he's forgotten the mullets, and as for you—you're too low down for him to see you, even;—he doesn't know you any longer for his friend, or his neighbor, or his anything i' the world.

BEPPO. What would you have me do, Cap'n? For this time, let me send them.

TONI. I don't tell you that you're not to send them.

BEPPO. Ho, there, Mendola! Take these mullets to His Lordship; tell him that I send it to him, this present. [*The boy goes out with the fish.*]

[PASQUA and LUCIETTA enter.]

PASQUA. [*To TONI.*] Here I am, master.

TONI. Hey there, ho there, goodwife!

LUCIETTA. [*To TONI.*] Brother!

TONI. Bright day to you, Lucietta.

LUCIETTA. Good day to you, Beppo.

BEPPO. You all right, sister?

LUCIETTA. I, yes; and you?

BEPP0. I'm all right; I'm all right. And you, sister-in-law! Are you well?

PASQUA. Yes, son. [*To TONI.*] Had a good trip?

TONI. What's this chatter about trips, goodwife? Once ashore, one forgets what happened out at sea. When there's a catch, it's been a good trip; and when there's a full net, who's afraid to risk his skin for it? We've brought back some fish with us; so we've got light hearts, we've got, and glad hearts.

PASQUA. Well, well, not such bad news! Touched anywhere?

TONI. Aye; touched at Sinigaglia.

LUCIETTA. Hey! You did? Brought me anything?

TONI. Aye, I have; brought you two pair red stockings and a shawl.

LUCIETTA. Dear, my dear old brother! He loves me, does my brother.

PASQUA. And to me, my master? Have you brought me anything?

TONI. To you, too; I've brought you what'll make you a skirt and waist.

PASQUA. Skirt and waist of what?

TONI. You'll see.

PASQUA. But of what? Come!

TONI. You'll see, I tell you; you'll see.

LUCIETTA. [*To BEPP0.*] And you? Have you brought me anything?

BEPP0. Listen to her! What was I to bring you? I've bought the ring for my girl.

LUCIETTA. Is it a handsome one?

BEPP0. Ho! no; not a bit, it isn't;—look.

LUCIETTA. Oh!—Oh, how pretty it is! And for *her* it is, this ring?

BEPP0. Why "her"?

LUCIETTA. If you only knew! Ask our sister-in-



law: how they treated us, that jackanapes Orsetta and that other minx Checca. Oh, the things they said!

PASQUA. And Dame Libera? She said little, I suppose! Could she have done better at knocking us about?

TONI. What's all this? What's happened?

LUCIETTA. Nothing. Bad tongues; tongues good to tear with.

PASQUA. There we are at our door, quietly working at our cushions, when—

LUCIETTA. Not so much as thinking of them, when—

PASQUA. If you only knew! And all on account of that good-for-nothing, Toffolo Runt.

LUCIETTA. They're jealous of the sweet thing!

BEPPPO. How? She talked to Toffolo Runt?

LUCIETTA. An it please you!

TONI. There, there, there! What's the good of putting the lad up with your stories, and making quarrels?

LUCIETTA. Ugh! If you only knew!

PASQUA. Leave it there, Lucietta; presently we'll get some of it, else.

BEPPPO. Whom did Runt talk to?

LUCIETTA. To all of us.

BEPPPO. Orsetta, too? Did he?

LUCIETTA. I think he did.

BEPPPO. By Gog's blood!

TONI. Come on, now; make an end. I don't want to hear any more grumbling.

BEPPPO. No, by Gog, I don't want her any more; and as for Runt—body of a whale! He'll pay me for this.

TONI. Come, come; let's go home.

LUCIETTA. And Titta-Nane? Where is Titta-Nane?

TONI. [*Crossly.*] Aboard.

LUCIETTA. I'd like to give him good day, at least.

TONI. Let's go home, I tell you.

LUCIETTA. Oh, please! What's your hurry?

TONI. You might have done better than come here and blab, you might.

LUCIETTA. There, you see, sister-in-law; we said we wouldn't talk.

PASQUA. And who let on first?

LUCIETTA. Oh, well! What did I say, anyhow?

PASQUA. As for that, what did I say?

BEPPA. You said so much that if Orsetta were here now I'd slap her face! I'm done with Her Sweetness; I'm going to sell that ring as soon as I can.

LUCIETTA. Give it to me.

BEPPA. The devil, I'll give you; may he carry you off!

LUCIETTA. What a beast you are!

TONI. Serve you right; you deserve worse. Home, I tell you; home, this minute!

LUCIETTA. See what pretty manners! What am I? Your servant?—Yes, yes, I'm going; it isn't with you that I'll be wanting to stay! But when I see Titta-Nane, I'll tell him either he marries me at once, or by Gog Godkin I'll go be a servant, rather than stay at home! [*She goes out.*]

PASQUA. Like a madman you behave, sometimes.

TONI. Choke your luff, or I'll—[*He offers to strike her.*]

PASQUA. But what men! But what devils of men! [*She hurries out.*]

TONI. But what women; but what women to

pound, by Gog, as one does the crabs for bait. [*He goes out.*]

[FORTUNATO, TITTA-NANE, and VICENZO enter, landing from the tartane amid men loaded with baskets of fish.]

TITTA. What the devil was all that hullabaloo?

VICENZO. Nothing, brother. You know Dame Pasqua; she's of the kind that's always scolding.

TITTA. Who was it that she was pitching into?

VICENZO. Her husband.

TITTA. Lucietta,—was she there?

VICENZO. Yes, I think she was there, too.

TITTA. Devil take it! I was down there in the hold, stowing the fish; I wasn't able to go ashore, even.

VICENZO. What a lad it is! Are you afraid you'll never set eyes on her again?

TITTA. If you knew! It's dying to see her, that I am.

FORTUNATO. [*He talks rapidly, and mumbles his words.*] Ca'an Izenzo.

VICENZO. What's the news, Cap'n Fortunato?

FORTUNATO. Here's eight ba'kets 'f fish; fo' ba'kets 'f 'oles; two ba'kets 'f mu'ts; si'—si' 'urnards, 'nd one ba'ket 'f 'kates.

VICENZO. Of what?

FORTUNATO. 'Nd one ba'ket 'kates.

VICENZO. I tell you, Cap'n, I don't get your bearings.

FORTUNATO. [*Slowly.*] Don't understand? Four baskets of soles, two baskets of mullets, six gurnards, and a basket of skates.

VICENZO. [*To himself.*] He talks in a way—

FORTUNATO. Take the fish home, and I'll come 'round 'ater and 't the 'oins.

VICENZO. Aye, master; when you want your coins, come around, and they'll be waiting for you.

FORTUNATO. Got a 'inch 'f 'uff?

VICENZO. What?

FORTUNATO. Snuff! Snuff!

VICENZO. Aye, aye, Cap'n; I get you, now. Willingly. [*He gives him the snuff.*]

FORTUNATO. I lost 'e 'ox in 'e sea, 'nd on board on'y few 'f 'em 'ad a'y. At Sinigaglia I bought a li'le, but 't's not 'ike ours at Chio'a. The 'uff 't they 'll at Sinigaglia 's 'uff, 'ike enough, but 't loo's 'ike 'ird shot.

VICENZO. Have patience with me, Cap'n Fortunato; devil a word can I make out.

FORTUNATO. Really now, really now, really now! Can't make out? Really now! I don't talk t' you in a st'ange la'uage, do I? I thi'k I talk our own di'ect, I thi'k.

VICENZO. Aye, aye, Cap'n; I see it all, now. Good night.

FORTUNATO. Your se'ant Ma'er Izenzo.

VICENZO. Till death, Titta-Nane.

TITTA. Master, give you good evening.

VICENZO. Let's be going, lads. Bring along that fish. [*To himself.*] Aye, great old lad, Cap'n Fortunato; it's as good as a pipe to hear him, so it is. [*He goes out.*]

TITTA. Shall we go, Cap'n Fortunato?

FORTUNATO. 'Ait.

TITTA. What would you have us wait for, Cap'n?

FORTUNATO. 'Ait.

TITTA. "Ait, ait;" what's there to wait for?

FORTUNATO. I mu't b'ing ashore some mo' fis' 'nd some flour; 'ait.

TITTA. All right, Cap'n; let's "ait."

FORTUNATO. Wha's this mo'ing? Wha's this cha'ering? Wha's 'is gab'ing?

TITTA. Aw, leave it there, Cap'n. See, here's your wife with her sister, Orsetta, and her sister, Checca.

FORTUNATO. [*Gaily.*] Aha! the goo'wife, eh? The goo'wife, eh?

[LIBERA, ORSETTA, and CHECCA enter.]

LIBERA. [*To FORTUNATO.*] What are you doing, master, that you don't come home?

FORTUNATO. I'm 'aiting for 'e 'ish, I'm 'aiting. How are you, 'ife? Are you 'ell, 'ife?

LIBERA. I'm well, my child; and you, are you well?

FORTUNATO. I'm 'ell, I am. Sister-in-'aw, bid you 'ood evening; bid you 'ood evening; Checca, 'id you 'ood evening. [*He makes gestures of salutation.*]

ORSETTA. Servant, brother-in-law.

CHECCA. Evening, brother-in-law; servant.

ORSETTA. Master Titta-Nane, not even that much can you say?

TITTA. Servant.

CHECCA. Eh, what a wide berth you give us, master! What are you afraid of? Of having been told a lot of stories by Lucietta?

TITTA. What's Lucietta doing? Is she well?

ORSETTA. Oh, she's well, the sweet creature!

TITTA. What's wrong? Aren't you friends any more?

ORSETTA. [*Ironically.*] Ho, but aren't we friends!

CHECCA. [*Ironically.*] She loves us so—

LIBERA. Come now, lasses, leave it there. We've made a gift of all that stuff; we've done with it. We agreed that we wouldn't talk, and I don't want

her saying that up and down and here and there we go gossiping.

FORTUNATO. Hey, 'ife, I've brought 'ome some flour from down the 'ind,—some Indian 'orn flour; we'll 'ake mush.

LIBERA. Good for you. You've brought home some Indian corn flour, have you? That's the way, that is.

FORTUNATO. 'es, 'nd I've brought—

TITTA. [*To LIBERA.*] I wish you'd tell me—

FORTUNATO. [*To TITTA.*] But let the 'en 'alk, let 'em!

LIBERA. [*To FORTUNATO.*] Dearest, my you, calm down for a little moment.

TITTA. I wish you'd tell me what it's been—about Lucietta.

LIBERA. Oh—nothing.

TITTA. Nothing?

ORSETTA. [*Nudging LIBERA.*] Nothing; come, come, nothing.

CHECCA. Yes, yes; we'd much better—nothing.

FORTUNATO. Ho, 'ere, 'oys! B'ing ashore the 'ack of flour!

TITTA. But come on, dear, my souls! If there's been something, tell me. I don't want you to be at odds. I know that you're good folk, you here; I know that Lucietta's a pearl of a lass—

LIBERA. Ho, the dear lad!

ORSETTA. Ho, such a pearl!

CHECCA. Ho, a new wonder!

TITTA. What can ye say against the girl?

ORSETTA. Nothing.

CHECCA. Ask Runt.

LIBERA. Now come, now come, now girls, hold your tongues. What the devil's wrong with you, that you can't hold your tongues?

TITTA. And who is he,—Runt?

ORSETTA. Don't you know him,—Toffolo Runt?

CHECCA. That boatman; don't you know him?

[*All descend from the vessel, carrying fish and a sack.*]

FORTUNATO. Le's go, le's go; here's 'e 'ish and 'e flour.

TITTA. [*To FORTUNATO.*] Eh! Go to the devil, go! [*To CHECCA.*] What's he got to do with Lucietta?

CHECCA. He sits close to her.

ORSETTA. He wants to learn to make lace.

CHECCA. He pays for her roast pumpkin.

LIBERA. And then, the ugly lubber, on her account he knocks us about.

TITTA. You're telling me an ugly yarn; you're telling me!

FORTUNATO. [*To the women.*] Home, home, home.

LIBERA. Hey, Titta; take it from me, he treated me nicely.

CHECCA. He called me Little Curd Pudding.

ORSETTA. All on account of your pearl!

TITTA. [*Panting.*] Where is he? Where does he live? Where can I find him?

ORSETTA. Hey, Titta; he lives in the Street o' the Crown, under the archway;—down there at the end, where you come out on the canal.

LIBERA. He lives in the same house as old man Trigolo.

CHECCA. And his boat; he moors it in the Canal o' the Palace, opposite the fish-market; he moors it beside Checco Bodolo's boat.

TITTA. To me! Leave it to me! If I find him I'll cut him in slices, like dog-fish!

CHECCA. Eh, if you want him, you'll find him at Lucietta's.

TITTA. At Lucietta's?

ORSETTA. Aye, surely; at your own sweetheart's.

TITTA. She's not my sweetheart any more, she's not. I'm going to leave her; I'm going to fling her away. And that jail-bird Runt, I'm going to slash his throat, by Gog's blood! [*He rushes out.*]

FORTUNATO. Le's go home, I 'ell you; le's go home, le's go.

LIBERA. Aye, let's go, bolting-mill, let's go.

FORTUNATO. Wha' have you 'ome to do here? Wha' have you 'ome to say here? Wha' 'ave you 'ome to 'ittle-'attle here? To make 'e devil 'appen, to make it? Gog's sea! If a'y-thing comes of this, if a'ything comes, I'm 'oing to spoil your snout, I'm 'oing to; I'm 'oing to 'ake you go to 'ed, I'm 'oing to; to 'ed, to 'ed, ye ugly, 'ursed 'ulks, to 'ed. [*He goes out.*]

LIBERA. Listen to that, will ye? My man knocks me about like the rest. Because of you chits, there, I'm always in for it, I am! But what the devil are you? But what tongues have ye got? You promise not to talk,—and then you come and say, and then you come and do. Gog's sea, it's that you want to split my heart, it is! [*She goes out.*]

ORSETTA. Hear that?

CHECCA. I'm not afraid! What you afraid of, anyhow?

ORSETTA. I? Nothing.

CHECCA. If Lucietta loses her sweetheart, worse for her.

ORSETTA. I'll have mine just the same.

CHECCA. 'And I'll find a way to have one, too.

ORSETTA. Oh, how very scared we are!

CHECCA. Oh, what things'll happen to us!



ORSETTA. Not even in our sleep, they won't.

CHECCA. Not even—in the holes of our noses!

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*Scene III. A Street With Houses, as in Scene I*

[TOFFOLO enters.]

TOFFOLO. Aye, it's wrong I did; wrong I did, wrong I did. Lucietta I should have kept clear of, I should. She's promised; I musn't be for fuddling my brains about her. Checca, now, she's yet free; one of these days she'll put on the *donzelon*, and her I'll be able to have for my girl, I'll be able. She was right, was Checca; she took it ill. It's a sign that she loves me, it is. If I could see her, at least! If I could talk to her a bit; I tell you, I'd make her feel all right again. Cap'n Fortunato, he's home—she don't yet wear the *donzelon*, she don't; but then, I might just ask him for her. The door's shut. I don't know whether he's in or whether he's not in.

[BEPPLO comes out of his house.]

BEPPLO. [*To himself.*] Here he is, this sneak!

TOFFOLO. [*To himself.*] If I could, I'd like to have a peek at her. [*He approaches nearer.*]

BEPPLO. Ho, there! Ho, there, Master Runt!

TOFFOLO. What's this "Runt"?

BEPPLO. Clear out.

TOFFOLO. Aw, dip flag! What's this "clear out"?

BEPPLO. Want to bet that I give you as many kicks as you can carry?

TOFFOLO. What harm am I doing you?

BEPPLO. What you doing here?

TOFFOLO. I'm doing what I please, I'm doing.

BEPPLO. And I've got a mind that you shan't stay here.

TOFFOLO. And I've got a mind that I'll stay, instead. I'm going to stay right here, I'm going to.

BEPPLO. Clear out, I tell you.

TOFFOLO. Not a bit, I don't.

BEPPLO. Clear out, or I'll slap your mug for you.

TOFFOLO. Gog's sea! I'll throw a stone at you, I will. [*He picks up stones.*]

BEPPLO. You will, you jail-hound? [*He clutches his knife.*]

TOFFOLO. Let me alone, let me.

BEPPLO. Out, I tell you.

TOFFOLO. I've nothing I want out, I've nothing.

BEPPLO. Out, or I'll rip your guts.

TOFFOLO. Keep away, or I'll break your head. [*He threatens BEPPLO with a stone.*]

BEPPLO. Throw, if you've the liver to!

[*TOFFOLO throws stones. BEPPLO tries to close in on him. TONI comes from his house, re-enters, and at once comes out again. PASQUA and LUCIETTA come out also.*]

TONI. What's this racket?

[*TOFFOLO throws a stone at TONI.*]

TONI. Help! He's got me! Wait, you jail-bird; I'll make you pay for that! [*He runs into the house.*]

TOFFOLO. I'm not harming anybody, I'm not. What'd you come calling me names for? [*He picks up more stones.*]

BEPPLO. Drop those stones.

TOFFOLO. Pocket that knife.

TONI. [*Re-appearing, armed with a hanger.*] Clear out, or I'll make chunks of you!

PASQUA. [*Holding TONI.*] Cap'n—stop—Cap'n—

LUCIETTA. [*Also holding TONI.*] Brothers! Don't!

BEPPLO. I wanted to kill him, I wanted.

LUCIETTA. [*Holding BEPPO.*] Come, you crazy thing; stop.

TOFFOLO. [*Threatening with stones.*] Keep back, or I'll do for you.

LUCIETTA. Help! Folks!

PASQUA. Help! Neighbors!

[FORTUNATO, LIBERA, ORSETTA, CHECCA, and men bearing fish and flour come down the street.]

FORTUNATO. Wha's all this? Wha's all this? Stea'y there. Wha's all this?

ORSETTA. Hey! A fight!

CHECCA. A fight? Oh, poor me! [*She runs into the house.*]

LIBERA. Fiend-possessed ones, stop!

BEPPO. [*To the women.*] On account of you.

ORSETTA. Who? What?

LIBERA. What do you mean by such talk?

LUCIETTA. Yes! Yes! You stir up fights!

PASQUA. Aye! You're trouble-makers, you.

ORSETTA. Hear you, what a liar!

LIBERA. Hear you, what tongues!

BEPPO. I'll kill him on your doorstep for you.

ORSETTA. Who?

BEPPO. This sneak Runt.

TOFFOLO. Clear out; I'm not Runt, I tell you! [*He throws more stones.*]

PASQUA. [*Pushing TONI.*] Get indoors, Cap'n.

LUCIETTA. [*Pushing BEPPO.*] Get in, brother, get in.

TONI. Keep quiet.

PASQUA. Get in, I tell you, get in. [*She makes TONI go indoors with her.*]

BEPPO. Let me be.

LUCIETTA. Go inside, I tell you; you mad thing, go inside. [*She forces him to go in with her. They shut the door.*]

TOFFOLO. Toughs, cut-throats, come out, if you've got pluck to!

ORSETTA. [*To TOFFOLO.*] Go to the devil!

LIBERA. [*To TOFFOLO.*] Go have yourself quartered! [*She shoves him back.*]

TOFFOLO. What's this shoving? What's this talk?

FORTUNATO. C'ear out, c'ear out; if I lay my 'ands on you I'll 'ake your 'uts come out of your 'outh.

TOFFOLO. I let you talk, I let you, because you're old and because you're little Checca's brother-in-law. [*Speaking towards TONI's door.*] But these blackguards, these dogs—by Gog's blood, I'm going to be even with 'em!

[*TITTA-NANE enters, armed with a hanger.*]

TITTA. Stand to it, for I'm going to do for you. [*He advances upon TOFFOLO, striking the ground with the hanger.*]

TOFFOLO. Help! [*He retreats to the door.*]

FORTUNATO. Steady 'ere! S'op! [*He stops*  
TITTA.]

LIBERA. Don't do it!

ORSETTA. Hold him!

TITTA. Let me go! By—let me go! [*He tries to get at TOFFOLO.*]

TOFFOLO. Help! [*He backs up against the door; it opens, and he falls in.*]

FORTUNATO. [*Holding TITTA-NANE and trying to drag him away.*] Titta-Nane, Titta-Nane, Titta-Nane—

LIBERA. [*To FORTUNATO.*] Bring him in; bring him in.

TITTA. I don't want to go in, I don't!

FORTUNATO. You've just 'ot to 'ome in. [*He drags TITTA in.*]

LIBERA. Oh, what a tremble I'm in!

ORSETTA. Oh, I'm all in a sweat!

PASQUA. [*Driving TOFFOLO out of the house.*]  
Get out of here!

LUCIETTA. [*Also driving out TOFFOLO.*] Go to the devil!

PASQUA. You firework, you! [*She disappears within.*]

LUCIETTA. You snag, you! [*She shuts the door.*]

TOFFOLO. [*To LIBERA and ORSETTA.*] Do you hear them, souls?

LIBERA. Worse for you. [*She goes out.*]

ORSETTA. Wish they'd done worse. [*She goes out.*]

TOFFOLO. Gog's blood! I'm going to have the law on 'em. [*He leaves.*]

ACT II

*Scene I. A Criminal Chancery.—ISIDORO is writing at a little table when TOFFOLO enters*

TOFFOLO. Illustrious Master Chancellor, sir.

ISIDORO. I'm not the chancellor; I'm the coadjutor.

TOFFOLO. Illustrious Master Coadjutor, sir.

ISIDORO. What do you want?

TOFFOLO. You're to know that a low-down dog, most illustrious one, sir, has treated me ill, and he's threatened to do me a mischief with his knife, and he wanted to hit me, and then afterwards there came another bad one, most illustrious one, sir,—

ISIDORO. A plague on your "illustrious sir"! Let it be, can't you?

TOFFOLO. But no, Master Coadjutor, sir, stop and hear my say, sir; and so, as I was saying, I haven't done him any harm, and he's told me that he wants to kill me.

ISIDORO. Come here; wait a moment. [*He draws a paper to him upon which to write.*]

TOFFOLO. I'm here, most illustrious one, sir. [*To himself.*] Cursed ones! They're going to pay me for it.

ISIDORO. Now, you, who are you?

TOFFOLO. I'm a boatman, most illustrious one, sir.

ISIDORO. What's the name of you?

TOFFOLO. Toffolo.

ISIDORO. And the surname?

TOFFOLO. Zavatta. (Slipper.)

ISIDORO. Ah, so you're not shoe; you're Slipper.

TOFFOLO. Zavatta, most illustrious one, sir.

ISIDORO. Where do you come from?

TOFFOLO. I'm of Chioggia; from Chioggia.

ISIDORO. Is your father living?

TOFFOLO. My father, most illustrious one, sir, died in the sea.

ISIDORO. What was his name?

TOFFOLO. Tony Zavatta, nicknamed Dodderdad.

ISIDORO. And you? Have you no nickname?

TOFFOLO. I? No, most illustrious one, sir.

ISIDORO. It's impossible that you, too, you shouldn't have your nickname.

TOFFOLO. What nickname would you have me have?

ISIDORO. Tell me, my dear you, haven't you been already—it seems to me—in court?

TOFFOLO. Yes, sir, I have, sir;—once I came to answer questions.

ISIDORO. It seems to me, if I'm not mistaken, that I had you summoned by the name of Toffolo Runt.

TOFFOLO. I'm Zavatta; I'm not Runt. Whoever's given me that name is a rotten carcass, most illustrious one, sir.

ISIDORO. Presently I'll give you an "illustrious one" on the crown.

TOFFOLO. May it please you to be compassionate—

ISIDORO. Who are they that have threatened you?

TOFFOLO. Cap'n Toni Basket; and his brother, Beppo Gog-Dang-It; and then afterwards Titta-Nane Hotblood.

ISIDORO. Had they arms?

TOFFOLO. Gog's sea! Had they? Beppo Gog-Dang-It had a fisherman's knife. Cap'n Toni came out with a sword that you could cut off a bull's head

with; and Titta-Nane, he had a hanger,—one of the kind we keep in the bows, aboard.

ISIDORO. Did they pink you? Did they wound you?

TOFFOLO. No, they scared me.

ISIDORO. Why did they threaten you? Why did they want to stick you?

TOFFOLO. For nothing.

ISIDORO. Had you quarreled? Had there been words between you?

TOFFOLO. I didn't say anything to them.

ISIDORO. Did you take to your legs? Did you defend yourself? How did it end?

TOFFOLO. I stood there—so—"Mates," I say, "if you want to do for me, do for me," I say.

ISIDORO. How did it end?

TOFFOLO. It was some good souls that came up, and made 'em stop, and saved my life.

ISIDORO. Who were these good souls?

TOFFOLO. Cap'n Fortunato Linchpin; and his wife, Dame Libera Capon-Cock; and his sister-in-law, Orsetta Bran-Bun; and another sister-in-law of his, Checca Little Curd Pudding.

ISIDORO. [*To himself.*] Yes, yes, I know them all, those. Checca's a saucy little baggage, too. [*Writing.*] Were others present?

TOFFOLO. There was Dame Pasqua Saucepan, and Lucietta Bouncers.

ISIDORO. [*To himself.*] Ah, these, also, I know who they are. [*Writing.*] Have you anything else to say?

TOFFOLO. I? No, most illustrious one, sir.

ISIDORO. Do you petition the court?

TOFFOLO. About what?

ISIDORO. Do you want them condemned to anything?



TOFFOLO. Yes, most illustrious one, sir.

ISIDORO. To what?

TOFFOLO. To be sent to the penitentiary, most illustrious one, sir.

ISIDORO. And you to be sent to the gallows, block-head.

TOFFOLO. I, sir? For what, sir?

ISIDORO. There, there, clod-poll. That'll do; I've understood everything. [*He writes on a small paper.*]

TOFFOLO. [*To himself.*] I wouldn't have it, I wouldn't, that they, also, should come and ask for the law, because I threw stones at them. Let 'em come, let 'em; I've come first, and the first to get there carries off the flag.

[*ISIDORO rings a bell. An usher enters.*]

THE USHER. Most illustrious one—

ISIDORO. Go summon these witnesses. [*He rises.*]

TOFFOLO. Most illustrious one, sir, my trust's in you, it is, sir—

ISIDORO. Ta-ta, friend Runt.

TOFFOLO. Zavatta, sir, to serve you, sir.

ISIDORO. Egad, yes, Slipper you are: 'ithout sole, 'ithout top, 'ithout measure, and 'ithout shape. [*He goes out.*]

TOFFOLO. [*To the usher, laughing.*] He's taken with me, Master Coadjutor is!

THE USHER. Aye, it's clear to be seen. Are they for you, these witnesses?

TOFFOLO. Yes, sir, Mr. Usher, sir.

THE USHER. Anxious to have 'em really summoned?

TOFFOLO. Sure I am, Mr. Usher, sir.

THE USHER. Pay for drinks?

TOFFOLO. Aye, willingly, Mr. Usher, sir.

THE USHER. But—do you know what? I haven't a notion where they live.

TOFFOLO. I'll show you; I will, Mr. Usher, sir.

THE USHER. Good for you, Mr. Runt, sir.

TOFFOLO. The de'il take you, Mr. Usher, sir.  
[*They go out.*]

*Scene II. The Street of Chioggia*

[PASQUA and LUCIETTA enter. *They come out of their house carrying their straw-bottomed chairs, their stands, and their cushions, and begin to work at their lace-making.*]

LUCIETTA. Mean things, was it right of them, I'd like to know—to go and tell Titta-Nane that Runt talked to me?

PASQUA. And you? Was it right of you,—to go and tell your brother what you told him?

LUCIETTA. And you, madam? Didn't you say anything, madam?

PASQUA. Aye, I did that; I talked, too, and I was wrong to talk.

LUCIETTA. Bad luck to Satan! I'd sworn, I too, that I wouldn't tell.

PASQUA. That's the truth of it, sister-in-law; you take it from me, that's the truth of it; we women, if we couldn't talk, we'd die.

LUCIETTA. I tell you, there's no resisting. I didn't want to talk, but, I tell you, I just couldn't hold myself in. The words, they'd come up into my mouth, and I'd try to swallow them, and they'd just choke me, they would. "Don't talk," say I to myself at one ear and "Talk," say I to myself at the other. Hold out, if you can! I tell you, I shut up the ear that said "Don't," and I opened the one that

said "Do," and I talked until I couldn't talk any more!

PASQUA. It's on my heart, it is, that our men should have come to blows.

LUCIETTA. A puff of wind, that! Never think of it; Toffolo's a gull; nothing will happen, you'll see.

PASQUA. Beppo wants to dismiss Orsetta.

LUCIETTA. Well, and what if he does! He'll find himself another one; no lack of girls at Chioggia.

PASQUA. No, lass, no; of the forty thousand souls that we are, here at Chioggia, I think thirty thousand are women.

LUCIETTA. And how many of them are still waiting for a husband?

PASQUA. That's just it, lass, you see? Aye, and it's in my heart; for if Titta-Nane leaves you, you'll scarce find another.

LUCIETTA. What have I done? I, to Titta-Nane?

PASQUA. Nothing, you've done to him; but those chits have set him up.

LUCIETTA. If he cared for me he wouldn't believe them.

PASQUA. Don't you know that he's jealous?

LUCIETTA. Of what, I'd like to know? Mayn't one even talk? Mayn't one even laugh? Mayn't one even amuse oneself? The men; they're at sea and out of sight for ten months; but we, we have to stay here;—musting and rusting; fiddling and fiddling, and fiddling all day long, with these danged spools!

PASQUA. Hey! Sh! Here's Titta-Nane now.

LUCIETTA. Eh, sirs! He's got the grumps; I see it already, that he's got the grumps.

PASQUA. Now don't give him hard looks, lass.

LUCIETTA. If he gives me hard looks, I'll give him hard looks; so there!

PASQUA. Don't you care for the lad?

LUCIETTA. I—yes.

PASQUA. Soften to him if you care.

LUCIETTA. Not I.

PASQUA. Come now, come now; don't go pig-headed.

LUCIETTA. Rather die first; there!

PASQUA. What a stubborn, set lass it is!

[TITTA-NANE comes down the street.]

TITTA. [*To himself.*] I have it in mind to dismiss her, but I don't know how to do it.

PASQUA. [*To LUCIETTA.*] Look at him, at least.

LUCIETTA. [*To PASQUA.*] Eh, sirs! I have my lace to look at, I have!

PASQUA. [*To herself.*] I could whang her face down upon that cushion, for her!

TITTA. [*To himself.*] She doesn't even look at me; she hasn't even a thought left for me.

PASQUA. Y'r servant, Titta-Nane.

TITTA. Y'r servant.

PASQUA. [*To LUCIETTA.*] Give him good day.

LUCIETTA. [*To PASQUA.*] Imagine whether I'm going to be the first!

TITTA. Very busy over our work we are!

PASQUA. Eh, eh, what do you think of it, lad? Aren't we canny women?

TITTA. Aye, aye, it's well to cast one's hands about when one can, because when lads come and sit beside one, one can't work.

[LUCIETTA coughs mockingly.]

PASQUA. [*To LUCIETTA.*] Soften him.

LUCIETTA. [*To PASQUA.*] Never!

TITTA. Dame Pasqua, do you like roast pumpkin?

PASQUA. See now! See now! What do you ask me that for?

TITTA. Because I've a fancy for some.

[LUCIETTA spits violently.]

TITTA. A great cold you must have, mistress!

LUCIETTA. [Continuing to work, without lifting her eyes.] The pumpkin makes me spit.

TITTA. [Angrily.] So might it have choked you!

LUCIETTA. [Angrily.] May whoever hates me crack his heart!

TITTA. [To himself.] The time's come for it; I've said it and I'll do it. [To PASQUA.] Dame Pasqua, I'm talking to you, for you're a woman worth the name; of you I asked your sister-in-law, Lucietta; to you I say that I dismiss her.

PASQUA. Just see what doings! And what for?

TITTA. What for, is it? What for?

[LUCIETTA rises to go away.]

PASQUA. Where are you going?

LUCIETTA. Where I please, I'm going. [She goes into the house, but presently returns.]

PASQUA. [To TITTA.] Don't give ear to chit-chat, lad.

TITTA. I know everything, and I wonder at you, I do; and I wonder at her.

PASQUA. And instead she's so fond of you—

TITTA. If she were fond of me, she wouldn't turn her back on me.

PASQUA. Poor soul, she'll have gone in to cry, she'll have gone.

TITTA. For whom, to cry? For Runt?

PASQUA. No, Titta-Nane, but no. She's so fond of you that when she sees you leave port she gets a turn,—every time. When it's dirty weather she's half beside herself; she trembles her heart out on account of you. She'll get up at night and go out

on the terrace to watch the weather. She's gone, heart and soul, for you; she's got no eyes to see with but yours.

TITTA. And why not say even one little kind word to me?

PASQUA. She wants to, Titta, but she can't. She's afraid; her heart's all a knot.

TITTA. Haven't I reason to complain of her, perhaps?

PASQUA. I'll tell you how it all went.

TITTA. No, sir! I want her to tell me, and to confess, and to beg me to forgive her.

PASQUA. Would you?

TITTA. Who knows; it might be that I would. Where's she gone?

PASQUA. Here she is, here she is, coming now.

LUCIETTA. There, my master, take back your slippers, and your ribbons, and your shawl that you gave me. [*She casts all upon the ground.*]

PASQUA. Oh, poor me! Are you mad? [*She picks the presents up and puts them on a chair.*]

TITTA. To me, this insult?

LUCIETTA. Haven't you dismissed me? Take your things, then, and make much of them.

TITTA. The next time I meet Runt, take it from me, I'll do for him.

LUCIETTA. Ho, long rule Gog! You've dismissed me and you want to order me about, too?

TITTA. I've dismissed you on account of him, I've dismissed you.

PASQUA. I wonder, I do, that you can believe that Lucietta would even look at a rag like him.

LUCIETTA. I'm ugly, I'm poor, I'm anything you want; but I haven't come down to loving a boatman; no, I haven't!

TITTA. What did you let him sit beside you for?  
[What did you accept roast pumpkin from him for?

LUCIETTA. Eh, sirs, what happenings!

PASQUA. Eh, sirs, what crimes!

TITTA. When I keep company with a girl I won't have people saying this and that. I'll have it so, I'll have it. By Gog's sea! Nobody's ever made Titta-Nane hold a candle for him, and nobody'll ever do it!

LUCIETTA. Hear him. [*Wiping her eyes.*] What poor cheap talk.

TITTA. I'm a man, d' you know it? I'm a man. I'm not a boy, d' you know it?

[LUCIETTA *cries but tries to control herself.*]

PASQUA. What's the matter, girl?

LUCIETTA. Nothing. [*She gives PASQUA a push, still crying.*]

PASQUA. You're crying.

LUCIETTA. With rage, I'm crying, with rage! I could cut him all up with my own hand!

TITTA. Come, I say! What's this sniffing?

LUCIETTA. Go to the devil!

TITTA. [*To PASQUA.*] Hear that, madam?

PASQUA. Isn't she right, too; for aren't you a mean hound, too?

TITTA. What'll you bet that now I go and throw myself into the canal?

PASQUA. Don't talk so, madman!

LUCIETTA. Let him go, let him. [*Still crying.*]

PASQUA. Come, come now, you silly goose.

TITTA. [*Melting.*] My girl that I loved so!

PASQUA. And now? Don't you love her any more, now?

TITTA. But, what would you have me do; what would you? If she doesn't want me any more—

PASQUA. What do you say to that, Lucietta?

LUCIETTA. Let—let me alone, let me.

PASQUA. See, here are your slippers, here are your ribbons, and here is your little shawl; look, take them.

LUCIETTA. I don't want anything, I don't.

PASQUA. [*To LUCIETTA.*] Look here; listen.

LUCIETTA. Let me be!

PASQUA. Say a word to him.

LUCIETTA. No!

PASQUA. Come here, Titta-Nane.

TITTA. Never!

PASQUA. But come on, now!

TITTA. I won't.

PASQUA. In half a minute I'll tell you both to go hang!

[*THE USHER comes in.*]

THE USHER. [*To PASQUA.*] Are you Dame Pasqua, wife to Captain Toni Basket?

PASQUA. Aye, Master; what do you command?

THE USHER. And that one there is Lucietta, sister to Captain Toni?

PASQUA. An it please you, master; what would you have with her?

LUCIETTA. [*To herself.*] Oh, poor me! What does he want, the Usher?

THE USHER. I summon you, by order of who commands, to go at once to the Palace—to the Chancellor's office—to give evidence.

PASQUA. About what?

THE USHER. I don't know anything. Go and obey; penalty ten ducats, if you don't.

PASQUA. [*To LUCIETTA.*] The fight.

LUCIETTA. [*To PASQUA.*] Oh, but I don't want to go! I don't want to go!



PASQUA. [*To LUCIETTA.*] No choice; we've got to go.

THE USHER. [*To PASQUA.*] Is that Captain Vincenzo's house, over there?

PASQUA. Aye, sir; that one, sir.

THE USHER. That's all I need to know. The door's open; I'll go up. [*He enters the house.*]

PASQUA. Did you hear that, Titta-Nane?

TITTA. I heard; that sneak Toffolo has made complaint against me. I must go hide.

PASQUA. And my husband?

LUCIETTA. And my brothers?

PASQUA. Oh, what shall we do now? Go, go down to the shore; go and see whether you can't catch them; go and warn them. I'll go look for Cap'n Vincenzo, and for my boy's godfather, who's a lawyer; I'll go to the Illustrious Madam; I'll go to His Lordship. Oh, poor me! my things, my bit money, my poor little house, my poor little house! [*She runs out.*]

TITTA. See now, miss? On your account.

LUCIETTA. I? What have I done? On my account?

TITTA. Because you've got no discretion, you haven't; because you're a bubble.

LUCIETTA. Go to the devil, crazy-brains!

TITTA. Yes, I'll go, yes; it's banishment for me; now you'll be content.

LUCIETTA. Banishment? Come here. For what, banishment?

TITTA. But if I've got to go, if they've got to banish me, I'm going to do for Runt, first.

LUCIETTA. Are you mad?

TITTA. And you! You! You! You're going to pay me for this, you are. [*He threatens her.*]

LUCIETTA. Me? What fault have I got in it?

TITTA. Take warning, take, for I don't care what I do.

LUCIETTA. Hey! Hey! The usher's coming!

TITTA. Now I'm in for it! It's run or give up now; if he sees me, I'm— [*He rushes away.*]

LUCIETTA. Mean thing! Dog! Assassin! He goes away from me, and he threatens me—this the way he loves me? What men! What people! No, I don't want to get married any more, now; I'd rather go drown myself. [*She goes off.*]

[FORTUNATO and the USHER enter from FORTUNATO'S house]

THE USHER. But, good my Cap'n Fortunato, you're a man; it isn't the first time you've heard of such things.

FORTUNATO. Bu' up there, I've ne'er 'een up there. In cou't, ne'er 'een in cou't.

THE USHER. Never been in court?

FORTUNATO. No, ma'er, no, ma'er; I've ne'er 'een.

THE USHER. Next time, you'll say differently.

FORTUNATO. 'Nd for wha' must my 'ife go?

THE USHER. To give evidence.

FORTUNATO. My si'ers-in-law also?

THE USHER. They also.

FORTUNATO. Also 'e 'irls must go? 'e 'irls? Also 'e 'irls?

THE USHER. They'll go with their married sister, won't they? What're you afraid of?

FORTUNATO. 'Ey cry; 'ey're af'aid; 'ey don't wa't to go.

THE USHER. If they don't go, it'll be the worse for them. I've done my part, and I'm going to report that you're all of you summoned; you're to do as you please. [*He goes out.*]

FORTUNATO. We 'ust go, we 'ust; we 'ust go, we 'ust, 'ife; put on 'our 'awl, 'ife; 'ister-in-law,

Orsetta, 'our 'awl; 'ister-in-law, Checca, 'our 'awl; we 'ust go. [*Loudly, towards the house.*] We 'ust, we 'ust go. The 'evil 'ake 'quabbles and 'neaks of 'quabblers. Come there, 'uick, prank 'ourselves out; wha' you doing? Women, I say, 'omen! The 'evil 'ake you, 'uick! I'm 'oming to stir 'ou up, I am; I am 'oming to stir 'ou up! [*He goes into the house.*]

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*Scene III. The Criminal Chancery*

[ISIDORO and VICENZO enter]

VICENZO. You see, sir, most illustrious one, it's a thing of no account.

ISIDORO. I don't tell you that it's a hanging matter, but the fact remains that here we have a plaintiff, here we have witnesses already summoned,—the process is begun; the law must take its course, now.

VICENZO. As for the lubber that's made the complaint, most illustrious one, sir, you don't believe him innocent, do you, sir? He, too,—he threw stones.

ISIDORO. All the better; proceedings will bring out the truth.

VICENZO. See here, most illustrious one, sir, can't we patch it up?

ISIDORO. I'll tell you: given an agreement with the plaintiff, the thing would end with the payment of costs.

VICENZO. Come now, come now, most illustrious one, sir; you know me, sir; I'm here to answer.

ISIDORO. I'll tell you, Cap'n Vincenzo. I said that the matter might be settled because the plaintiff's nothing much in itself; but I don't know what the witnesses may have to say, and I want to examine a few of them at least. If nothing more comes out—no evidence of old rust between ye, or malice aforethought,

or oppression, or torts to third parties, or what not—I'll lend a hand myself towards getting ye all out of it. But I'd have you take my meaning: I've no mind to decide between ye; I'm the coadjutor and not the chancellor, and I have to render account to who's above me. The chancellor is at Venice; we're expecting him here from one minute to another. He'll look over the little case; then you'll talk to him. I'll talk to him, too, for that matter: I'm no richer for the case, and don't want to be. I've a heart myself, and I'm glad to take an interest in ye all; if I can do you a good turn, I'll do you a good turn.

VICENZO. Spoken like the gentleman you are, sir; and I know my duty, sir.

ISIDORO. For myself, I tell you, I don't want anything.

VICENZO. Come now, sir; a fish—eh, sir? A fine fish?

ISIDORO. Oh, well, well,—if it's the matter of a fish. One eats because one must use one's dinner table; that's all very well; but I like a good snack in good company as well as any man.

VICENZO. Eh, we know, we know; Master Coadjutor likes good things,—eh, sir?

ISIDORO. What would you have? One works; one must play, too.

VICENZO. Eh, Master Coadjutor likes a pretty shawl, too!

ISIDORO. Well, well, well! now I must despatch a man that's waiting for me. If anyone comes, tell him that I'll be back presently. Tell your womenfolk to come and be examined. Tell 'em not to be afraid; I'm good with everyone, but with women,—egad! I'm a sponge-cake. [*He leaves the room.*]

VICENZO. Aye, aye, he's all you'd want him to be,

he is, but he don't come buzzing around *my* house. My women can pass the time very well without his yarns to help them. These fine gentlemen, with their fine wigs, they don't look well in company with us poor fisher folk. Ho, by Gog! Here they come to be examined. I was afraid that they'd balk at it. They've got a man with 'em. Aye, I see now, it's Cap'n Fortunato. Come right on, come right on, souls; don't be afraid; there's nobody here.

[PASQUA, LUCIETTA, LIBERA, ORSETTA, and CHECCA, with their large shawls about them, and

FORTUNATO, enter.]

CHECCA. Where are we?

ORSETTA. Where must we go, now?

LIBERA. Oh, poor me! I've never been in this place before.

FORTUNATO. Cap'n Vincenzo, ser'ant, Cap'n Vincenzo. [*He salutes VICENZO.*]

VICENZO. Cap'n Fortunato. [*Saluting him.*]

LUCIETTA. My legs tremble under me, they tremble.

PASQUA. And I? I'm in such a state—

FORTUNATO. [*To VICENZO.*] Whe' is he? Whe' is Ma'er Chancellor?

VICENZO. He's not here; he's at Venice, is Master Chancellor. Master Coadjutor will come to examine you, presently.

LIBERA. [*To ORSETTA, nudging her and showing by her manner that he is an old acquaintance to them both.*] Hey! Coadjutor!

ORSETTA. [*To CHECCA, nudging her and laughing.*] Hey, that most illustrious spark!

PASQUA. [*To LUCIETTA, with evident pleasure.*] Hear that, lass? The Coadjutor'll examine us.

LUCIETTA. [*To PASQUA.*] Oh, but I'm glad! At least we know him.

PASQUA. [*To LUCIETTA.*] Aye, he's good-natured.

LUCIETTA. [*To PASQUA.*] Do you remember? When he bought six yards of lace at thirty sous of us, and gave us three francs for it?

[ISIDORO enters.]

ISIDORO. What ye all doing here?

THE WOMEN. [*All together.*] Most illustrious one, most illustrious one,—

ISIDORO. What d'ye expect? That I'll examine ye all at once? Go into the anteroom, and wait; I'll call you one by one.

PASQUA. We first!

LUCIETTA. We first!

ORSETTA. We came first!

ISIDORO. I'll play fair with ye all; I'll call ye in order, as I find ye in the list. Checca's first. Checca, you stop here; you others go out.

PASQUA. Ho! of course; she's young. [*She goes out.*]

LUCIETTA. That's not enough; one must have the luck, too. [*She goes out.*]

ISIDORO. Eh, what women! They must talk, they must talk; even if they thought they'd have to tell the truth, they'd talk.

FORTUNATO. Le's go out, le's go out, le's go. [*He goes out.*]

ORSETTA. Hey, Master Coadjutor, don't keep her here three hours; we've got things to attend to. [*She goes out.*]

ISIDORO. Yes, yes, yes; I'll despatch ye all in a trice.

LIBERA. [*To ISIDORO.*] Hey, master! I'm leaving her in your hands; remember that she's a poor innocent, sir.

ISIDORO. My good woman, in this place there's no danger of such things.

LIBERA. [*To herself.*] Aye, aye, but he's so mighty

red i' the face that I don't trust him much. [*She goes out.*]

ISIDORO. Come here, child; sit down. [*He seats himself.*]

CHECCA. Eh, no, Master; I'm very well on my feet.

ISIDORO. Sit down; I won't have you stand.

CHECCA. As you command. [*She sits down.*]

ISIDORO. What's your name?

CHECCA. My name's Checca.

ISIDORO. And your surname?

CHECCA. Schiantina.

ISIDORO. Have you any nickname?

CHECCA. Eh, sirs! a nickname, is it?

ISIDORO. Don't they call you Little Curd Pudding?

CHECCA. Ho! of course, you want to make fun of me, too, now! [*She pouts.*]

ISIDORO. Come, come! as you're pretty, you must also be good. Answer me. Do you know what you've been called here to be examined about?

CHECCA. Yes, sir;—a fight.

ISIDORO. Tell me how it all went.

CHECCA. I don't know anything; I wasn't there. I was going home with my sister Orsetta and my brother-in-law Fortunato; and there were Cap'n Toni, and Beppo Gog-Dang-It, and Titta-Nane, who wanted to hit Toffolo Runt; and he was throwing stones.

ISIDORO. What did they want to hit Toffolo Runt for?

CHECCA. Because Titta-Nane keeps company with Lucietta Bouncers; and Runt he went and talked to her, and bought roast pumpkin for her.

ISIDORO. Well, well, well! I've understood; that'll do. How old are you?

CHECCA. You want to know how old I am, also?

ISIDORO. Yes, ma'am; whoever's examined must say how old he is; and at the end of the evidence—when it's all taken down—one writes his age. And so, how old are you?

CHECCA. Oh, I don't tell lies about how old I am; I'm seventeen.

ISIDORO. Swear that you've told the truth.

CHECCA. About what?

ISIDORO. Swear that all you've told in your examination is true.

CHECCA. Oh, yes, yes. I swear that I've told the truth.

ISIDORO. And now your examination is over.

CHECCA. May I go?

ISIDORO. No, stay here a little bit. How are you off for sweethearts?

CHECCA. Eh, sirs! I haven't any sweethearts.

ISIDORO. Don't tell fibs.

CHECCA. Must I swear?

ISIDORO. No, you needn't swear any more, now; but fibs,—one mustn't tell fibs. How many sweethearts have you?

CHECCA. Me! Nobody wants me, because I'm poor.

ISIDORO. Want me to find you a dowry?

CHECCA. I wouldn't say no to that!

ISIDORO. If you had a dowry, you'd like to get married?

CHECCA. I? Yes, most illustrious one, I'd like to.

ISIDORO. Got any one on hand?

CHECCA. And who would you have me have?

ISIDORO. No one that you'd fancy?

CHECCA. You make me feel so ashamed—

ISIDORO. Don't feel ashamed; we're alone. Tell me freely, now.



CHECCA. Titta-Nane; if I could have him, I'd like him.

ISIDORO. Isn't he Lucietta's sweetheart?

CHECCA. He's dismissed her.

ISIDORO. If he's dismissed her, we might see whether he'd have you.

CHECCA. Oh, how much will the dowry be?

ISIDORO. Fifty ducats.

CHECCA. Oh, good! Oh, good! One hundred my brother-in-law'll give me; fifty more I've laid aside with my lace-making. I don't believe Lucietta can give that much.

ISIDORO. Want me to have Titta-Nane spoken to?

CHECCA. I'm willing enough, most illustrious one, sir!

ISIDORO. Where is he?

CHECCA. He's gone to hide.

ISIDORO. Where?

CHECCA. I'll tell you in your ear, for nobody must hear me. [*She whispers in his ear.*]

ISIDORO. I've understood. I'll send for him. I'll talk to him myself; leave it all to me. Now go, lassie, go, that they mayn't say—you understand me, lass. [*He rings a bell.*]

CHECCA. Oh, you dear most illustrious one, blessed one!

[*The USHER comes in.*]

THE USHER. Command me, sir.

ISIDORO. Let Orsetta come in.

THE USHER. At once, sir. [*He goes out.*]

ISIDORO. I'll let you know; I'll drop in and let you know.

CHECCA. Yes, most illustrious one, sir. [*She rises.*] Hey! then I'd show her what,—Miss Lucietta. Wish I could!

[*ORSETTA enters.*]

ORSETTA. [*To CHECCA.*] All this time he's been examining you? What all has he examined you about?

CHECCA. [*To ORSETTA.*] Oh, sister! I've had the loveliest examination! I'll tell you later. [*She goes out.*]

ISIDORO. Come here; sit down.

ORSETTA. Yes, sir. [*She sits down with a satisfied air.*]

ISIDORO. [*To himself.*] Hey! she's not so timid, this one. [*To ORSETTA.*] What's your name?

ORSETTA. Orsetta Schiantini.

ISIDORO. Called—?

ORSETTA. What's this "called"?

ISIDORO. Haven't you a nickname?

ORSETTA. What nickname do you want me to have?

ISIDORO. Don't they call you Bran-Bun?

ORSETTA. I'll tell you what, most illustrious one, if it weren't for the place I'm in, I'd comb that wig of yours for you!

ISIDORO. Hey, there! Hey, there! Speak respectfully.

ORSETTA. What's this "Bran-Bun"? Bran-buns, at Chioggia they're made with bran and Indian corn; and I'm not yellow like corn, and I'm not the color of bran-buns.

ISIDORO. Come, come, Mistress, don't get so hot, for this isn't the place to make scenes in. Answer me. Do you know for what reason you've been called here to be examined?

ORSETTA. No, I don't, sir.

ISIDORO. Can't you imagine?

ORSETTA. No, I can't, sir.

ISIDORO. Do you know anything about a certain brawl?

ORSETTA. I know, and I don't know.

ISIDORO. Come, come; tell me what you know.

ORSETTA. Ask me questions, and I'll answer you.

ISIDORO. [*To himself.*] She's of the kind that drive us poor devils of coadjutors mad. [*To ORSETTA.*] Do you know Toffolo Zavatta?

ORSETTA. No, sir, I don't.

ISIDORO. Toffolo Runt?

ORSETTA. Yes, sir.

ISIDORO. Do you know of anyone wanting to beat him?

ORSETTA. I can't know what people have it in their minds to want.

ISIDORO. [*To himself.*] Gad! what a little cat! [*To ORSETTA.*] Did you see anyone make show of weapons against him?

ORSETTA. Yes, sir.

ISIDORO. Who were they?

ORSETTA. I don't remember.

ISIDORO. If I name them, shall you remember?

ORSETTA. When you name them, I'll tell you.

ISIDORO. [*To himself.*] May the devil take you! She wants to keep me here till evening. [*To ORSETTA.*] Was Titta-Nane Hotblood there?

ORSETTA. Yes, sir.

ISIDORO. Was Cap'n Toni Basket there?

ORSETTA. Yes, sir.

ISIDORO. Was Beppo Gog-Dang-It there?

ORSETTA. Yes, sir.

ISIDORO. Good for you,—Mistress Bran-Bun!

ORSETTA. Say, sir, haven't you a nickname?

ISIDORO. [*Writing.*] Come, come, less talk.

ORSETTA. [*To herself.*] Ho! I'll give him one, then: Master Coadjutor Lackpenny!

ISIDORO. Toffolo Runt, did he throw stones?

ORSETTA. Yes, sir, he threw stones. [*She mutters*

*to herself*] Good for him if he'd got the Coadjutor's head with 'em.

ISIDORO. What's that?

ORSETTA. Nothing; I'm talking to myself. Mayn't one even talk?

ISIDORO. What brought on this row?

ORSETTA. How would you have me know?

ISIDORO. [*To himself.*] 'Sblood! I'm getting weary of it. [*To ORSETTA.*] Do you know anything about Titta-Nane's being jealous of Toffolo Runt?

ORSETTA. Yes, sir; on account of Lucietta Bouncers.

ISIDORO. Do you know anything about Titta-Nane's having dismissed Lucietta?

ORSETTA. Yes, sir; I've heard say that he's dismissed her.

ISIDORO. [*To himself.*] Checca told the truth; I'll see whether I can't do the thing for her. [*To ORSETTA.*] Come, you're nearly through, now. How old are you?

ORSETTA. Ho, by Gog's house, now! Also how old I am, must you know?

ISIDORO. Yes, ma'am; also how old you are.

ORSETTA. And you must write it down?

ISIDORO. And I must write it down.

ORSETTA. Oh, well, write it, then;—nineteen.

ISIDORO. [*Writing.*] Swear that you've told the truth.

ORSETTA. Swear, must I?

ISIDORO. Swear that you've told the truth.

ORSETTA. I'll tell you, sir,—if I must swear to it, why,—really, I'm twenty-four.

ISIDORO. I don't tell you to swear about your age; one mayn't administer that oath to women. I tell you to swear that what you've said in this examination is the truth.

ORSETTA. Oh, yes, sir, I swear.

[ISIDORO rings a bell. The USHER enters.]

THE USHER. Whom do you want next, sir?

ISIDORO. Dame Libera.

THE USHER. Serve you immediately, sir. [*He goes out.*]

ORSETTA. [*To herself.*] Eh, sirs! How old one is, too, one must tell. [*She rises.*]

[LIBERA enters.]

LIBERA. [*To ORSETTA.*] Have you weathered it?

ORSETTA. [*To LIBERA.*] Hey, listen! You have to tell him how old you are; that, too, he must know!

LIBERA. [*To ORSETTA.*] Really, now?

ORSETTA. [*To LIBERA.*] And swear to it! [*She goes out.*]

LIBERA. [*To herself.*] Taste of that, now! How old one is, he wants to know? Makes one swear to it, does he? Ho! but I've got a patch or two to fit that!

ISIDORO. Let's hear *you*, now. Come here, and sit down.

[LIBERA does not answer.]

ISIDORO. Hey, there, I say; come here and sit down. [*He motions her to a seat.*]

[LIBERA takes the seat.]

ISIDORO. Who are you?

[LIBERA does not answer.]

ISIDORO. [*Giving LIBERA a push.*] Answer. Who are you?

LIBERA. Eh, master?

ISIDORO. Who are you?

LIBERA. What's that you say, sir?

ISIDORO. [*In a loud voice.*] Are you deaf?

LIBERA. I don't hear much, master.

ISIDORO. [*To himself.*] God save us! [*To LIBERA.*] What is your name?

LIBERA. Please you, sir?

ISIDORO. Your name?

LIBERA. Talk a bit louder, master.

ISIDORO. D'you really think I want to go mad?  
[*He rings the bell. The USHER enters.*]

THE USHER. Here, sir.

ISIDORO. Have the man in.

THE USHER. At once, sir. [*He goes out.*]

ISIDORO. [*To LIBERA.*] Go, and good inns to you.

LIBERA. Eh, master? What?

ISIDORO. [*Pushing her out.*] Be off. Get out of here.

LIBERA. [*To herself.*] There! Managed that pretty nicely. He shan't know my affairs, I tell you!  
[*She goes out.*]

ISIDORO. This profession is handsome, genteel, decorous,—even useful; but, egad! sometimes things are enough to drive you mad.

[*FORTUNATO enters.*]

FORTUNATO. Your se'ant, mo't illus'ious one; your se'ant, your se'ant.

ISIDORO. Eh? Who are you?

FORTUNATO. Fortunato A'ichio.

ISIDORO. Talk plainly, man, if you want to be understood. Captain Fortunato Cavicchio. Do you know why you've been summoned here.

FORTUNATO. 'Es, 'ir; 'es, 'ir.

ISIDORO. Let's hear you tell me, then; why have you come here?

FORTUNATO. I've 'ome 'ecause Ma'er Usher 'old me to 'ome.

ISIDORO. Witty, by gad, sir! I know that myself. Have you heard anything about a certain brawl?

FORTUNATO. 'Es, 'ir; 'es, 'ir.

ISIDORO. Come, tell me how it went.

FORTUNATO. You 'ust know, 'ir, that 'oday I 'ame

in with 'e tartane, and I put in at 'igo; and my 'ife came there, and my 'ister-in-law O'etta, and my 'ister-in-law Checca.

ISIDORO. If you don't talk clearer, I can't make you out.

FORTUNATO. 'Es, sir; 'es, 'ir. Going home with my 'ife and my 'ister-in-law, I saw Cap'n Toni, I 'aw; and Beppo 'Og-'Ang-It, I 'aw, and Titta-Nane 'Otblood, and Toffolo 'Unt. And Cap'n Toni, 'iff, he went, with 'is 'anger; and Beppo, "'Et fro' under!'" 'ith 'is knife; and 'Offolo 'Unt, zam, 'am, 'am, with 'tones. And 'en Titta-Nane 'ame, Titta-Nane 'ame: "'Way, there! 'ay, 'ere!'" 'ith 'is 'anger. Pull, 'ush, whack, 'ang, racket. Toffolo 'Unt 'ell down,—and 'at's all I know. Have you u'erstood?

ISIDORO. Not a word.

FORTUNATO. I 'alk Chioggian, I 'ink, most illus'ious one! From wha' coun'y do you 'ome?

ISIDORO. I come from Venice, but I'll be danged if I understand you, man.

FORTUNATO. Do you co'and 'at I say it over a'ain?

ISIDORO. What?

FORTUNATO. Do you co'and 'at I say it over a'ain? Over a'ain? Over a'ain?

ISIDORO. Go to the devil, the devil, the devil!

FORTUNATO. [*Going.*] Se'ant, most illus'ous one.

ISIDORO. Damned old parrot!

FORTUNATO. [*Going.*] Se'ant, 'ost 'lus'ous one.

ISIDORO. If this were an important case, woe to me!

FORTUNATO. [*On the threshold.*] Ma'er Coadjutor, most illus'ous. [*He goes out.*]

ISIDORO. The devil take you! [*He rings the bell.*]

[*The USHER enters.*]

THE USHER. Here to serve you, sir.

ISIDORO. Dismiss those women; send 'em away; tell 'em to be off. I don't want any more of it.

THE USHER. At once, sir. [*He goes out.*]

[*PASQUA and LUCIETTA enter.*]

ISIDORO. One must get out of temper, whether or no!

PASQUA. [*Resentfully.*] Why are you sending us off?

LUCIETTA. Why don't you want to examine us?

ISIDORO. Because I'm sick of it;—that's why.

PASQUA. Ho! yes, my deary; we understand it all.

LUCIETTA. You heard those you wanted to; we're sweepings, of course!

ISIDORO. Will ye have done?

LUCIETTA. Little Curd Pudding—you kept *her* an hour.

PASQUA. And Bran-Bun? How long did he keep her?

LUCIETTA. But we'll go to whom we have to go.

PASQUA. And we'll get our rights, we'll get.

ISIDORO. Ye don't understand a thing. Listen.

PASQUA. What are you going to sing us now?

LUCIETTA. What are you going to fool us with now?

ISIDORO. You're an interested party in the case; you mayn't be heard as witnesses.

LUCIETTA. Not a word of it true! Not a word of it! We're not interested; we're honest witnesses, we are.

PASQUA. And we, too, want to be heard.

ISIDORO. Have done, I tell you.

PASQUA. And we will be heard, too!

LUCIETTA. And we'll make it plain, too!

ISIDORO. Go to the devil!

[*The USHER enters.*]

THE USHER. Most illustrious one—



ISIDORO. What now?

THE USHER. The Most Illustrious Chancellor has arrived. [*He goes out.*]

PASQUA. There! *He's* the man for us.

LUCIETTA. We'll go to *him*.

ISIDORO. Go where the devil you like! Beasts! Fiends! Devils! [*He rushes out.*]

PASQUA. Gog's sea! We'll put a load on his back yet!

LUCIETTA. Long live jackanapes! We'll make him carry it, too!

## ACT III

### *Scene I. The Street of Chioggia*

[*BEPPO enters.*]

BEPPO. I don't care; let 'em catch me if they want to. I'll go give myself up,—I don't care; but in hiding I won't stay any longer. I shan't die content if I don't give Orsetta a slap. And Runt,—I'm going to cut off an ear for him, I am, even though I should die in prison afterwards. My door's shut, like the rest. Lucietta and my sister-in-law, they'll have gone to tell our side of the story. Toni and the others will have gone to speak for Runt. I hear someone coming, I hear. I always seem to feel the bailiffs at my back. Hey, there! it's Orsetta coming! Come along, come; I'll fix you now.

[*LIBERA, ORSETTA, and CHECCA enter, with their shawls over their shoulders.*]

LIBERA. [*Affectionately.*] Beppo!

ORSETTA. Beppo, dear!

BEPPO. Go drown yourselves, go!

ORSETTA. What are you mad at?

LIBERA. Who's to "go drown yourself"?

BEPPO. Go drown yourselves, the whole lot of you!

CHECCA. [*To BEPPO.*] Go yourself, go.

ORSETTA. [*To CHECCA.*] Hush! [*To BEPPO*] What have we done to you?

BEPPO. You'll have it as you want it: I'll go to prison. But before I go—

ORSETTA. Never think of it; it won't be anything at all.

LIBERA. Cap'n Vincenzo says so;—that we needn't be afraid of anything, for it'll all be fixed up.

CHECCA. And then, we've got the Coadjutor on our side.

ORSETTA. Tell us what you're mad at, anyway.

BEPPPO. At you I'm mad.

ORSETTA. At me?

BEPPPO. Yes, at you.

ORSETTA. What have I done to you?

BEPPPO. What d'you go minding Runt for? What d'you go talking to him for? What's he come hanging around you for?

ORSETTA. I?

BEPPPO. You!

ORSETTA. Who told you that?

BEPPPO. My sister-in-law and my sister; they told me.

ORSETTA. Lying things!

LIBERA. Lying chits!

CHECCA. Oh, what liars!

ORSETTA. He talked to Checca.

LIBERA. And then he went and sat beside your sister.

ORSETTA. He bought roast pumpkin for her.

CHECCA. Why, Titta-Nane's dismissed her; that enough for you?

BEPPPO. Dismissed my sister? What for?

CHECCA. Because she was too sweet on Runt.

ORSETTA. And I? What have I got to do with it?

BEPPPO. [*To ORSETTA.*] Runt didn't talk to you? [*To all.*] He talked to Lucietta? And Titta-Nane dismissed her?

ORSETTA. Yes, you dog, you; don't you believe me, you mean thing, you? Don't you believe your poor Orsetta who loves you so—when I've had so many cries on your account—when I'm wasting away because of you?

BEPPPO. Then what did they tell me for, those sluts?

LIBERA. To get from under it themselves, they try to put it on us.

CHECCA. We've done nothing to them, and they hate us.

BEPPPO. [*Threateningly.*] Let 'em come home, let 'em.

ORSETTA. Hush! here they come.

LIBERA. Keep it quiet.

CHECCA. Don't say anything about it.

[PASQUA and LUCIETTA, *their shawls over their shoulders, enter.*]

LUCIETTA. [*To BEPPPO.*] What is it?

PASQUA. [*To BEPPPO.*] What you doing here?

BEPPPO. [*Sternly.*] What are you coming around with now?

LUCIETTA. Listen.

PASQUA. Come here; listen.

BEPPPO. What you going to rig up now? What you—

LUCIETTA. [*Breathlessly.*] But come here, quick!

PASQUA. Quick, you poor soul!

BEPPPO. What is it? Something happened? [*He approaches them and they get on either side of him.*]

LUCIETTA. Get away.

PASQUA. Go hide. [*The other women, meanwhile, take off their shawls.*]

BEPPPO. Why, they've just told me that there's nothing to be afraid of.

LUCIETTA. Don't trust them!

PASQUA. They're trying to murder you!

LUCIETTA. We've been to the Palace; he wouldn't even listen to us.

PASQUA. Them he let in; but us—he drove us away.

LUCIETTA. And Orsetta, she was in there with the Coadjutor for more than an hour.

PASQUA. You're as good as tried.

LUCIETTA. You're as good as caught.

PASQUA. Go hide yourself.

BEPP0. [*To ORSETTA.*] And you'd murder a man in this way?

ORSETTA. What's happened?

BEPP0. Kept me talking here to trap me!

ORSETTA. Who says that?

LUCIETTA. I say it, I do.

PASQUA. And we know everything, we know.

LUCIETTA. [*To BEPP0.*] Go, go.

PASQUA. [*To BEPP0.*] Go, lad, go.

BEPP0. [*To ORSETTA.*] I'm going—but you'll pay me for this.

[*CAPTAIN TONI enters.*]

PASQUA. Husband!

LUCIETTA. Brother!

PASQUA. Go away from here.

LUCIETTA. Don't let yourself be found.

TONI. There, there; don't be afraid. Cap'n Vincenzo has been around to see me, and he says that everything's fixed up; we may go about all we like.

ORSETTA. Hear that?

LIBERA. Didn't we tell you so?

CHECCA. Are we the story-tellers?

ORSETTA. We want to murder you, don't we?

BEPP0. [*To PASQUA and LUCIETTA.*] What did you come bothering around for, then? What did you go rigging all that up for?

[*CAPTAIN VICENZO enters.*]

ORSETTA. Here's Cap'n Vincenzo, now. Isn't it true that everything's arranged, Cap'n Vincenzo?

VICENZO. Nothing's arranged at all.

ORSETTA. How, nothing's arranged?

VICENZO. There's no way of making that stubborn-mug Runt consent to an agreement, and without his consent nothing can be done.

PASQUA. Hey! Hear that?

LUCIETTA. Didn't I tell you so?

PASQUA. Don't believe a word they say.

LUCIETTA. Nothing's fixed up.

PASQUA. Don't trust them; don't be seen about.

LUCIETTA. Go and hide at once.

[TITTA-NANE comes in.]

PASQUA. Oh! Titta-Nane, what are you doing here?

TITTA. I'm doing what I please, I'm doing.

PASQUA. [*To herself.*] Hey! he hasn't got over it yet.

LUCIETTA. [*To TITTA-NANE.*] Aren't you afraid of the bailiff?

TITTA. [*To LUCIETTA, sternly.*] I'm not afraid of anything. [*To VICENZO.*] I've been to the Coadjutor's—he sent for me—and he says that I may go around all I like and that I'd do better to stop fussing about the thing.

ORSETTA. [*To LUCIETTA.*] Talk, now, if you've got breath to talk! [*To the rest.*] Didn't I tell you that we had the Coadjutor on our side?

[THE USHER enters.]

THE USHER. Cap'n Toni Basket, Beppo Gog-Dang-it, and Titta-Nane Hotblood, come with me to the Palace, at once; the Chancellor wants you.

PASQUA. Oh, poor me!

LUCIETTA. We're done for.

PASQUA. [*To ORSETTA.*] Where's the truth of your talk?

LUCIETTA. [*To ORSETTA.*] What were you thinking of, to trust that bouncer of a Coadjutor?

[ISIDORO enters.]

LUCIETTA. [*To herself.*] Huh! I've done it, now.

ISIDORO. Who is it that thinks so handsomely of me?

ORSETTA. [*Pointing at LUCIETTA.*] That one, there, most illustrious one; I'm out of it.

LUCIETTA. What do you want with our men? What do you want to do to them?

ISIDORO. Nothing; let them come with me and fear nothing. I'm dealing honestly by ye. I've undertaken to settle the matter, and the Chancellor, good gentleman, leaves it all to me. Now, then, Cap'n Vincenzo, go you and look for Runt, and do your best to bring him to me; and if he isn't to be moved by persuasion, tell him that I'll move him myself, by force.

VICENZO. Aye, aye, sir; when there's a good turn to be done, I'm here. I'll go at once. Beppo, Cap'n Toni, come with me; I've got something to tell you.

TONI. I'm with you. Bro' Vincenzo; aye, sure, I'm with you.

TITTA. [*To himself.*] I don't budge from beside the Coadjutor.

BEPPPO. So long, Orsetta.

ORSETTA. [*To BEPPPO.*] Are you still angry?

BEPPPO. Come, come, what's this all been about, anyhow? We'll see each other later. [*He goes out with TONI and VICENZO.*]

CHECCA. [*To ISIDORO.*] Say, most illustrious one—

ISIDORO. [*To CHECCA.*] What is it?

CHECCA. [*To ISIDORO.*] Have you talked to him?

ISIDORO. [*To CHECCA.*] I've talked to him.

CHECCA. [*To ISIDORO.*] What's he say?

ISIDORO. [*To CHECCA.*] To tell it you as it

stands, he said neither yes nor no; he doesn't dislike the idea of the two hundred ducats, though.

CHECCA. [*To ISIDORO.*] Do, please, try to—

ISIDORO. [*To CHECCA.*] Leave it to me. [*To the rest.*] Come, let's be off.

TITTA. [*Starting to go.*] I'm here with you.

LUCIETTA. [*To TITTA.*] Not even a rag of a good-bye, master?

PASQUA. [*To TITTA.*] Where's your manners?

TITTA. [*Disdainfully.*] Servant, mistresses.

ISIDORO. [*To TITTA.*] Come, say good-bye to little Checca.

TITTA. [*Graciously.*] Bid you good-bye, pretty lassie. [*LUCIETTA becomes agitated.*]

CHECCA. Servant, Titta-Nane.

TITTA. [*To himself.*] Glad of it, that Lucietta's chewing herself, glad of it; I want to get even with her. [*He goes out.*]

ISIDORO. [*To himself.*] And this, too, is seeing the play, in a sort. [*He goes out.*]

LUCIETTA. [*To PASQUA.*] Did you hear what he said to her? "Pretty lassie," he said to her.

PASQUA. [*To LUCIETTA.*] But come on, now! What are you getting into your head this time?

LUCIETTA. [*Raising her voice in order to be heard.*] And she? "Your servant, Titta-Nane."

CHECCA. What's the matter now, miss? Would you be making fun of me again?

ORSETTA. [*To CHECCA.*] Tell her to mind her own doings.

LIBERA. Aye, and pretty things they are.

LUCIETTA. Me? Oh, truly, there's little to say about me; there are some mean things that I shouldn't have the heart to do.

PASQUA. [*To LUCIETTA.*] There, there; don't



bother your head about them. Don't you know what they are?

CHECCA. [*To PASQUA.*] What are we?

ORSETTA. [*To PASQUA.*] What do you mean by that?

LIBERA. [*To ORSETTA.*] There, there; show that some of us, at least, have a little sense.

LUCIETTA. [*To LIBERA.*] Eh, the sage sibyl! Maids that have sense, mistress, let alone other folks and don't go stealing their sweethearts.

ORSETTA. [*To LUCIETTA.*] What are we stealing from you, please?

LUCIETTA. Titta-Nane's my sweetheart.

CHECCA. Titta-Nane's dismissed you.

PASQUA. Not a word of it true.

LIBERA. Ho! All the neighborhood heard him.

PASQUA. [*To LIBERA.*] Go, go; you're a fire-brand.

ORSETTA. [*To PASQUA.*] Hold your tongue, there, addle-head.

LUCIETTA. Listen to her! Impudent thing!

LIBERA. [*With angry irony.*] Ho, see her, there; she's a pretty maid, she is.

LUCIETTA. Better than your sister!

CHECCA. You're not even fit to say my name, you're not.

LUCIETTA. Poor dirty one!

ORSETTA. How're you talking? You—[*They advance upon each other.*]

PASQUA. What ye bet that I mess your hair for ye, now?

LIBERA. Who'll mess our hair? Who?

ORSETTA. By Gog's sea! I'll tear the skin from you, now!

LUCIETTA. What a devil you are!

ORSETTA. Stop that talk, stop! [*She slaps LUCIETTA on the hand.*]

LUCIETTA. Hey, there! [*She raises her hand to strike.*]

LIBERA. [*Giving PASQUA a push.*] Move over, there.

PASQUA. [*Giving LIBERA a push.*] What's this pushing?

ORSETTA. [*Striking PASQUA.*] Hey, there! Hey, there! Hey, there! [*They beat each other, both screaming.*]

ALL. Hey, there! Hey, there! Hey, there!

[*FORTUNATO enters.*]

FORTUNATO. S'op that, women! S'op that! S'op that! [*He rushes in between the screaming, fighting women, and finally manages to separate them, driving his family into the house.*]

LIBERA. Aye, aye; you're right. [*She goes out.*]

CHECCA. You'll pay me for this! [*She goes out.*]

ORSETTA. [*To PASQUA.*] I'll yet root up your pig-tail; remember that! [*She goes out.*]

PASQUA. [*To ORSETTA.*] You cat, you! If my arm hadn't been hurting me I'd have rubbed you on the ground! [*She goes out.*]

LUCIETTA. It's a shame! [*To FORTUNATO.*] If you don't make 'em behave, I'll, I'll throw dish-water all over you; there! You horrible old half-dead thing; there! [*She goes out.*]

FORTUNATO. Go in, 'ere! Poh, you 'evils! Go in, I 'ay! Women, 'omen—ugh! A'ways squabbles, a'ways 'ights. It's right, is 'e 'overb: woman, worry; 'oman, 'orry, 'orry, 'orry. [*He goes out.*]

*Scene II. A Room in a Private House*

[ISIDORO and TITTA-NANE enter.]

ISIDORO. Come with me; come with me. There's nothing to feel uncomfortable about; here we're not in the Palace; here we're not in court. We're in the house of an honest gentleman. He's a Venetian who comes here to Chioggia twice a year, and when he's not here himself, you know, he leaves me the keys; so I'm master in this house just now, and here we're going to make peace between ye and settle this squabble, because I'm a friend to friends, you know, and I like you Chioggians.

TITTA. It's very good of you, Master Coadjutor.

ISIDORO. Come here, while we're alone—

TITTA. Where are the others?

ISIDORO. Cap'n Vincenzo's gone to fetch Runt, and he'll come here, for he knows already where he's to come. Cap'n Toni I've sent up to my rooms at the Palace to get my man, for I want us to wash down this peace with a couple of flasks of wine. Beppo's gone to fetch Dame Libera and Cap'n Fortunato. You see, I've planned everything nicely, and I'm telling you everything frankly.

TITTA. And if Runt doesn't want to come?

ISIDORO. If Runt doesn't want to come, I'll have him brought. And now, while we're alone, answer me plainly about that matter we spoke of. Don't you fancy little Checca? Shouldn't you like to have her?

TITTA. If I'm to tell you the plain truth, sir, I don't like her.

ISIDORO. How's this, now! You talked differently this morning.

TITTA. What did I say?

ISIDORO. You said: "I don't know; my word's

half given elsewhere." You asked me what dowry she had, and I told you, too; I told you she has better than two hundred ducats, and it seemed to me that you didn't dislike the idea of the ducats so very much, nor of the girl either. What's this shuffling, now?

TITTA. Most illustrious one, I'm not shuffling anything, most illustrious one. The truth of it is, sir, that I've been keeping company with Lucietta for two years, and I got mad and did what I did because I was jealous and because I love the girl, and that's why I dismissed her. But you're to understand, sir, that Lucietta's the only girl for me, she is; and when a man's mad, sir, he doesn't half know what he's saying. This morning I could have killed her, and for a bit I had half a mind to do it; but by Gog's sea, when I think of giving her up, I can't do it, and there's an end. She talked back at me, and I dismissed her, but it's as if the sides of my heart would burst, it is.

ISIDORO. A pretty speech, by gad, sir! And here I've sent for Dame Libera and Cap'n Fortunato to arrange this match.

TITTA. [*Remorsefully.*] Thank you, most illustrious one.

ISIDORO. You won't have her, then?

TITTA. [*Remorsefully.*] Thank you for your goodness, sir.

ISIDORO. Yes, or no?

TITTA. With all respect, sir, but I won't.

ISIDORO. Go, be hanged, for it's little I care.

TITTA. How are you talking, most illustrious one? I'm a poor man, I'm a poor fisherman, but I'm an honest man, sir.

ISIDORO. I'm vexed, because I'd like to see the lass get a husband.

TITTA. Most illustrious one, have patience with me; with all respect, I'd say a thing to you.

ISIDORO. Say on. What would you say to me?

TITTA. Dear, my most illustrious one, don't take it ill, what I'm going to say.

ISIDORO. No, no; I shan't take it ill. [*To himself.*] I'm curious to hear what he's got it in his head to say.

TITTA. I talk with all respect, sir; I kiss where you tread;—but, if I were to get married, I'd as soon not have an illustrious one so anxious about my wife.

ISIDORO. Oh, what a dear, Titta-Nane! Ha, ha, ha! You make me laugh, 'pon my word. Why do you think I'm anxious about this girl, pray?

TITTA. [*Ironically.*] What's it matter? Because you'd do her a kindness, you're interested. What's it matter?

ISIDORO. I'd have you know that I'm an honorable man, and not capable—

TITTA. [*Ironically.*] Aye, aye. What's it matter, anyhow?

ISIDORO. [*To himself.*] A plague on the rascal!  
[VICENZO enters.]

VICENZO. Here I am, most illustrious one. I've managed to make him come, at last.

ISIDORO. Where is he?

VICENZO. He's outside; shall I call him?

ISIDORO. Call him.

VICENZO. Toffolo, come here to us.

TOFFOLO. [*To ISIDORO, saluting him.*] I'm here, most illustrious one.

ISIDORO. Come forward.

TOFFOLO. [*Again saluting.*] Most illustrious Master Coadjutor.

ISIDORO. Tell me, now; why won't you make

peace with those three you had trouble with this morning.

TOFFOLO. Because, most illustrious one, they want to kill me.

ISIDORO. Once that they ask you to make peace, they don't want to kill you.

TOFFOLO. They're bad ones, most illustrious Master Coadjutor.

TITTA. [*Threatening him.*] Mind how you talk, you!

ISIDORO. [*To TITTA-NANE.*] Keep quiet. [*To TOFFOLO.*] Mend your manners, or I'll have you given bad lodgings.

TOFFOLO. Whatever you command, most illustrious one.

ISIDORO. Do you know it, that on account of the stones you threw you deserve to be put on trial; and that for the trick you tried to play, bringing suit afterwards, you'll be condemned to pay costs? Do you know it?

TOFFOLO. I'm a poor man, most illustrious one; I can't pay! [*To VICENZO and TITTA-NANE.*] Come on; kill me and have done with it. I'm a poor, miserable man; kill me.

ISIDORO. [*To himself.*] He looks like a simpleton, but he's got the devil's own wiliness in him.

VICENZO. Say that it's peace and the thing's done.

TOFFOLO. I want to be sure of my life, I want.

ISIDORO. Well and good; I'll put your mind at rest on that score. Titta-Nane, do you give me your word not to trouble him further?

TITTA. Yes, most illustrious one; so long as he lets Lucietta be and keeps away from there, I'm content.

TOFFOLO. I, Bro' Titta-Nane, haven't a thought in

my head about Lucietta, and it isn't on her account, it isn't, that I hang around there.

TITTA. On whose, then?

TOFFOLO. Most illustrious one, he's not the only one who wants to get married.

ISIDORO. But come on, speak up. Whom have you got your eye upon, over there?

TOFFOLO. Most illustrious one—

ISIDORO. Orsetta?

TOFFOLO. Aw, no.

ISIDORO. Checca, perhaps?

TOFFOLO. [*Laughing.*] Ah, now; that's more like it, now! Good for you, sir.

TITTA. You're a liar!

TOFFOLO. What for a liar?

TITTA. Because Checca told me, and Dame Libera and Orsetta told me, that you sat beside Lucietta and bought things for her!

TOFFOLO. To spite someone, I did it.

TITTA. To spite whom?

ISIDORO. Now, keep quiet! [*To TOFFOLO.*] Do you really mean it that you care for Checca?

TOFFOLO. I, yes; honest lad's word, I do.

ISIDORO. Would you take her for your wife?

TOFFOLO. Gog's sea! Would I!

ISIDORO. And she? Will she want you?

TOFFOLO. Aw, what am I? Why shouldn't she want me? She said such things to me, she said;—I can't even repeat them, I can't. Her sister drove me away; else—and when I moor a deck of my own at Vigo, I'll be able to keep her, too.

ISIDORO. [*To himself.*] He'd be just the thing for little Checca.

[*TONI and a man servant with flasks of wine enter.*]

TONI. Here's your man, most illustrious one.

ISIDORO. Good! [*To the man.*] Set down those

flasks and go get some glasses in the kitchen; they're in the little cupboard. [*The servant goes out.*]

TONI. [*To VICENZO.*] How are things going, Cap'n Vincenzo?

VICENZO. [*To TONI.*] All well, all well! Such things we've found out—it'll all end well.

ISIDORO. Merrily, there, Toffolo! I want to see a fine marriage, soon.

TOFFOLO. I'm ready enough, I am, sir.

TONI. Ho, there, Toffolo; who is she?

ISIDORO. Little Checca.

TONI. And my brother, Beppo, shall marry Orsetta.

ISIDORO. Good lads! And Titta-Nane shall marry Lucietta.

TITTA. Why, if she speaks fair, it may be that I'll take her.

ISIDORO. Let by-gones be by-gones, now; let by-gones be by-gones! There's to be no more stickling at trifles, now! We're going to celebrate these marriages, and ye shall be married here, all of ye. I'll provide the confetti, and we'll sup, and we'll all be merry.

TOFFOLO. Ho, Cap'n Toni; merrily, there!

TONI. Merrily, there, Cap'n Vincenzo!

VICENZO. Merrily, there!

ISIDORO. Hurrah, Titta-Nane! Merrily, there; you, also.

TITTA. Aye, aye, sir. I'm here; I'll stand by.

ISIDORO. Come, now; make peace, all of ye.

TOFFOLO. Peace. [*He embraces TONI.*]

TONI. Peace. [*He embraces TOFFOLO.*]

TOFFOLO. Friend—[*He embraces TITTA-NANE.*]

TITTA. Friend. [*He embraces TOFFOLO.*]

TOFFOLO. Cap'n Vincenzo—[*He embraces VICENZO.*]

VICENZO. All friends, now; all friends, now.



[BEPP0 enters.]

TOFFOLO. Friend, peace; friend, mate—[*He clasps BEPP0's neck and embraces him.*]

BEPP0. Avast, there. Such a storm, there's been! Such a racket! Oh, bro' o' mine, I can't half give you the size of it!

ISIDORO. What's happened?

BEPP0. They screamed; they scratched; they laid into each other; you never saw a thing like it.

ISIDORO. Who?

BEPP0. My sister-in-law, Pasqua, and Lucietta, and Dame Libera, and Orsetta, and Checca. I went to do the right thing, I went;—because Master Co-adjutor told me to. Oh, aye, I made a good thing of it. They wouldn't so much as let me into the house. Orsetta slammed the window in my face. Lucietta won't have Titta-Nane any more. They're screeching that they'll do for each other, and I'm afraid they'll go at it again, presently.

TITTA. By Gog's blood! She won't, won't she? By Gog's blood! [*He rushes out.*]

TONI. I'd better go see about my woman; I don't want her hurt. [*He hurries away.*]

BEPP0. We'll lay on, by Gog; we'll have it good, this time! [*He goes out.*]

VICENZO. Stop, hold hard, keep your heads on! Wait! [*He goes out.*]

TOFFOLO. They'd better let Checca alone! I tell you that, I do! They'd better! [*He follows VICENZO.*]

ISIDORO. The devil take ye all! The devil take ye all! The devil take ye all! [*He goes out.*]

*Scene III. The Street of Earlier Scenes*

[LUCIETTA and ORSETTA sit at the windows of their houses.]

LUCIETTA. What's that? My brother doesn't want you any more? He's right; you're not fit to have him.

ORSETTA. Eh, sirs! It won't be hard to find better.

LUCIETTA. Really? Whom will you find?

ORSETTA. My Yone Yum. Ever heard of him?

LUCIETTA. Your own—nothing. A little more and I had given you a rhyme for that.

ORSETTA. Oh, we don't need to be told that you're a clean-spoken maid.

LUCIETTA. If I were like you—

ORSETTA. Hold your tongue! I'm an honest girl!

LUCIETTA. If you were, you'd act so.

ORSETTA. Go, go; smirch-names!

LUCIETTA. Trouble-maker!

PASQUA. [*Calling loudly from within.*] Lucietta! Come in! Lucietta!

LUCIETTA. You'll yet have to leave the neighborhood.

ORSETTA. Who?

LUCIETTA. You.

PASQUA. [*Within.*] Lucietta!

ORSETTA. [*Slapping herself on the elbow.*] Kiss that; look, that!

LUCIETTA. Go drown yourself. [*She withdraws from window.*]

ORSETTA. Poor, dirty one! You think you're talking to one of your own sort, don't you? I'll get one, yes;—I'll get a husband. But you? You'll not find one to take you. Ho, that poor unfortunate who wanted you! He'd have made a good thing of

it; he'd have been cooked in a good sauce! But Titta-Nane doesn't want you any more; too bad, isn't it? Isn't it too bad of Titta-Nane that he doesn't want you any more?

LUCIETTA. [*Returning to the window.*] I don't care; I wouldn't have him if he wanted me; so there!

ORSETTA. Sour grapes!

LUCIETTA. Yes, yes; he'll marry that dirty one, your sister.

ORSETTA. Mind how you talk, you!

PASQUA. [*Within.*] Lucietta!

LUCIETTA. I shan't have to beg for one if I want one.

ORSETTA. Eh, yes; we know you've got a protector.

LUCIETTA. Hold your tongue! I'll make you take that back!

PASQUA. [*Within.*] Lucietta! Lucietta!

ORSETTA. [*Mockingly.*] Oh, what a fright I'm in!

LUCIETTA. I'll make you feel sick!

ORSETTA. Meeyow, mud-puddle meeyow!

LUCIETTA. I'm going, because I won't stop to talk to ye! [*She withdraws.*]

ORSETTA. Go, go; don't be made a fool of.

LUCIETTA. [*Returning.*] Bran Bun!

ORSETTA. [*Returning.*] Bouncers!

LUCIETTA. Musty one! [*She withdraws.*]

ORSETTA. Big feet! [*She withdraws.*]

LUCIETTA. [*With irony and contempt, as she re-appears.*] But what a sweet, pretty thing she is!

ORSETTA. [*With irony and contempt, as she re-appears.*] But what a nice, pretty rosebud she is!

[TITTA-NANE, BEPPO, and TONI enter, successively.]

TITTA. [*To LUCIETTA.*] What's all this? What have you been saying about my concerns?

LUCIETTA. Go drown yourself. Go talk to Checca.  
 [*She withdraws.*]

TONI. [*To ORSETTA.*] What way of talking to a man is this?

ORSETTA. [*To TONI.*] Go away; you're a bad lot, all of you.

BEPPPO. Why, Orsetta! Orsetta!

ORSETTA. Go hang yourself. [*She goes out.*]

TONI. [*To TITTA.*] And you keep away from here; for I don't want you here.

BEPPPO. [*To TITTA.*] Stop hanging around the house; we don't want you here.

TITTA. That's why I'm going to come here, instead.

BEPPPO. And I tell you that if I promised 'em to Runt, I'll give 'em to you, I tell you! You just wait! [*He enters the house.*]

TITTA. Here are two horns for your head, look! [*He makes a derisive gesture.*]

TONI. You keep away from the boat, too; find yourself a new master, and I'll find myself a new man. [*He goes into the house.*]

[VICENZO, TOFFOLO, and ISIDORO enter, successively.]

TITTA. Body of a turtle; somebody'll pay me for this!

VICENZO. Titta-Nane! What's happening?

TITTA. Knives! Out with your knives!

VICENZO. Come on, you madman; don't do what there's no mending, now.

TITTA. This time I'm going to get myself hanged, but by Gog's blood, before I'm hanged I'm going to stick it where it'll do most good, I am!

TOFFOLO. I've come to see to things, I have! What's happening here?

TITTA. Knives! Knives out!

TOFFOLO. I'm not in it! I know nothing about

it! [*He runs away, but collides with ISIDORO, who throws him down.*]

ISIDORO. Ha, jackass!

TOFFOLO. Help!

ISIDORO. [*To TOFFOLO.*] What d' ye mean by it? Who's your quarrel with now?

TOFFOLO. [*Rising.*] He wants to do for me, he does!

ISIDORO. Who wants to do for you?

TOFFOLO. Titta-Nane!

TITTA. No I don't!

ISIDORO. [*To TITTA.*] Be off this minute!

VICENZO. He's not after him, most illustrious one; he's after Beppo and Cap'n Toni.

ISIDORO. [*To TITTA.*] Be off, I tell you!

VICENZO. [*To TITTA.*] Come, let's go; do as he tells you, brother-in-law; let's go, brother-in-law.

ISIDORO. [*To VICENZO.*] Take him away with you and bide a while under the portico on the square,—in front of the barber's or the draper's; if I want you, if there's need of you, I'll send for you.

VICENZO. [*To ISIDORO.*] You shall be obeyed, most illustrious one. [*To TITTA.*] Let's go; come.

TITTA. I won't come.

VICENZO. Come with me; that's a good lad. Never fear; I'm a man; I'm a square man; never fear.

ISIDORO. Go along, now, and do as Cap'n Vincenzo tells you; and have a bit of patience, and wait and see what happens. It may be that you'll get all the satisfaction you want; leave it to me.

TITTA. I'll leave it to you, then; but do the right thing by me, sir. I'm a poor man, Master Coadjutor; I'm an honest man, Most Illustrious Master Coadjutor. [*He goes out with VICENZO.*]

ISIDORO. [*To himself.*] I knew that would bring

'em to terms; a good stick would bring 'em to terms. But I lose some fine sport. [*To TOFFOLO.*] Come here, Toffolo.

TOFFOLO. Most illustrious one—

ISIDORO. Shall we talk to this lass, now, and see what can be done about a marriage between ye?

TOFFOLO. I'm for it, most illustrious one! But we must see Dame Libera, her sister; and her brother, Fortunato.

ISIDORO. Think these folks are in?

TOFFOLO. I don't know, most illustrious one; if you want me to call 'em—

ISIDORO. Let's go in ourselves, rather.

TOFFOLO. I can't! I can't go into the house.

ISIDORO. Why can't you, pray?

TOFFOLO. Here at Chioggia, most illustrious one, a man that's not married mustn't go in where there are girls.

ISIDORO. And yet ye manage to do a deal of love-making; that I know.

TOFFOLO. In the street, most illustrious one; we do it in the street. Then one has her asked of her parents; and when she's been asked for, then one can go in.

ISIDORO. Let's have 'em in the street, then.

TOFFOLO. Ho, there, Cap'n Fortunato! Are you there? Ho, there, Dame Libera!

[*LIBERA and FORTUNATO enter.*]

ISIDORO. [*To himself.*] Eh, gad, I've had enough of Dame Deafness already.

LIBERA. What is it? What do you want?

TOFFOLO. There's Master Coadjutor, here—

LIBERA. Most illustrious one, what do you command?

ISIDORO. How's this? Aren't you deaf any longer?

LIBERA. Oh—most illustrious one, no; I'm well, now. I had a chill, but I'm well, now.

ISIDORO. So soon?

LIBERA. Aye, from one moment to the next, as it were.

ISIDORO. Aye, aye, natural enough; keeping in mind, too, that you got deaf—not tell—

FORTUNATO. Most illus'ous one—

ISIDORO. And here's Nuncle Bolting Mill, I declare. I've come to ask ye whether ye'd be inclined to marry Checca.

LIBERA. That we should, most illustrious one. I'd be glad to get her settled.

FORTUNATO. I, most illus'ous one, I've p'omised her a 'undred 'ucats.

LIBERA. And fifty more could be got together when the time came.

ISIDORO. And I'll make her a little present of another fifty.

LIBERA. May you be blessed! Have you some match for her?

ISIDORO. [*Pointing at TOFFOLO.*] How should ye like that match?

FORTUNATO. To'olo? To'olo? Trouble-ma'er, trouble-ma'er!

TOFFOLO. I don't trouble anyone, I don't; when I'm let alone—

LIBERA. With just a bit of a boat, how's he to keep her?

TOFFOLO. And don't I mean to set up a deck of my own, don't I?

LIBERA. And where'll you house her, I'd like to know, since you've never a raft nor a roof to your name?

FORTUNATO. Would you 'ake the 'irl to the 'oat to s'leep?

TOFFOLO. Why, you might keep the hundred ducats, you might, and we might stay with you, the wife and I.

ISIDORO. Aye, so you might. Not a bad idea; he's got more sense than I thought. Couldn't you give 'em board and lodging for a while?

LIBERA. But, for how long, most illustrious one?

ISIDORO. [*To TOFFOLO.*] How long do you propose to have 'em keep you, for these hundred ducats?

TOFFOLO. I don't know; at least six years.

FORTUNATO. Splash! Splash! Six 'ears? Splash!

ISIDORO. Egad, you'd want to spend 'em well.

TOFFOLO. Settle it you, most illustrious one.

ISIDORO. [*To LIBERA.*] Come, would a year suit you?

LIBERA. [*To FORTUNATO.*] What do you think, master?

FORTUNATO. [*To LIBERA.*] Settle it you, 'ife; 'ettle it you, 'ife.

TOFFOLO. I'm content to have it any way you want, most illustrious one; I'll do as you say.

ISIDORO. [*To LIBERA.*] Call the girl; let's hear what she has to say.

LIBERA. Hey, Checca!

FORTUNATO. Checca! Checca! [*He calls loudly.*]  
[*CHECCA comes out.*]

CHECCA. Here I am; what do you want?

LIBERA. Don't you know?

CHECCA. Eh! I've heard everything.

FORTUNATO. Tha's a nice 'irl! Been eaves dro'-ing. Tha's a nice 'irl!

ISIDORO. [*To CHECCA.*] Well, what do you think of it?

CHECCA. [*To ISIDORO.*] Listen—

ISIDORO. [*To CHECCA.*] Well? Here I am.



CHECCA. [*To ISIDORO.*] Titta-Nane—Isn't there any chance?

ISIDORO. [*To CHECCA.*] He gave me a plain no.

TOFFOLO. Most Illustrious Master Coadjutor—

ISIDORO. What is it?

TOFFOLO. I'd have you hear me, too; I'd have you.

ISIDORO. [*To CHECCA.*] Come, make up your mind; will you have him, or won't you?

CHECCA. [*To LIBERA.*] What do you think, sister? [*To FORTUNATO.*] What do you think, brother-in-law?

LIBERA. [*To CHECCA.*] What do *you* think? Do *you* want him?

CHECCA. Eh, why not?

TOFFOLO. [*Gleefully.*] Oh, the sweet, dear lass! She wants me; she wants me!

ISIDORO. Now, see here, children, if I'm to be a party to the thing, there mustn't be any more dilly-dallying; come to the point, and let's see you married at once.

[*ORSETTA enters.*]

ORSETTA. Eh, sirs! How are things to be here? I, who've been in donzelon these three years, am to be left waiting for a husband, am I; and she, who's younger, is to get married before her elder sister?

FORTUNATO. Aye, aye, she's right; aye, she's 'ight.

CHECCA. Oh, there, now! Just envy, it is. Who's keeping you from getting married? Get married, if you want to.

FORTUNATO. Aye, get ma'ied, if you want to get ma'ied.

LIBERA. You had a sweetheart; what did you go disgusting him for?

FORTUNATO. Aye; wha' did you dis'ust him for?

ISIDORO. [*To LIBERA.*] Wasn't Beppo her sweet-heart?

LIBERA. Aye, master; Beppo.

FORTUNATO. Beppo.

ISIDORO. Wait a bit. [*Calling towards BEPPO'S house.*] Are you within, there, Beppo?

[*BEPPO comes out.*]

BEPPO. Here I am, most illustrious one.

ISIDORO. Why did you fly into a passion at Orsetta, pray?

BEPPO. I, most illustrious one? She it was; she called me names, and drove me away.

ISIDORO. [*To ORSETTA.*] Hear that, mistress?

ORSETTA. Don't you know it, that anger's one-eyed? That it doesn't know what it's doing, sometimes?

ISIDORO. [*To BEPPO.*] Hear that? She isn't angry any more.

BEPPO. I, too; I'm one of those that get over it soon.

ISIDORO. [*To ORSETTA.*] Come, then; all's settled. If you don't want Checca to be married before you, why, give Beppo your hand, now, and be before her.

ORSETTA. [*To LIBERA.*] What do you think, sister?

LIBERA. Me, you ask?

FORTUNATO. [*Gaily, encouraging ORSETTA to get married.*] Make it a good one, now, Orsetta! Make it a 'ood one! Make it a 'ood one!

[*LUCIETTA comes in.*]

LUCIETTA. [*To BEPPO.*] How, master good-for-nothing, master man of no account? Would you have the face to marry that sweet thing, there, who's tousled you so?

ISIDORO. [*To himself.*] Just this was lacking!

ORSETTA. [*To LUCIETTA, angrily.*] What's this "sweet thing"?

LIBERA. Now, then, let's not fly off the handle.

FORTUNATO. Now, then; now, then; now, then!

BEPPPO. I don't know what to say, I don't; I don't know what to do. I want to get married.

LUCIETTA. I must, first; and no more sisters-in-law are coming into the house until I'm out of it; so, now!

ISIDORO. [*To BEPPPO.*] But why don't you get her married and done with it?

BEPPPO. Because Titta-Nane's dismissed her.

ISIDORO. Get you down there, Toffolo; get you down to the square—to the barber's, there, under the arcade—tell Cap'n Vincenzo to come here, and to bring Titta-Nane with him, and to make haste.

TOFFOLO. At once, most illustrious one. Checca, I'm coming right back; I'll be back right off. [*He runs out.*]

LUCIETTA. [*To herself.*] Now that she's got Toffolo for a sweetheart, she'll let Titta-Nane alone; things look less bad for me, now.

ISIDORO. Women, women, if ye don't all come to your senses— Be good souls, now: will ye make peace? Will ye be friends again?

LUCIETTA. If they've nothing against me, I'm sure I've nothing against them.

ISIDORO. [*To LIBERA, ORSETTA, and CHECCA.*] Come, now, what have you got to say?

ORSETTA. As for me, between here and there, it's all over.

LIBERA. And I! I, when I'm not dragged into a row by the hair of my head, am friends with all folks.

ISIDORO. And you, Checca?

CHECCA. Oh, as for me, I like to be friends with everyone.

ISIDORO. Come, then, make peace; come, kiss and make peace.

ORSETTA. I'm ready.

LUCIETTA. I'm here.

[PASQUA enters.]

PASQUA. [To LUCIETTA.] What are you doing, there? What are you doing? Making up with 'em? With them? With that crowd?

ISIDORO. Must you come to plague us, now?

PASQUA. I! I'm astonished, I am, to hear such talk. They've treated me something shameful.

ISIDORO. Well, forget all about it, as the others have done; let's make an end of this squabble.

PASQUA. No, I won't forget! This arm still aches. I won't forget about it.

ORSETTA. [To herself.] Wish we'd torn it out!

[TONI enters.]

ISIDORO. Hey, there, Cap'n Toni; come here.

TONI. Most illustrious one—

ISIDORO. See here, Cap'n, if you don't make your wife behave—

TONI. I heard, most illustrious one, I heard. [To PASQUA.] Now, then, wife, tell 'em it's all right.

PASQUA. I'll do no such thing!

TONI. [Threateningly.] Quit fooling; tell 'em it's all right.

PASQUA. I won't!

TONI. [Catching up stick.] Tell 'em it's all right, tell 'em! Tell 'em it's all right!

PASQUA. I'll tell 'em, husband, I'll tell 'em. [Humbled, she approaches the others.]

ISIDORO. Bravo, by gad! You're a man to my taste, now! Bravo!

LIBERA. Come here, Pasqua.

PASQUA. Aye, Libera. [*They embrace.*]

LIBERA. You, too, lasses. [*All kiss and embrace.*]

ISIDORO. Hurrah, that's right; and may it hold,—until it comes undone.

VICENZO. [*Entering with TITTA.*] Here we are, most illustrious one.

ISIDORO. Come here, Titta-Nane. Now let me see whether you two really care for each other; now let me see whether you're really a man, Titta-Nane, or a bag of wind.

VICENZO. I've said so much to him myself, that I've half made him see reason, eh? And I hope that now he's going to do all that the Most Illustrious Master Coadjutor tells him to, like a good lad.

ISIDORO. Come, then, lad; forget what's past and gone, be friends with everyone again, and let's see you married to this lass Lucietta.

TITTA. I, most illustrious one? Not if you hang me, I won't marry her.

ISIDORO. A pretty fellow you are!

LUCIETTA. [*To herself.*] Oh, couldn't one beat him as one beats stock-fish?

PASQUA. [*To TITTA.*] See here, if you think you're going to get Checca, why, you aren't; for she's going to marry Toffolo.

FORTUNATO. I'm 'oing to 'ive her a hundred 'ucats.

TITTA. I'm not even thinking of her, I'm not; she may marry anybody she wants to.

ISIDORO. [*To TITTA.*] Why won't you have Lucietta any more?

TITTA. Because she said "Go drown yourself," she said.

LUCIETTA. Eh, sirs, what a great thing! And you? What did you say to me?

ISIDORO. Well, we've wasted time enough; let

who's for it be for it, and who's against it—why, his own loss. Checca and Toffolo, take hands and plight your troth.

TOFFOLO. Here I am.

CHECCA. And here I am, too.

ORSETTA. No, sirs! Stop! I'm going to be married first.

ISIDORO. Courage, Beppo; like a gallant lad, now.

BEPPLO. Oh, it's little persuading that I'll need!

LUCIETTA. [*To BEPPLO.*] No, sir; if I'm not to be married, you aren't, either.

PASQUA. She's right, is Lucietta.

TONI. And I, who am I? Haven't I a word to say to this?

ISIDORO. Shall I tell ye how it stands? Go to the devil, the whole lot of you, for I'm sick of it! [*He turns to go.*]

CHECCA. [*To ISIDORO.*] Don't go, sir; please don't go.

FORTUNATO. [*To ISIDORO.*] Most illus'ous one—

ORSETTA. [*To ISIDORO.*] Don't go, sir.

FORTUNATO. [*To ISIDORO, stopping him.*] Most illus'ous one—

LIBERA. [*To ISIDORO.*] Have patience with us, sir.

ISIDORO. [*To LUCIETTA.*] All's spoilt on account of you, you hussy.

LUCIETTA. Oh, please, most illustrious one, don't shame me any more. I don't want anyone to be the worse on my account. If it's all my fault, why, I'll take what comes of it, that's all; if Titta-Nane doesn't want me any more, I'll try to be patient. But I haven't done anything to him, I haven't. I called him things, but he called me much worse; and I love him, and I've forgiven him for everything; and if he won't forgive me, why, it means that he doesn't love me, it means. [*She cries.*]

PASQUA. [*Lovingly.*] Lucietta, lass.

ORSETTA. [*To TITTA.*] Hey! there; she's crying.

LIBERA. [*To TITTA.*] See, she's crying.

CHECCA. [*To TITTA.*] She makes me feel bad.

TITTA. [*To himself.*] Dang it all! If I weren't ashamed to, I'd—

LIBERA. [*To TITTA.*] But come on, now! Can one believe it, that you've a heart like that? Poor lass! See her, there; she'd move a stone to feel for her.

TITTA. [*To LUCIETTA, roughly.*] What's wrong with you?

LUCIETTA. [*Crying.*] Nothing.

TITTA. Come, cheer up.

LUCIETTA. What do you want?

TITTA. What's this blubbering?

LUCIETTA. [*Passionately.*] Mean dog, you! Mean brute!

TITTA. [*Imperiously.*] Now, stop that.

LUCIETTA. Are you going to leave me?

TITTA. Will you drive me wild any more?

LUCIETTA. No.

TITTA. Will you love me a little bit?

LUCIETTA. Yes.

TITTA. Cap'n Toni, Dame Pasqua, most illustrious one, by your good leave. [*To LUCIETTA.*] Give me your hand.

LUCIETTA. There; take it. [*She gives him her hand.*]

TITTA. [*Still roughly.*] You're my wife.

ISIDORO. Sansuga! Sansuga, I say!

[*A servant enters.*]

THE SERVANT. Most illustrious one—

ISIDORO. Go at once and do as I told you; you remember.

THE SERVANT. Immediately. [*He goes out.*]

ISIDORO. Now you, Beppo, take hands with your lass.

BEPPLO. I? Just see, now, how smooth it goes. Cap'n Fortunato, Dame Libera, most illustrious one, by your good leave. [*He gives his hand to ORSETTA.*] Husband and wife.

ORSETTA. [*To CHECCA.*] Now get married, too, if you like; I'm willing now.

ISIDORO. Well, Toffolo? Whose turn is it now, think you?

TOFFOLO. Mine, sir; mine's the next boat in, sir. Cap'n Fortunato, Dame Libera, most illustrious one, by your leave, eh? [*He gives his hand to CHECCA.*]

CHECCA. [*To ISIDORO.*] Hey! And the dowry?

ISIDORO. Give you my word; you shall have it.

CHECCA. [*To TOFFOLO.*] Here's my hand.

TOFFOLO. Wife.

CHECCA. Husband.

TOFFOLO. Hurrah!

FORTUNATO. Hurrah! Me'ily there, everybo'y, wife, I feel me 'y, too.

[*The servant re-enters.*]

THE SERVANT. [*To ISIDORO.*] Everything's here, master, as you commanded.

ISIDORO. Merrily all, lads and lasses! I've provided some refreshments for you, and some lads who'll play for ye while ye dance. Come with me, come with me; I want ye all to have a good time; we'll dance a lively measure.

ORSETTA. Here, let's dance; let's dance here.

ISIDORO. Yes, yes, to be sure; wherever you like. Courage, there; bring out the chairs. Bid those musicians come forward; and you, Sansuga, run around to the casino and fetch the refreshments.

LUCIETTA. Yes, yes, let's dance and let's be happy, for we're all sweethearts, now. But listen, most



illustrious one; I'd like to say something to you, if I may. I'm very grateful to you for all you've done for me, sir; and these maids here, too, sir,—you've been very good to us all, I'm sure. But we wouldn't have it, sir, that— You're a stranger here, you see, and you'll be going away, some time—for which we're very sorry, I'm sure, sir—and we wouldn't have it that—that it were to be said that Chioggian women are squabblers, sir. What you've seen and heard has been just an accident, as it were, sir. We're a proper sort of women, sir; and we're merry, too, aren't we, sir? And now we want to be happy, and dance, and frolic so that everybody may say, "Hurrah for the women of Chioggia! Hurrah for the women of Chioggia!"

## TRANSMUTATION OF CONTEMPORARY DRAMATIC VALUES



THE drama is a living art form. One may question, therefore, whether it will ever be possible to devise for it categories wholly valid, universally comprehensive, since the drama, as a life-form, is subject to the law of evolution. It is a significant illustration of the evolution which is creative as well as progressive, continually enlarging its scope, broadening its domain, through the pressure of the human factor, in this instance the vital urge. Writing to Heinrich Laube in 1880, Ibsen said: "Do you really attach much value to the categories? I, for my part, believe that the dramatic categories are elastic, and that they must accommodate themselves to the literary facts—not *vice versa*." And again, four years later, in a letter to Theodore Caspari, Ibsen remarked: "I gave up universal standards long ago, because I ceased believing in the justice of applying them." In these observations, Ibsen struck a blow for freedom in the domain of dramatic art. Dramatic criticism, forever seeking to formulate comprehensive categories within which to embrace the entire field of dramatic representation, exercises a repressive influence upon the creative genius. One of the most striking facts in the modern dramatic movement is the constructive demonstration of many contemporary dramatic craftsmen that a play may be eminently successful in stage representation, judged by both artistic and commercial standards, and yet be

intrinsically "undramatic" when judged by the confining definitions and traditional tenets of dramatic criticism. A continually recurring phenomenon nowadays is the play which attains popular success on the stage, though condemned by the dramatic critic as not *du théâtre*, not a drama. The time is ripe for the exhibition of creative criticism as applied to the new forms and the display of a more catholic spirit in judging the original, experimental art-work of to-day.

One can illustrate sharply the difference between ancient and modern practice, by a comparison of the ideas of Aristotle with the ideas of Hauptmann in regard to the drama. Such a comparison will serve to clarify and elucidate, in some measure, the most significant terms employed in dramatic criticism: character, action, and drama. In one of the most famous passages in all dramatic criticism, Aristotle says: "Tragedy is an imitation, not of men, but of an action and of life. . . . Dramatic action, therefore, is not with a view to the representation of character; character comes in as subsidiary to the action. Hence the incidents and the plot are the end of a tragedy; and the end is the chief thing of all. Again, without action there cannot be a tragedy; there may be without character. . . . The plot, then, is the first principle, and, as it were, the soul of a tragedy; character holds the second place." Viewed from any standpoint, whether from that of Aristotle alone or from that of the dramatic critic of to-day, the dictum is so gross and exaggerated a distortion of the truth as to be a virtual falsity. The object of the drama, in Aristotle's view, is to exhibit character in action; and the two constituent elements of the drama are, therefore, character and action. Is it possible, then, for the dramatist to

utilize either to the exclusion of the other? In other words, Aristotle is seeking the indispensable requirement, the absolute *differentia* or distinguishing characteristic, of the literary species known as the drama. Of the two, he chooses "plot" as the "first principle" of the drama; and he clearly implies the definition that action means "the incidents and the plot." Since Aristotle's day, action has come to mean something vastly deeper and more comprehensive than merely "the incidents and the plot." It appears to be a perfectly true, but perfectly trivial, dictum that a fable is indispensable to the drama. It is a deliberate perversion of the facts to maintain that this fable is synonymous with action. By the same token, a fable is equally indispensable for the novel and the short story. Yet, in the light of modern dramaturgic practice, even the fable is not an indispensable ingredient of the drama. The drama may exist without a plot; and the contemporary naturalist has again and again demonstrated this dictum by taking down the fourth wall of a room and exhibiting a static picture of human life. Such a play is not a play in the sense understood by Aristotle; it is not essentially narrative, but essentially pictorial and atmospheric, in its nature. The drama need not embody a story of human experience; it need only be a picture of human existence, real or imagined. In the choice of the dramatist, sublimated by his art, this picture may be so typical, so representative, as in itself to constitute a criticism of life, a judgment of society, or an ideal striving of the human soul.

It has been pointed out that Aristotle is guilty of real confusion in thought in identifying the story with "the incidents and the plot." If Aristotle really meant, as he says, that "without action there

cannot be a tragedy," again is he refuted by the practice of contemporary dramatic art. Here we are confronted with the fundamental principle, indeed the very definition, of the drama; and of necessity we must strive anew at some adequate comprehension of the term action. Through the intermediary of Spitta, in his *Die Ratten*, Hauptmann "denies the importance of action in the drama and asserts it to be a worthless accident, a sop for the groundlings!" Certainly, action in the sense of physical deeds is no longer the obligatory attribute of the drama. Speaking in his own person, Hauptmann has said: "Action upon the stage will, I think, give way to the analysis of character and to the exhaustive consideration of the motives which prompt men to action. Passion does not move at such headlong speed as in Shakespeare's day, so that we present not the actions themselves, but the psychological states which cause them." Up to the time of our modern era, the inevitable conclusion, the artistic *finale*, of tragedy was death. To-day, the violent is the exceptional moment of life; and a deeper tragedy than dying may be the tragedy of living. Great dramas surely will be written, notable dramas have already been written, in which passive acceptance and not active resistance is the distinguishing characteristic. Action, says Gilbert, in Wilde's *Intentions*, is limited and relative. "But we who are born at the close of this wonderful age, are at once too cultivated and too critical, too intellectually subtle, and too curious of exquisite pleasures, to accept any speculations about life in exchange for life itself." Wilde here but expresses the conventional idea that the life of action is infinitely preferable to the life of contemplation. Certain modern critics have even gone so far as to say

that Aristotle, in positing action as the indispensable criterion of the drama, was only anticipating Ferdinand Brunetière in defining the drama as the struggle of the human will against obstacles.

The essential feature of the dramatic species, says Brunetière, is the exhibition of the opposition between the world without and the world within, the objective and subjective. Struggle is its essential element. With Aristotle, the word action has an implicit material connotation; but Brunetière employs the word conflict which is as applicable to the realms of the mental, the moral, the ethical, and the spiritual, as to the material and the physical. The one and indispensable criterion for the drama, according to Brunetière, is that it shall portray a clash of contending desires, a stark assertion of the human will against strenuous opposition, for the attainment of its end. "There can be no tragedy without a struggle," he says; "and there can be no genuine emotion for the spectators unless something other than and greater than life is at stake." It is not life alone, then, the material issue, but a spiritual issue—something other and greater than life—which is the stake of tragedy: character, honor, loyalty, integrity, fidelity, freedom, justice. To quote Brunetière once more, to make his position abundantly clear: "Drama is a representation of the will of man in conflict with the mysterious powers or natural forces which limit or belittle us; it is one of us thrown living upon the stage, there to struggle against fatality, against social law, against one of his fellow mortals, against himself, if need be, against the ambitions, the interests, the prejudices, the folly, the malevolence, of those who surround him."

Life thrusts before us at every turn a series of decisions that must be made, of alternatives that

must be chosen. The problems of duty and desire eternally clamor for solution—the problems of predestination and freedom, of will and inclination, of passion and self-restraint. The two fundamentals which Brunetière posits as indispensable criteria for the dramatic species are will and struggle. A very brief consideration will suffice to demonstrate that these so-called differentiating characteristics of the dramatic species are striking characteristics of other forms of literary art. The short story is an art-form which has been developed to a high state of excellence during the contemporary period. Intensive, cumulative force is a distinguishing characteristic; unity of impression is a prime requisite. All the lines must converge to a predestined end or culmination. Some of the most finished specimens of the form exhibit the human will in struggle, or a clash of contending desires. Even the lower forms, such as the detective story, make concrete a struggle of the intensest sort. The will of a Dupin, expressed in the most cultivated forms of detective imagination, of the faculties of analysis and deduction, struggles to overcome the obstacles presented by a series of mysterious, apparently inexplicable, facts. Sherlock Holmes is less a personality than a volitional intelligence, directing the searchlight of imagination and deduction in the effort to overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles. To acknowledge that such stories are essentially dramatic is begging the question. By the logic of Brunetière's hypothesis, we are driven to the manifestly false conclusion that they *are* dramas. We may assume that such stories, in competent hands, are subjects for dramatization. But such an hypothesis is clearly irrelevant to the question before us.

The suggestion has recently been advanced that

crisis, rather than conflict, is the essence of drama. A crisis is a turning point in the progress of a series of events, a culmination. Assuredly this is a concomitant attribute of the dramas falling under Brunetière's definition. Such dramas, indeed, exhibit or constitute a series of events, of physical or psychological import, marked by the display of wills in action. Crisis, to be sure, is one phase, the culminating phase, of the struggle of wills; indeed, such a struggle will generally exhibit a chain or succession of crises. It must also be conceded that this new criterion, though shallower in content, is more comprehensive than the criterion of Brunetière. Consider the static dramas of Maeterlinck in his earlier period, which are indubitably short stories cast in the dramatic form. A play such as *L'Intruse*, exhibiting no struggle of wills, is clearly not a "drama," according to Brunetière. Yet under the new criterion, it is distinctively a drama: an intensive representation of a crisis. In order to create the desired illusion, the author makes every word, every slightest stir of nature, cumulative in its effect. It is a little drama of cumulative dread. This new theory has, however, no thoroughly solid foundation. For its propounder has left undefined the essential element, crisis; or, rather, he committed the amateurish blunder of defining it in terms of itself. The quintessential characteristic of drama, says Mr. Archer, is crisis; but he further insists that, since all crises are not dramatic, we must admit within our category only the dramatic crises! In other words, the essence of drama is the crucial crises; or, to put it the other way round, crisis is the essence of the dramatic drama. This is absurd.

It may be further urged against the criteria of both conflict and crisis that many great novels ex-



hibit the stark assertion of the human will struggling against obstacles through a series of progressive, interlinking crises. Furthermore, one need only turn to the fertile and original dramas of our time in order to discover satisfactory examples of the successful stage play which fall outside the categories of both conflict and crisis; and a backward glance will disclose not a few plays of high rank, the work of men of different times and differing nationalities, excluded from these categories. Of plays of the moderns, falling without the category of conflict, may be cited, for example, Schnitzler's *Lebendige Stunden*, Maeterlinck's *Les Aveugles*, *Les Sept Princesses*, *L'Intérieur*, and *L'Intruse*, Gorky's *Nachtasyl*, Hauptmann's *Hannele*, Strindberg's *Easter*, Elizabeth Baker's *Chains*; an extended list might readily be made from the plays of Æschylus, Sophocles, Goldoni, Calderon, Goethe, Schiller, the Elizabethans, the French classicists, the dramatists of the Restoration. Of modern plays falling without the category of crisis may be mentioned Strindberg's *The Dream Play*, Ibsen's *When We Dead Awaken*, Maeterlinck's *The Blue Bird*, Barker's *The Madras House*, Galsworthy's *The Pigeon*. It must be clear, from the considerations set forth above, that a new definition of drama is demanded. Such a definition must accord with the facts of modern dramatic practice. It must represent a thoroughly catholic point of view. At the same time it must be recognized, not as final, but only as tentative—subject to future modification, in order to conform to the practice of future way-breakers in dramatic art.

The exhibition of will in conflict with obstacles is assuredly a spectacle perennially attractive and fascinating to the human species. The games and plays of children, the sports of the collegian, the profes-

sional contests of foot-ball, base-ball, tennis, cricket, lacrosse, the prize fights of America, the bull fights of Spain, the cocking mains of France, the student duels of Germany—all amply testify to man's absorbing interest in a spectacle full of conflict, with the added element of danger. The same tendency is prevailingly manifest in the drama. The plays of most direct and immediate appeal to a popular audience are those which present a naked struggle, with its attendant emotional excitation. Volitional activities in mortal combat are spectacles surcharged with the maximum of emotional excitation. The appeal is to the baser emotions of the crowd, or even of the mob, rather than to the more disciplined and restrained emotions of the enlightened individual. Such hand-to-hand, or, rather, will-to-will, conflicts are only moderately frequent in every period of the drama's history. A man like Strindberg frankly says: "I find the joy of life in its violent and cruel struggles"; and Shaw, who has since proved reculant to his avowed principles, outspokenly says: "Unity, however desirable in political agitations, is fatal to drama, since every drama must be the artistic presentation of a conflict. The end may be reconciliation or destruction, or, as in life itself, there may be no end; but the conflict is indispensable: no conflict, no drama." Of modern plays embodying a conflict of wills, one thinks of Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, Strindberg's *The Father* and *The Dance of Death*, Shaw's *Man and Superman*, and *Candida*, Galsworthy's *Strife*, Moody's *The Great Divide*, Jones's *Mrs. Dane's Defense*, Wilde's *Salomé*, Björnson's *A Gauntlet*, Pinero's *The Gay Lord Quex*, Schnitzler's *Professor Bernardhi*, as typical illustrations. Plays of this type, exhibiting the conflict of will with will, constitute only a frac-

tion of the dramas successfully presented on a stage in a theatre before an audience, in any given historical period. In the vast majority of plays, beyond doubt, there is exhibited an exercise of the human will; but this human will is not necessarily brought into direct conflict with another human will. It may operate in opposition to insurmountable obstacles, such as the fatality of the ancients, the predestination of character, or the dead hand of heredity. Such plays—say *Macbeth*, *Wallenstein*, *Ghosts*—with disastrous ending, are classed as tragedies. Again, the will may be shown in conflict with current moral laws, the rules of society, conventional codes of conduct; and in such cases—Hugo's *Hernani*, Hebbel's *Maria Magdalena*, Dumas's *Fils Naturel*, Brioux's *Les Avariés*, Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*—we have the serious drama, in which the end may or may not be tragic. If the forces are more nearly equalized and the consequences clearly do not promise disaster, we have comedy, with its various shadings—Molière's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, Ibsen's *The League of Youth*, Wilde's *Lady Windermere's Fan*, Shaw's *Arms and the Man*. There are, also, the two lower forms of drama in which the characters exist for the sake of the plot, and the incidents are largely adventitious—melodrama, a bastard form of tragedy, and farce, a degenerate form of comedy. In these lower forms, free play is given to surprise, sensation, accident, chance, coincidence; the incidents are often improbable, verging upon the impossible; and the immediate appeal is to the more superficial, vulgar, and easily stimulated emotions.

The point of departure for a new definition of drama—a definition at best suggestive, not final—is the school of contemporary dramatists including such names as Ibsen, Björnson, Hauptmann, Strind-

berg, Maeterlinck, Brioux, Shaw, Gorky, Wedekind, Barker, St. John Hankin, Schnitzler and Galsworthy. By their practice, and not through mere theorizing, they have compelled a new rating, a fresh interpretation of action in the drama. Hitherto, action has been universally accepted as an indispensable attribute of drama; and by critics so remote in times and tendency as Aristotle and Maeterlinck. The latter, virtually disavowing the principle of his own static dramas, has said: "Do what one will, discover what marvels one may, the sovereign law of the stage, its essential demand, will always be *action*—there are no words so profound, so noble and admirable, but they will weary us if they leave the situation unchanged, if they lead to no action, bring about no decisive conflict, or hasten no definite solution." The whole trend of contemporary dramatic art has been in the direction of minifying material action and magnifying emotive, psychological, intellectual, and spiritual action. Shaw has employed a suggestive description of the function of the new drama—illumination of life. The physical actions, the material incidents, of actual life have largely ceased to be ends in themselves: they have become the means to deeper ends, the revelation of character, the exhibition of underlying motives, passions, impulses, the disclosure of the soul—in a word, the unveiling of the inner life of man. One of the speakers in Dryden's *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* speculatively observes: "Every alteration or crossing of a design, every new-sprung passion and turn of it, is a part of the action, and much the noblest, except we conceive nothing to be action till the players come to blows." I would remind you once more of Ibsen's declaration that the ability to project experiences *mentally lived through* is the secret of the literature of modern

times. And it was assuredly of dramatic literature that he was thinking when he spoke these words. He confessed that he never began the writing of a play until he had his dramatic characters wholly in his power, and knew them down to the "last folds of their souls."

Aristotle said that the drama must have a beginning, a middle, and an end. The tendency of the modern drama is to have no beginning, and no middle, and to begin where the earlier drama left off. It is a drama of pure culmination: the unrolling of the scroll of ultimate human character. Nor in a certain sense can it be said to have any end; for the curtain often falls without finality. We are left with a haunting sense of the continuity and endlessness of human life. The contemporary drama, in its higher forms, is an illustration of extreme artistic foreshortening. The modern dramatist strives to penetrate deeper and ever deeper into the depths of human consciousness; and in his progress there is the ceaseless exposure of the secret springs of human conduct. The age itself is introspective, self-analytical; we perpetually scrutinize ourselves at arm's length. The popularization and diffusion of scientific theories, the widespread and ever-increasing interest displayed in philosophy, psychology, pathology, criminology, psychiatry, eugenics; the spread of humanitarian ideas, breeding a spirit of quiescence and peace rather than of resistance and war; increased specialization and refinement of knowledge, imposing the obligation of dispassionate and selfless research—these and similar forces co-operate masterfully in giving tone to the era. Mere acts of violence, deeds of blood, fortuitous conjunctures and collisions, are now held to be barbaric, atavistic,

characteristic of the child-mind, of the race in the primitive stage. The contemporary feels interest in the cause, not in the details, of suicide, for example. The query is not How? but Why? The ideal of modern heroism is self-control rather than surrender to the promptings of the instincts and the passions. Yet modern life—who would venture to deny it?—for all this tone of quietude, of repression, furnishes joys more uplifting, hopes more ardent, despairs more poignant, tragedies more hopeless, than the past ever cradled in any age.

If it were possible to accept conflict as the *differentia* of the drama, one might define drama as the art of decisions. But it should now be clear that decision, the exercise of will for definite ends, is not an indispensable criterion for the drama. For the drama is the meeting place for all the arts. In pre-eminent degree, it possesses both plastic and pictorial attributes. The easiest, not necessarily the highest, mode of gratifying the curiosity and stimulating the interest of the instinctive spectator is to present action on the stage, action culminating in deeds. A psychologist of the crowd, like Le Bon, will ingeniously explain this as an evidence of the prevalence of the mob instinct in the theatre. The sophisticated, cultured, enlightened individuals who constitute a goodly proportion of modern audiences for the better drama of to-day, do not, I venture to affirm, relapse atavistically in the theatre. To stimulate thought through the medium of the emotions is certainly only a very partial, a very limited, conception of the function of the drama. The assumption that the theatre audience of to-day is "hugely commonplace," deeply swayed only by commonplace emotions, seems to me to be one of those ill-digested generalizations which distort the real meaning of

our civilization. If the greatest achievements of the contemporary drama signify anything, it is that the emotions most worth appealing to are the higher, and not the commonplace, emotions. A drama intellectual in texture, moral in tone, spiritual in appeal, humanitarian in intention, is a powerful educative force. Its function is not to pander to commonplace feeling, but to serve as a stimulant and excitant of the higher emotions. The emotions thus appealed to are Christian, social, in their nature—the sense of brotherhood, the idea of justice and equality, the sentiment of social solidarity, the passion for social service, the desire for race improvement, the ideal of social betterment, sympathy for the wronged and the afflicted. The commonplace emotions are not ignored; but certainly they are no longer paramount. The dramatists of the earlier time were content to follow the laggard snail-pace of the crowd. The dramatists of the newer dispensation are leaders, not mere spokesmen, of the ideas and feelings of the mob—leaders in thought, exemplars of the higher emotions destined to become the common heritage of the race. The spectator at the drama of the past might have thus voiced his appreciation to the dramatist: “How grateful I am to you for actually expressing what I have often felt, but never put in words!” The spectator at the contemporary drama feels like saying to the dramatist: “How grateful I am to you for bringing out in me latent, unsuspected funds of emotion! You have enabled me to feel what I might have felt, but actually never have felt until now.” Modern dramatic art effectively belies the assertion of Letourneau that the drama “can not express more than the average of prevailing opinions, of the ideas current in the surrounding social medium.” Intellectual iconoclasts,

as well as esthetic revolutionaries, like Ibsen, Björnson, Hauptmann, Brieux, Shaw, have raised and continue to raise whole strata of society to the intellectual and emotional level which they, as chosen and advanced individuals, enjoyed in more than comparative isolation.

Hauptmann's *Das Friedensfest* bears upon its title page as motto the following significant passage from Lessing: "They find action in no tragedy but that in which the lover kneels down, etc. It has never struck them that every internal conflict of passions, every sequence of antagonistic thoughts, where one annihilates the other, may also be an action; perhaps they think and feel too mechanically to be conscious of any activity. To refute them seriously were serious labor." The leading contemporary dramatists, Ibsen, Björnson, Hauptmann, Schnitzler, Strindberg, Brieux, Shaw, Galsworthy, in tragedy, tragi-comedy, comedy, and even farce, have imported a new kind of action into the drama. In the earlier dramas, there was sometimes an "argument" which, in anticipation, set forth in condensed form the plot of the play. In such dramas, the dialogue, the spoken words, the gestures, served but as commentaries upon the actions of the characters. In the higher dramas of to-day, the play is itself the argument. The exposition is no longer the means of exhibiting the action: it is the action itself. The dialogue is the drama. We see before us individual personalities with strong convictions and definite philosophies of life. The real drama issues from the struggle of these conflicting conceptions of life. A well constructed drama, says Eloesser, is like a law-suit, in which the parties to the suit are permitted to speak only the essential things. In a sense, a drama of Shaw or Brieux, to



employ a French law term, is a dramatic *procès-verbal*. The dramatist presents the characters as right from their several points of view, and resolutely refuses to take sides. The work of a dramatist like Galsworthy often fails to stir the emotions because of this extreme impassibility, this inflexible sense of rectitude and fairness. The newer comedy of our time arises from the unveiling of the motives of character, the ruthless exposure of sentimental, crude, irrational, antiquated, conventional views of life. In this new comedy we observe less a conflict of wills than a clash of ideas. Oscar Wilde once observed that the greatest dramatic effects are produced by a conflict between our artistic sympathies and our moral judgment. Ibsen's whole series of social dramas may be regarded as a series of conflicts between the newer and the older ideas and ideals. In his introduction to *The Cenci*, Shelley—who possessed deep insight into the essentials of the dramatic art—shrewdly observes: "It is in the restless and anatomizing casuistry with which men seek the justification of Beatrice, yet feel that she has done what needs justification; it is in the superstitious horror with which they contemplate alike her wrongs and their revenge, that the *dramatic* character of what she did and suffered consists." An excellent example of the play of conflicting ideas and sentiments, falling outside the contemporary dramatic movement, is *Le Gendre de M. Poirier* of Augier and Sandeau. The characteristic examples of modern drama exhibit the merciless unmasking of conventional morality, or social hypocrisy, of conspiracies of silence. They are essentially dramas of disillusionment. The process of disillusionment is the drama. The comic dramatist forces his audience to laugh at the victim while he is

being disillusionized; the more serious dramatist moves the spectator to pity and terror over the spectacle of the disastrous consequences of acting in blind obedience to views of life which are patently false and illuding. Bernard Shaw has given graphic description of his own comedies in the definition: The function of comedy is nothing less than the destruction of old established morals. "People imagine," he observes, "that actions and feelings are dictated by moral systems, by religious systems, by codes of honor and conventions of conduct which lie outside the real human will. Now, it is a part of my gift as a dramatist that I know that these conventions do not supply them with their motives. They make very plausible *ex post facto* excuses for their conduct; but the real motives are deep down in the will itself. And so an infinite comedy arises in every-day life from the contrast between the real motives and the alleged artificial motives." The dramatist refuses to be imposed upon, and forces his audience either to laugh consumedly at the imposture, or sympathetically to discern behind the imposture the austere face of tragedy.

That fine French actor, the late Edmond Got, in the first volume of his *Diary*, has tersely expressed the function of the drama, according to conventional standards, in the following passage: "So long as there are opposed interests on the stage, situations that is to say, and these as strong as possible, if it all holds together and is carried out in a more or less logical *crescendo*, you have bagged your game, *l'affaire est dans le sac*." Here we see represented all the classic requirements expressed in slangy form: the "opposed interests" to furnish the desiderated conflict; the "structural union of the parts" so dogmatically insisted upon by Aris-

tote; the "cumulative interest" of the series of events moving toward a crisis; and action which consists of "plot and incidents" so arresting in their nature as to maintain "continuity of interest." It is against the hampering restrictions of these classic requirements that the new school of dramatists, in England and on the continent, continue to protest, both critically and constructively. Indeed, the naturalist, no matter of what nationality, abjures the artificial "preparation" of the French school; displaces plot in favor of a series of graphically noted scenes which, in themselves, constitute a suggestive epitome of a certain phase of human life; and reduces action to its lowest terms by presenting, as a substitute for things done, the clash of mind on mind, the pressure of character against character, or the straining of the soul on the leash of heredity, environment, institutionalism, social determinism. There are no such things as scenes with Hauptmann, for example; life is continuous and consecutive. In such plays, the interest is not cumulative from act to act: everything is on the same dead level of interest. The incidents are juxtaposed, as in life, rather than interwoven, as in art.

A somewhat different aspect of the new dramaturgy is afforded by the plays of Barker, of Galsworthy, of Shaw, and the younger school of British playwrights. Impartial, many-sided discussion of a specific problem or a definite situation, devoid of real action save that of powerful cerebration—this is an accurate description of *The Madras House*, of *Getting Married*, of *The Pigeon*. Such a play is not a structural union of organic parts: it is a series of mental films of the same object taken from different angles. The speech of the characters, to employ

a happy phrase of Meredith, "rambles concentrically." It is much as if some definite question of human life—marriage, poverty, an immoral inheritance, the relation of the sexes, civic responsibility—was set upon a revolving pedestal; and as it revolves, the many facets of the subject are reflected in the minds of the characters. In the main, the unities of time and place are observed; there is unity of impression only in the sense that a single subject is seen in contrariety, caught in the mirrors of sharply delineated mentalities. Such art is not life seen through the prism of the temperament of the artist: it is life, a corner of existence or a phase of social thought, seen through the many temperaments of the artist's dramatic characters. This new species of drama is essentially intellectual in its appeal; it may or may not be propagandist in spirit, depending entirely on the temperament of the individual artist. Shaw and Brieux represent the extreme propagandist element; Barker occupies the middle ground; whilst Galsworthy and Tchekhov represent the impassibility of consistent realism. Thus Shaw says that "an interesting play cannot in the nature of things mean anything but a play in which problems of conduct and character of personal importance to the audience are raised and suggestively discussed"; and accordingly "we now have plays, including some of my own, which begin with discussion and end with action, and others in which the discussion interpenetrates the action from beginning to end." The intellectual rather than the emotive texture of contemporary drama has been expressed by Hauptmann: "I believe the drama to be the expression of *genuine mental activity*, in a stage of high development. . . . From this aspect there results a series of consequences which enlarge

endlessly the range of the drama beyond that of the ruling dramaturgies on all sides, so that nothing that presents itself, either outwardly or inwardly, can be excluded from this *form of thinking*, which has become a *form of art*." In protest against the conception of drama as a conflict of wills and of the dramatist as a "Professor of Energy," Brieux insists that the theatre "will be obliged, more and more as time goes on, to devote itself to the study of the great topics of the day." For his part, Galsworthy denies that it is the function of the artist to work for a practical end. "It is the business of the artist," he reservedly says, "to set down just what he sees and what he feels, to be *negative* rather than positive." At the same time, he acknowledges that "the writer's own temperamental feeling gives the hint of a solution to his readers"; but "the solution is conveyed in flux." The most conspicuous exemplar on the Continent of the dramaturgy which abjures action and dispenses with the "dramatic" is Tchekhov. In such a play as *The Cherry Garden*, for example, absolutely nothing happens—in the ordinary sense of the term; there is no conflict of wills, the leading characters are deficient in the faculty of volitional decision. Yet in this, as in his other plays, there is an infinitude of psychological action: soul struggles, bankruptcies of will, catastrophes of indecision, tragedies of passivity. Many of Maeterlinck's plays have accustomed us to the character of passive acceptance and the play of quiescence; such plays are adventures of the soul in quest of the unknown. The guiding principle of the new school, the experimental school, is the intention to show us real life, in its simple, normal, sincere aspects, and at the same time to reveal to us exactly what is transpiring in the minds of char-

acters placed in such circumstances. Real life is not packed full of emotive crises; real life, save at rare intervals, is not "dramatic." So we hear a man like Barker making his plea for the "normal drama"—"normal plays about and for normal people, capable of normal success under normal conditions." Such a drama must present an undistorted view of life; it must be a "comedy which shall reflect and clarify, honestly and humorously, many aspects of the confused life around us." It is not the "serious drama," or the "advanced drama," or the "intellectual drama" that these men are trying to produce. It is the "sincere drama" which Tchekhov, Hankin, Galsworthy, Barker, Houghton, and their congeners are striving to create: the drama which will make interesting on the stage the things which interest us in ordinary, everyday life—things trivial enough in themselves, yet in their setting more touching, more moving, more affecting, than all the dramatic conjunctures, theatrical episodes, the artificial and far-fetched situations of the theatre of commerce. The merely dramatic element in life is coming to be recognized as essentially occasional; its transposition to the stage imparts to it the note of the factitious. It is the human element, the pathos of "little, nameless, unremembered acts," the courage to endure the life that is, the idealism that goes forward in the face of indifference and hostility, the tragi-comedy of all that we are, of all that we fear and hope—this is the material of the new drama. "Sincerity bars out no themes," says Galsworthy in a suggestive passage; "it only demands that the dramatist's moods and visions should be intense enough to keep him absorbed; that he should have something to say so engrossing to himself that he has no need to stray

here and there and gather purple plums to eke out what was intended for an apple tart. Here is the heart of the matter: You cannot get sincere drama out of those who do not see and feel with sufficient fervor; and you cannot get good, sincere drama out of persons with a weakness for short cuts. There are no short cuts to the good in art."

In the light of the contributions of the experimental and pioneering dramatists of the contemporary era, I shall make an effort to formulate a working definition of a play. It is important to note that our vocabulary of dramatic criticism is deficient in the requisite terms for including all the species of plays which find a place on the boards. We have no exact analogue, pithy and concise, for the German term *Schauspiel*. The *bourgeois* drama is only imperfectly rendered by domestic drama; an even less desirable term is the drama of middle-class life. The very thing we are discussing has itself become suspect. A drama is, from its very derivation, a branch, not of statics, but of kinetics. It really means a doing, an action of some sort, through the intermediary of human beings. Yet we are confronted to-day with a startling contradiction in terms; for, as we have shown, many contemporary dramatists produce theatre-pieces which are successfully produced before popular audiences, in which the tone is contemplative, not active. In such plays the stress is thrown upon being, to the virtual exclusion of doing. We are driven, finally, to a definition, not of the drama, but of the play.

A play is any presentation of human life by human interpreters on a stage in a theatre before a representative audience. The play intrinsically, and its representation by the interpreters, must be so effective, interesting, and moving as to induce the normal

individual in appreciable numbers to make a sacrifice of money and time, either one or both, for the privilege of witnessing its performance. The subject of a play may be chosen from life on the normal plane of human experience or on the higher plane of fantasy and imagination. Both the action and the characters of the play may be dynamic, static, or passive. By action is designated every exhibition of revelative mobility in the characters themselves, whether corporeal or spiritual, relevant to the processes of elucidation and exposition of the play; as well as all events, explicit or implicit, in the outer world of deed or the inner life of thought, present or antecedent, which directly affect the destinies of the characters, immediately or ultimately. The characters may be evolutionary, static, or mechanical—ranging from the higher forms of tragedy, comedy, tragi-comedy, through all forms of the play, down to the lower species of melodrama, farce, and pantomime. A common, but not an indispensable, attribute of the play is a crisis in events, material, intellectual, or emotional, or a culminating succession of such crises; and such crisis generally, but by no means invariably, arises out of a conflict involving the exercise of the human will in pursuit of desiderated ends. A play may be lacking in the elements of conflict and crisis, either or both, since the pictorial and plastic, in an era of the picture-frame stage in especial, are themselves legitimate and indispensable instrumentalities of stage representation. A play cannot be purely static, cannot wholly eliminate action. Physical, corporeal action may nevertheless be reduced to its lowest terms; in such plays the action consists in the play of the intellect and of the emotions. All dramas are plays; all plays are not dramas. The drama may



be defined as the play in which there is a distinctive plot, involving incidents actively participated in by the characters; a plot must be of such a nature that it can be clearly disengaged and succinctly narrated as a story. A drama involves the functioning of the human will, whether in the individual or in the mass; and includes within itself a crisis in the affairs of human beings. Dramatic is a term descriptive of the qualities inherent in, indispensable to, the drama. A play may or may not be dramatic. A drama is a particular kind of play.

The characteristic features of the contemporary play, as the result of the revolution of technic, may now be detailed. They are, concretely, the transposition of the crucial conjuncture from the outer world to the inner life; the enlargement of the conception of the dramatic conflict in order to include the clash of differing conceptions of conduct, standards of morality, codes of ethics, philosophies of life; the participation in such conflicts not only of individuals, but also of type embodiments of social classes or even segments of the social classes themselves; the elimination of both conflict and crisis without denaturization of the literary species known as the play; the invention of the technic by which a single subject is explored from many points of view, as distinguished from the earlier technic in which many subjects are exhibited from a single point of view. Most profound and far-reaching of all changes has been the change wrought by the revolutionary spirit in morals, ethics and social philosophy. The social has been added to the individual outlook; the temporal has been surcharged with the spirit of the eternal. The contemporary playwright devotes his highest effort to the salutary, if not wholly grateful, task of freeing mankind from the

illusions which obsess and mislead. Until the scales fall from his eyes, the modern man cannot stand high and free, cannot fight the great fight against physical, social, institutional, and moral determinism. The drama of the modern era is essentially the drama of disillusion.

ARCHIBALD HENDERSON.

## THE PANTOMIME MAN OF DRURY LANE



**O**ld Drury nothing is left—nothing of Garrick's Drury. The candle-dips, the velvet curtain, the green room, the old gallery of the gods, are no more. No longer, as in Lamb's day, does the amiable Cockney fruiteress, with her long brass ear-bobs, her frizzes, her flounces, her rapier tongue, and her broad smile, punctuate the eager hum of many voices with her shrill command: "Chuse some oranges; chuse some numparels; chuse a bill o' the pli'!" Instead, modern progress has substituted electricity, a safety curtain, hydraulic lifts, automatic scenery appliances, a teakwood stage floor, property rooms like huge warehouses, an auditorium reeking in fresh paint, silent "usheresses" in uniform, who serve tea, and a lobby resplendent in an heroic portrait of King George V.

Yet the phantoms of Drury's illustrious dead still seem to jostle one another in the musty, draft-swept aisles. The air seems to tingle with the faint, still presence of those who have gone before. The spirit of Lacy, of Garrick, of Sheridan, of Macready, still seems to rest benignly in the flower-decked circular foyer. Each was the pantomime man of his day. Each one opened the doors of the Theatre Royal on Boxing Night with a succession of pantomime shows that crystallized a precedent into a revered tradition. And the man who has come into the kingdom made royal by Lacy, he who has taken his stand in direct succes-

sion to those illustrious rulers of Drury Lane—the pantomime man of our own day—respects all the old traditions, hears all the phantom protests, listens to the demands of the children of the hour, yet turns out a show each year which would have bewildered Garrick and sent Macready away tragically, fuming over the mad extravagance of our times.

Arthur Collins, the man of Drury Lane, is the one impresario living who has done most to keep the almost forgotten art of pantomime alive. He views it as a staple, like wheat. He recognizes it as a fundamental human need. It is laughter cloaked in motley and tinsel, yet laughter still—one of the few eternal things. He is still a young man; that means he sometimes chafes under the burden of sacred traditions. Yet he continues to revere them because perchance he must. And he stands alone as the one man in the world who has preserved the Christmas pantomime spectacle in all its early Elizabethan continuity, in all its mid-Victorian dignity. He has not only preserved continuity and dignity but also fancy and symbolism, and he has developed it into a spell-binding succession of gorgeous scenic effects and of wonderful mechanical novelties undreamed of by earlier managers.

In many respects, the pantomime of Arthur Collins is identical with that of Christopher Rich, patent holder and lessee with Colley Cibber, who introduced pantomime into old Drury early in the eighteenth century. Now, as then, it is given only at a specific period. The London crowd which mobs new Drury on Boxing Night and keeps up the struggle for pit and stall seats incessantly for five weeks suddenly vanishes the very hour the month of January closes. No British subject can be induced after

that date to attend a performance. It is one of the strange psychological oddities of the tradition-bound English public that things must be done and seen only at an hour or a season when their ancestors beheld a similar event or performed a similar act.

Now, as then, it is all enchantment. The curtain drawn between two worlds veils a heaven to every childish mind. Pegasus, the horse eloquent, still trots the air, and the earth sings when he touches it. To this hour the "basest horn of his hoof is more musical than the pipe of Hermes." Eyes, lids, lips, ears, nose, and tail move harmoniously with (forgive me the figure) a wagging operator in the stern sheets and a helmsman in the bow. Though this gallant steed's interior is as romantic as that of the horse of Troy, he never laughs except in bitterness, nor smiles except in scorn.

But Pegasus does not hold the limelight alone. A long colorful pageant is there in a strange valley, prolific in grotesque papier-mache treasures, gilt moons, ultramarine sunsets, jeweled scenery, funny clothes, red noses, and boisterous horse-play. An eloquent yet voiceless ballet flutters ecstatically like a troop of hysterical moths. Clowns, pantaloons, harlequins, columbines, in strongly contrasted individualities amble lightly through the swift action and the definite plot, made illuminative by constructive gesture and a finely fluent art. The truths of life they hold and liberate with flying feet, with talking fingers, eyebrows, and lips, and with torsos which fairly scream their romantic sermons.

"Give us pantomime," the London crowd cries, "because it needs no interpreter!" Yet is not a Drury spectacle more than a spectacle? What more adroit mime is there than the principal "boy," in

her silken doublet and hose, her plumed princely chapeau, her long troubadour cloak? What voice more lyric, what curve of slender limb more persuasive, what bloom of youth more beseeching? Alone the "boy" stands—a symphony of appeal. What of the clown, droll as a monkey, sad as Hamlet? A citizen of the world—interpretation of world humor is more than life to him. He lives and nobly lives—an immortal adjunct to an immortal show.

As for the tale these mimes unfold, it is always very much the same. Except that more skill is employed in the writing, little deviation is made to-day from the form established by Christopher Rich. The formal entertainment is divided into two parts—the burlesque and the harlequinade. The former is invariably founded upon some well-known fairy tale, in the building of which dramatic unity has come to be carefully preserved. The stage effects, wonderful in themselves, are now made to conform rigorously to the story which is being enacted. Actual old-time pantomimes have frequently been revived of late, both under the régime of Sir Augustus Harris and of Arthur Collins. A favorite model, revived under different titles, and typical of modern pantomime as produced at Drury Lane, is *Harlequin and the Ogress*, or *Beauty and the Beast*. A still more popular fable, and one which was the subject of a recent spectacle, is the old story of *Hop o' My Thumb*. Until its recent performance it had not been employed at Drury Lane since 1864. The original mid-Victorian book as devised by Blanchard was rearranged and infused with a more modern spirit. The allusions and quips of fifty years ago were carefully expurgated and the libretto was fairly packed with strength and

cleverness by modern wit and the latest mechanical and scenic novelties.

The burlesque of *Hop o' My Thumb* was divided into two parts. The first of these was made up of various scenes in a succession of beautiful realistic stage effects, exquisitely lovely in coloring and outline—ending with a remarkable panorama called the Garden of Statues. This artistic finale of part one constituted the climax of the show. Famous groups of statuary, impersonated by a troupe of posing acrobats, were scattered about an enchanted garden, glowing with thousands of adventurous fireflies. Interspersed with intricate, delightfully executed ballet movements of the Watteau period, the inanimate statuary gradually came to life. The garden shone with moving loveliness; exotic perfumes rose to meet the senses; a purring orchestra formed a symphonic background; grace, youth, laughter danced hand in hand. No more delicate and seductive picture was ever devised by the romantic brain of a Villon or a Beaudelaire.

The second portion of this performance was made up of another succession of striking scenes, consisting first of the king's palace of the fable, with a court ball, a gorgeous function, resplendent with military costumes of the Wellington period, and more than a hint of crinoline. This was followed by the Floral Home of Fairy Forget-Me-Not, the Land of Lost Memory, the Terrace of the Palace, the Woodcutter's Home in Winter, and the final scene of the whole pantomime, entitled Good Will to Men. Of these, the Garden of Memory scene was the most poetic, displaying with charm the most lively sentiment. Various persons entered the garden and were carried backward through their lives as infants, boys, lovers, husbands. The effect was most

absorbing in its interest, and gave frequent flashes of convincing humor.

There are many other Christmas pantomimes in London every year. As a matter of fact, the number frequently reaches fifteen, but a majority are in the nature of a ribald travesty, followed by the conventional harlequinade, in which the characters enacting the scenes in the burlesque are converted, by a touch of the wand of some attendant fairy, into Harlequin, Columbine, Pantaloon, and Clown, who leap into a perfect whirlwind of buffoonery, with the slapstick persistently rampant, with a succession of wild adventures, tricks and transformations tumbling helter-skelter through forty-five minutes of continual action. These are modern growths, built to suit the jaded fancy of Piccadilly idlers. The Drury Lane performances alone remain as the last true vestige of the Elizabethan yuletide. Collins alone has preserved all the old-time customs as handed down. Within the past few years this pantomime man has created the most brilliant shows and in every sense of the word the most genuinely fine Christmas entertainment that all London has ever known or the splendid old playhouse has sheltered in the four distinct eras of its long career. The impresario stands head and shoulders above all of his distinguished predecessors.

To accomplish this undertaking on so large and so artistic a scale requires the labor of six months' preparation. June of every year finds the pantomime man at his desk in the dingy little office at the right side of the main balcony, where for a hundred years his predecessors have sat. Here he receives the librettist of the fairy-tale pantomime, who has been at work on his book since the beginning of the previous December—for the subject



and title of a pantomime are settled by Arthur Collins fully a year previously to the opening on Boxing Night. Since every pantomime relates a distinctly coherent melodramatic story, its action is viewed as seriously as that of any other play, and is carefully considered scene by scene. The book completed, the remainder of the summer is taken up in consultation with the staff of scenic artists, with Comelli, who designs the costumes, and James M. Glover, who writes the music.

All summer long the darkened Theatre Royal, to all intents and purposes idle, is a veritable beehive. The stately, suave porter in uniform who guards the front porticoed portal in Catherine Street never seems to desert his post. The stage door man sits, a benign fixture, under the long colonnade in Russell Street. Back of the stage the scenic artists are at work carrying their built-up models to Collins for almost daily inspection. About the size suited to the children's Theatre Royal back drawing-room, these models are designed with a perfection of detail rarely observed outside an architect's office. After careful scanning day by day, the impresario finally selects those scenes which will be presented to the audience.

In the same way Signor Comelli spends many months designing hundreds of costumes from selections made by the manager. The selected designs are in turn submitted to costumers all over the world, who are engaged to make them. Another important department is that of the vast property room, where masks and various models in papier-mache are manufactured by skilled modelers. Outside the theatre, far more elaborate properties, consisting of armor, swords, spears, masks, and grotesque forms, are also being made. The lighting effects, the various

inventions to be employed, the legerdemain illusions, are all inspected and supervised by the impresario himself. The mechanism for successful comedy motor-car accidents, air-ships and submarine exploits are devised; for frequently these effects are introduced into the action by way of melodramatic surprise, to take the place of the wizard tricks of the obsolete Harlequin school of pantomime.

This is absorbing labor for one man. Though it has been jocularly said that no member of the Drury Lane staff ever goes home, except the impresario himself, nevertheless, he, too, may be found at his desk twelve to fourteen hours a day. After mechanical and scenic investiture has been agreed upon, rehearsals are begun the last week of September and conducted daily for three months. Rarely less than a thousand adults and children take part in the rehearsals and subsequent performances. The school children who are employed cannot in consequence attend their classes. The pantomime man, however, views them as his special charges and to avoid the probability of missing their examinations, he engages a school-board mistress who teaches them their lessons during the intervals between rehearsals. Over the least of these in the long train of imps, goblins, and fairies he exercises the tenderest care. They are viewed for the time being by their astute, keen-eyed guardian, with his eternal cigarette and his Piccadilly nonchalance, as if they constituted an artistic family all his own. They are, indeed, his own. For many amongst them appear and reappear season after season, devotedly loyal to his standard, and wishing for no greater joy in life than a place in the Christmas pantomime.

Nearly all the regular performers Collins knows by name. Now and then a novice slips in, but he

soon observes the new face and promptly acquires all the history of its possessor. All applications for positions receive his personal attention, and every known expedient is employed to deceive him in the quest for a place in the ranks. Not even Collins himself is proof against the deceptions employed by adults to secure employment. In the case of Lilliputians, the impresario has come to view these crafty midgets with the tender consideration given mere children, and to employ them as if they were such. An amusing story is told of a little girl engaged to play "Cupid," who was not, after all, a little girl. A tiny wight, who seemed not more than knee high, entered Collins' office one day to report to him.

"What is it, my little dear?" the manager asked, as he glanced down at the quaint bit of femininity, who might have been tucked away and completely concealed in the waste-paper basket.

"Don't you call me 'your little dear'!" she suddenly snapped, belligerently.

"And why not?" Collins asked.

"Because my 'usband, 'e'll swot ye, he's that jealous; an' ain't I got two kids o' me own!"

The impresario gasped.

"How old are you?" he managed to ask.

"Goin' thirty-six, that's all," she explained, her professional guile reasserting itself. "I've played Cupid in a Birmingham panto these twenty-five years." She was given her part, but Collins now reserves his paternal endearments for those whose age is more convincingly obvious.

Baton in hand, he takes his place at the prompter's table during the final dress rehearsals, and as he reviews the long, bewildering procession of dancing and singing wights, of ballet moths, of comedians, principal "boys," harlequins and colum-

bines, the endless gay army, like denizens from some far-away, unexplored butterfly world, flows to his command as a battalion of soldiers to the word of their chiefs. Alone he stands, a youngish man, lean as a greyhound, immaculately groomed, Chesterfieldian in his manner, alert, agile, omniscient, a royally respected mundane ruler inspecting the strangest army of exotic subjects impresario has ever known. And when the first performance comes, as they glance toward the prompter's box, the motley crowd still seems to see his thin lips directing and exhorting them. For his spirit is omnipresent, holding his army in wonderful control—that spirit of the pantomime man who never loses his poise, never forgets the least among his followers, and who, like his subjects, acts eloquently and talks little if at all.

Arthur Collins is, indeed, a young man in years, but he has crowded the activity of a lifetime into his youth. The son of a well-known London architect, as a boy his artistic inclinations and his fondness for painting were so pronounced that he was early apprenticed to Henry Emden, the great scenic artist of Drury Lane, who is still in active harness. While engaged in the paint room, Collins first attracted the attention of Sir Augustus Harris, then manager of Drury Lane, to whom he owes his opportunity and his rise. The young man was made stage manager under the brilliant tutelage of the sheriff-producer. During the last ten years of the life of Harris, from 1886 to 1896, Collins produced all the operas, dramas, and pantomimes given at Drury Lane and at Covent Garden. Those ten years were packed with amazing activity, and every year since the death of Sir Augustus has likewise been one of strenuous and noteworthy exploit.

LUCY FRANCE PIERCE.

## THE NEW STAGE ART: FUCHS



THE human side in the two-fold tendency of the movement now reanimating stage art in Europe is represented with unusual explicitness by the ideas of Mr. George Fuchs. Quite as completely as Fortuny has exemplified, by means of his scenic innovations—described in **THE DRAMA** of May last—the tendency in the present reformation toward repossessing for the stage the radiant beauty of Nature herself, does Mr. Fuchs express the supplementary half of the current tendency—the new desire to give dominant play to the human spirit.

Fortuny's accomplishment lies along the mechanical side of what Mr. Fuchs calls in his book "The Revolution in the Theatre," while that of Fuchs lies along the psychological side. In consequence, although never were mechanical effects, aided by the witch-work of electrical science, approached in a more artistic spirit, nor with more subservience to the natural, Mr. Fuchs's way of approach toward something better transcends the Fortuny way. He looks not merely for the more beautiful and adequately natural scenic reform, but for the essential reforms that may put the stage in perfect tune with the very spirit and motive-force of human evolution.

The historic development of civilization toward which Mr. Fuchs has set his face is that of the phase of culture obviously bound to follow the period he designates as that of the civilization of "machinism."

He considers that our generation has awakened

from a protracted lethargy. The spasmodic energy of "machinism" has destroyed the most solidly established of the old modes of civilization. Ancient moulds of life and grooves of thought have been completely broken up. Still, the old masks have been retained to hide the ugly face of formlessness during the chaotic interregnum. Empty imitation of the forms of the past in which the superseded civilization suitably expressed itself has been our most unsuitable refuge.

Our stage, therefore, is still the stage of the court. It is suited to the life of the courtier and to conditions of a unified society. But our society is no longer a unified society. It is an inchoate society on its way toward a reorganization. Our parvenu bourgeoisie is still seeking to-day, under these discordant conditions in our broken-up society, to pretend that it is not broken up, and to figure prominently itself in the spectacular splendor of a mimic court-stage.

The theatre of this pretended and pretentious civilization of ours is accordingly characterized by a taste for the pompous, by boxes where some people can be conspicuous, and by scenery attempting to be realistic. In the cramped-in, "stereoscopic" box of the old court theatre we are trying to vie with the richness and beauty and perpetual flux of nature.

Like the court, the imitatively luxurious society of to-day desires the tritest realism or the most extravagant spectacle. It is ready to gape with admiration if the stage and its decorative effects elaborately and expensively copy external reality, either modern or historical. For whether our stage-art seeks to reproduce contemporary or archæological details, it is equally realistic, without becoming real.

It can never succeed in actually appearing to be

what it tries to be. Under a false light, with a false perspective, a true impression is impossible. And the minds of men are changing with the new order. They can no longer be convinced by the old one. They can see that the actor, compared with the trees and the mountains and the buildings of the stage painter, is an insignificant speck. They can see how the footlights illumine crudely and uniformly, so that details which on the canvas should appear thirty to fifty yards away are laid open to view by the artificial glare as if they were only one yard off.

It would appear from all this that Fuchs is as desirous as Fortuny to reform unreality. But he is more skeptical. He thinks the needed reforms may not be attained from the mere standpoint of the scenic. He doubts the desirability of the "real." The shortcomings are at the root spiritual. They are essentially due to the glaring disproportions between the scale of size and modes of influence within the range, respectively, of the actor's little human figure and nervous psychical energies and the stolid materialism intended by realistic scenery. The objective appeal to the senses usurps the human and detracts from its best effects. "Things" are imposing, but insensate. They remain untouched and indifferent, at odds with and even hostile to the spirit of mobile and idea-inspired life that should dominate the whole scene.

The scenic must be suggestive, not exhaustive. It must be put into imaginative sympathy with the informing idea. The action must no longer be set into place as one more decoration of the scenic. Action and its informing idea are not even the finishing touch to the scenic. They are not its climax, but its source. Through them only has it any dramatic value.

Naturalism and care for facts quite miss their aim. Convincingly real is just what the conventional stage is not, and cannot be by realistic methods. Illusion is just what is absent. Nobody is taken in. Nobody is carried off his feet with a sense of life by stage scenery. Realism has, in fact, kept on making the audience more and more exacting, and inducing more and more elaborate scenic combinations, with less and less attainment of the effect desired. It has succeeded at last in unintentionally showing us the need for a radical reform of the "stereoscopic" stage.

Having pointed out, by showing the historic development of civilization and the stage, that we are still vainly trying, through childish social ambitions and by additional spectacular effects, to galvanize the court stage of our granddads, after the court life it suited is dead, Mr. Fuchs then becomes both hopeful and constructive.

He beckons us with enthusiasm toward the civilization of the future, whence a great scenic reformation is naturally to be expected. He is full of belief in the power as well as the need of the new generation to *retheatralize the theatre*.

Hitherto, reformers of the theatre have had in mind some exclusive point of view. They have had some moral or musical, literary or decorative, hobby to serve. They have forgotten that the theatre, properly considered, is an industry that must be carried on in such a way as really to satisfy the dramatic taste of the people and give the widest number an essentially dramatic, artistic pleasure.

Everything tends to indicate, now, that the theatres of great municipalities will soon break with the barbarisms of the conventional stage, and that



many little local country theatres will seek to present good pieces with fair skill and good taste.

By the side of the false civilization that is still hanging on to the skirts of the past, a new society is crystallizing. It is made up of the young and ardent minds of the world. They are too vigorous to let themselves be crushed under the leveling rollers of the century of machines.

All who enter into this movement of these young and enthusiastic minds make up the new society. They feel themselves to be radically opposed to the "great public" and the pseudo-civilization of parvenu society. They are made up of the most thoughtful spirits and far-seeing minds, scattered here and there the whole world over. They are its future.

This new society will develop and unify the new civilization. It will have its own theatre.

The building itself will be different. Boxes and balconies—do they not answer the purposes of display for some and the converse for others? They are an inheritance without any vital connection with the dramatic desires of the new society. These impediments will disappear, says Mr. Fuchs, in favor of the unified audience-amphitheatre. In this, all auditors alike will have their attention centered upon a stage whose first principle will be to put the actor "in relief" and in close touch with his public. The spectacular effects to be sought on such a stage will be limited strictly to the only requisite of the dramatically scenic—merely to produce that impression of atmosphere serving to bring out psychic phenomena in action.

Since no theatre can exhibit life itself, since it is impossible to make art materialistic, since the more existing places are copied or are scenically "made up," the more the spectators are reminded that they

are attending a "show," the author must throw the imitation of reality to the winds and learn, instead, how to choose the characteristic. In the very construction of his piece, he must take it away from nature. The stage-producer, painter, and actor must do the same. They will make use of nature to put the human in relief.

The piece that puts the actor in relief will be produced on a stage that will show him in relief and keep him in direct touch with his audience.

Who has not noticed the instinctive tendency of the actor to come down stage as close as he can to his audience? He wants actually to get over the footlights and impart directly to those before him the dramatic life that is throbbing within him. He feels the impulsion of an inner force—the dramatic impulse. It moves him to project himself—to put himself "in relief," in the sculpturesque sense of the phrase.

He must no longer repress that impulse, or make it gross, or exaggerate his effects in order to carry them "across." He must no longer put a pictorial pose in the room of dramatic passion. For to chill and repress his impulse and obstruct the community of feeling it begets between him and his public, is to go against the fundamental law of the drama.

The curve of the footlights now imprisoning him within the scene should become the freeing space where the bodily dramatic movement of the actor is transmuted into the spiritual emotion of the auditor.

The scenic law dictates that the characters of the piece upon whom the action and the interest center shall be free to make their impression upon the same plane as that of the public. The old-fashioned deep stage, devoted to stereoscopic vista, runs at cross-purposes with this law.

After all, Mr. Fuchs asks, what is all this depth of space behind the actor and the action for? Three-quarters of it is filled up with supernumeraries and scenic lumber, pictorial details and accessories that are tiresome and in the way or distract attention and destroy the unity of impression.

It may be answered that this depth of scene is needed where crowds are essential to the play. But, asks Mr. Fuchs, what makes a crowd? Is it ten, twenty, thirty persons? An actual crowd is only wanted to fill the empty picture-space open to view in all its nakedness from boxes and balconies, and thence criticisable as ridiculous. But all that is needed in a unified amphitheatre to meet essentially dramatic requirements is to give an impression of a crowd. For that, a row of figures, intelligently placed, is enough. Does not art succeed in representing with a dozen figures a whole army in the disarray of total rout? To attain the end in view, the simplest means serve best.

Let the stage painter, too, be content to stay within his own domain. He should not attempt to give the illusion of depth by depicting the three dimensions. He has enough to do if he confine himself to *his proper problem of lines and planes*.

The links that may be traced between this stage of the future and certain new stages recently built in Europe, and also with two of the greatest stages of the past—the Greek and the Shakespearian—are peculiarly interesting.

Mr. Fuchs belongs with a group of men—Professor Littmann, the architect; Erler, the producer, and others, painters and artists—whose practical stage-work has been imbued with a similar class of ideas concerning the need of an organically reformed theatre. They would all make the very struc-

ture of the building tell upon the principle of setting the actor in relief, pruning the scenic of its redundancies, and relegating it to its subservient place as a mere background for the actor.

The expression of their ideas has monumentally appeared, for example, in the Kunstler Theatre of Munich. This stage is an earnest of the reforms advocated by Mr. Fuchs in his book, *Die Revolution des Theaters*.

The stage of this theatre is three-fold. It has a fore-stage, a middle stage, and a set scene at the rear framed in by an architectural portal. This portal is meant to take the place of flies, wings, and borders, and to cut off the view of the audience from where it is not wanted—that is, overhead and at the sides—while it thrusts the actor and all crucial action forward toward the heart of the audience, and places at the rear the presentation of distant pictures.

The set scene at the rear supplies relief, also, to the movement of the play as a whole by enabling swift changes in the course of the action. By this arrangement the action flows now forward on the fore-stage, now up stage at this remote *aufsatz Stücke*, with a livelier variety of effect than if all the actors were always posturing along the line of the middle distance, as they do on our old-fashioned court stage, where the scenes move instead of the actors and the action.

The portal has two fixed towers at either side, each with a door and window. To this permanent architectural effect considerable variety in size and impression is given by a movable ceiling placed at different heights. This whole fixed scenic feature can also seem to become the background of the fore-scene by means of a curtain used in special connec-

tion with it and drawn behind the towers. Or this curtain may shut off this rear-stage space (*aufsatz Stücke*) when it is shortly to be arranged to present a distant picture to the audience.

The rear stage set, in which or in front of which the actors perform, consists of a painted drop hung up at the ceiling and attached to a truck sliding on a rail that conveys it from the property room to the stage. Seven such trucks are used. And by turning a crank in the floor the drop can be moved up or down and adjusted. A movable panorama in four colors is also employed, which slides in a groove, describing a parabolic curve as it unrolls from one cylinder at one side to another opposite, the cylinders working either by hand or electricity.

The middle stage is separated from the rear stage by two movable scenic arrangements, consisting of wall-panels. They may be so placed with relation to each other as to present the angles at a street corner or of a city square; or, posed at various angles and reinforced by movable properties, they lend themselves to a variety of other purposes.

The electric lighting system is peculiarly ingenious and rich in coloring and range of effects. Foot-lights are avoided by placing along the architrave of the fore-stage a specially constructed lintel, set with electric lamps so contrived as to throw the light down upon the stage. All the lighting is derived from such lintels as these, but to prevent harsh shadows, an indirect lighting up of the floor is devised. It sheds a soft diffused light, but is capable of a high brilliancy without dazzling the actor whenever the focussing of an extremely strong light upon him is called for.

The stage is shallow, barely more than twenty-three feet from the proscenium to the back. The

union of actor and audience is perfect, and a whispering voice from a concealed actor will carry to the remotest parts of the house, in part because of the proportions of the stage, but also because of the perfect acoustics, enhanced by decorations of carved wood that augment and reverberate all tones.

In this summary of the main points that are novel in the construction of this theatre, the electric lighting particulars constitute an altogether modern touch.

In other details of stage structure, what remarkable links of kinship are to be traced with the stage of Shakespeare!

That, too, was a three-fold stage. That equally enjoyed a rear-stage, a mid-stage and a fore-stage capable of close sequence and unified or separable use in the presentation of the action. Shakespeare's rear-stage structure, two stories in height, carried with it an even greater variety of the same species of permanent architectural effects and dramatic adaptation than the portal and lateral towers of the Munich theatre can supply.

Most notable of all, however, as it seems to me, is the point of contact in common presented by Mr. Fuchs's reforming ideas and the new organization of the Kunstler Theatre stage with both the Greek and the Shakespearian stages in precisely that particular which is the most essential to them and the most different from the modern stage. In the arrangement to put the actor in relief—in the bringing forward of the actor in the tensest action into close quarters and intimate touch with his audience—these recent reforms, both of idea and of actual theatre construction, are brought within close range of the vital characteristic alike of the Greek and the greatest English stage. For in both

these stages the center of dramatic activity was the center of the theatre.

In the Greek theatre this organic effect was the result of action around the altar that stood in the open middle of the "orchestra." In Shakespeare's theatre it was the result of dramatic action brought down upon a fore-stage whose forward edge ran out under the sky in the half-roofless enclosure as far as the mid-diameter of the circular house.

This one similar feature in the organic structure of these theatres means much. It means "getting over the footlights." And the footlights are the barrier our stage inherits from the court stage. It means room for the utmost variety of movement in action. It means life in the round and at short range—voice, facial expression, bodily movement, all—within touch, instead of life in the flat and at long range. It means life in play instead of display, in real action instead of pretended action, in dramatic focus instead of painted vista.

And it means all this without sacrifice of appropriate pictorial possibilities. Removed effects of distance and scenic illusion are alike afforded by the Greek skênê, Shakespeare's rear-stage, and the *aufsatz Stücke* of the Munich Kunstler Theatre; while on our grandfathers' stage of to-day we have sacrificed almost all free action in the round for limited action in the flat and for pose in silhouette.

How far will these reforms take us? It will be interesting to see. That progress along this path will lead us to greater dramatic vividness, I believe. And with reason I believe it, since it has twice before so led at the liveliest moments of dramatic genius in the past, and since it is in accord with a fundamental dramatic principle. CHARLOTTE PORTER.

## THE PLAYS AND PLAYERS CLUB OF PHILADELPHIA



S is constantly affirmed, the theatre is an important educational factor; but to make a serious play financially successful, instruction should be given after the Montessori method so that an audience does not realize it is being taught. There are distinct indications of an improved public taste and one of the most striking features is development along advanced literary lines in the work of nonprofessional playwrights. Until recently, amateur dramatic performances meant little; to-day encouragement and appreciation is manifest in the successful forming of numberless clubs for the study of the drama. The Plays and Players Club of Philadelphia is an excellent illustration of this movement. It is just entering its fourth year with a membership of over three hundred and fifty, and has already become a prominent educational feature in the life of the city.

The aims of Plays and Players is best stated by quoting from its charter of March, 1911. "The purpose for which the corporation is formed shall be to associate the amateur histrionic talent and the playwright of the community for the advancement and production of amateur theatricals, and for literary and social intercourse."

The play-rooms at 43 South Eighteenth Street, though limited in seating capacity, are well equipped for the production of club night performances. On these occasions two short plays are usually pre-



sented; they are selected from the work of the most modern playwrights and are given with an excellence rarely seen in amateur work. Frequently they are repeated for various charities, and supply a long felt want for such organizations.

The first musical venture was the short opera *L'Enfant Prodigue* by Claude Debussy, which was given on the opening night last season. The scenery was painted by one of the members, and with excellent singers in the three musical roles, the evening was a marked success. Two of Bernard Shaw's plays, "*How He Lied to Her Husband*" and "*Press Cuttings*," were so well done on the following club night that they have re-appeared on many programs. Also "*The Chasm*," by Jaroslav Vrchlicky, and the "*School for Mothers-in-Law*," by Eugene Brieux, were put on in February.

Much original work has been done by the members, and six original plays have been given before the society. Prizes in play-competition have been awarded to Mrs. Otis Skinner for "*The Ne'er to Return Road*," and to Mrs. Frances Pemberton Dade for "*In the Darkest Hour*."

The presentation of Alfred Noyes' "*Radah*" before the Drama League of Philadelphia, with Mrs. Yorke Stevenson in the title role, and the author present, was a most important event in the life of Plays and Players. Milton's *Comus*, produced for the benefit of the College Club, also attracted much attention. A Cushman Club benefit introduced "*What the Public Wants*," by Arnold Bennett; a difficult play adequately handled. The play selected for the Drama League Convention, held in April at the Bellevue-Stratford, was the fifteenth century French farce "*Master Pierre Patelin*," Englished by Richard T. Holbrook, Ph. D., of Bryn Mawr Col-

lege. The stage settings and costumes, after illustrations by Boutet de Monvel, were under the excellent management of Mrs. C. Yarnall Abbott and added much to the success of the performance. This performance was repeated in May for the club, at the Little Theatre, and again in June as an open air performance at Bryn Mawr College; it is booked for several future productions.

Some idea of the progress of the club may be gained by the fact that during the first year six plays were produced; in the second thirty-two, while in the third, including repetitions, there were about fifty performances.

Aside from the difficult work so earnestly done by the club's active members, the social side of the organization holds an important place. Frequent afternoon teas and suppers follow the regular club night performances. One of the largest and most attractive affairs at the club rooms was the luncheon given for the guests of the Drama League Convention, when many people of note were present. Receptions have been tendered by the club to Mr. and Mrs. Otis Skinner, Mr. George Middleton, Mr. Alfred Noyes, Mr. William H. Crane, Miss Margaret Illington the Misses Taliaferro, Mr. John Drew, Miss Doris Keane, and other distinguished artists, including members of the various companies playing in the city during the season.

DANIEL MANSFIELD HOYT.

## BAEDEKER IN DRAMA.

*The Continental Drama of Today*, by Barrett Clark.  
Henry Holt and Company. New York, 1914.

In these days when the world is reading drama as it has never before read any type of standard literature except the popular short story and the novel, when all one's friends are studying plays because they hope eventually—as they confide to you individually late at night—to see their own work in production, and when every progressive woman's club has its department of drama study, any new publication printing drama references in more accessible form and telling where one can find the coveted translations of good foreign plays is a boon. So often in the past such translations have been hazarded only by the small publisher who was testing the public taste, or have been printed by those specialized purveyors of plays for amateur production, that one has despaired of finding the work he wished in the regularly consulted catalogues of the larger companies. The pursuit of such material has been an especial difficulty to those living in the small towns. With the increasing tendency of such publishers as Mitchell Kennerley, Charles Scribner's Sons and Doubleday, Page and Company to put forth extensive series of dramas, the possibility of locating a play at once will be a safe wager. Even serious articles on the drama have until recently not been fully recognized. The work of ferreting out what material we already have on hand is arduous but worth while.

The chief value perhaps of Barrett Clark's *The Continental Drama of Today* lies in the fairly complete bibliographical material pertaining to the selected twenty-four playwrights (all of major importance as artists except Wedekind. How he crept in one wonders). The plays of each writer are listed in the order of their publication and are often annotated to show when and sometimes where they were first produced. In addition, one finds record of all dramas that are in English translation, with the name of the publisher and the date of publication. There is also cited whatever valuable biographical and critical discussion the author has been able to discover in English. To these lists is added a paragraph or so sketching the life of each dramatist considered, a brief critical analysis of his work as a whole, and study outlines for one or two of his most significant plays. Thus the book goes far toward meeting that "growing demand on the part of clubs, reading circles, schools, colleges, and universities for definite and systematic guidance" of which the author speaks in the preface.

Perhaps one ought not to find fault with a turkey because it is not a peacock. And perhaps one ought not to object to the brief discussions of work of the various authors because these discussions do not cover the points made by longer critiques. The task of giving in two pages a worthwhile estimate of Ibsen is one beyond the power of any but a genius—and a rare genius at that. For the more one is written about—and Ibsen has suffered much in this particular—the greater becomes the labor of the latest appraiser in sifting, and sorting, and synthesizing. A more graceless work still is that of summarizing Strindberg in six sentences. Yet such an attempt is made by the brave Mr. Clark. The result

in these critical portions is a series of rather disorganized judgments, choppy, sweeping and—like the run of generalizations—often inaccurate. One bites his lip, for instance, over the use of one of the six Strindberg sentences to express this idea, "In *The Father*, *Countess Julia*, *Creditors*, and *Comrades* he makes woman a fiend incarnate." Much of the critical material is of this sophomoric variety. One wishes that the whole section might have been omitted or given space permitting dignified, organized treatment. At present it is of worth to none and might prove misleading. From this same consideration of Strindberg, one would never dream him to be the author of such highly imaginative and highly spiritualized dramas as *Lucky Pehr* and *Swanwhite*, for example. The American publisher, to be sure, has done what he could to sell his books by choosing only one type of Strindberg's work and by thus advertising him as the "advanced" writer on sex. As a consequence the popular idea seems not that Strindberg is to be read as a technician, a thinker, and an interpreter of life, but as a "shocker." Such a compendium as *The Continental Drama of Today*—including as it does all of an author's dramatic work—should give us an all-around view of his position if it attempts to give any view. While this type of book need not be academic or meticulous, it should be scholarly.

*The Continental Drama of Today* is not a readable book; it is not intended to be. As a mine of facts it should be orderly and free from inaccuracies. Unfortunately, it is neither. The kind of information given about one author is often different from that about another. Sometimes—as with Andreyev's *Savva*—an important play is omitted from the list of an author's plays only to be mentioned a para-

graph or so later. The misquoting of titles, as *The Marriage of the Sobeide*, indicates a lack of revision. The statement that Andreyev's *The Pretty Sabine Women* appeared in THE DRAMA of May, 1914, should read February, 1914. These are, one regrets to say, the mistakes of a few pages only. More excusable are the omissions of notes as to the productions of plays, for the data of this kind are somewhat inaccessible. However, Chicago's many open-pursed attempts to domesticate the "new drama" deserve recognition. The first "new theatre" venture brought out *Elga* and *The Great Galeoto*. Several years ago that chronic pioneer, Donald Robertson, produced *As the Leaves*, *The Intruder*, *A Gauntlet* and a portion of *Sigurd Slembe*. Later the Drama Players gave Giacosa's *The Stronger*. A year ago the Chicago Little Theatre offered for some weeks Strindberg's *The Stronger* and *Creditors*. For the plays of Ibsen Mr. Clark gives apparently the dates of first production on any stage; for most of the plays he gives the date of the American production only; for Tchekoff, for instance, he gives no production dates at all. Yet one of the significant events in the history of modern drama was the production of *The Sea Gull* and other plays at the Sea Gull Theatre in Moscow (so called now because the play placed the theatre on a sound financial basis and gave a new impetus to the Art Theatre movement).

However, it is infinitely easier to pick flaws than to do creative work. Errors in dates and the like are tinder-dry material for the reviewer's match; and in pain be it said—most reviewers seem to enjoy a fire that consumes or at least scorches. To be just to Mr. Clark one must say that as a handy reference book for anyone interested in the drama, his

work is most helpful. For the study clubs or reading circles, it offers for the first time the information they have been, for the last few years, at such unrewarded trouble to find.

BALLOU.

## THE DRAMA LEAGUE CONVENTION, 1914



IN holding its fourth convention in Philadelphia, the Drama League of America demonstrated the fact that now, at last, it was so truly national as to dare to venture out from its western birthplace and rally the delegates to a new meeting-point. Nor did the convention suffer from this experiment. There was a greater number of delegates, hailing from more varied points, than at any previous convention, and the spirit of loyalty and devotion to the cause was more marked than ever before.

In looking back over the three days' session, full to overflowing with interesting reports, brilliant addresses, and helpful discussions, it is difficult to say what was most striking of the varied impressions received. To the worker in the ranks, the point of paramount importance was the fact that though much had been accomplished, there was even more to do; that the very success of the past year had opened up activities still more important for the future—that the experiments of the year just past had pointed out definite, hopeful work for another year. Thus one session after another served as a stimulus to greater effort. Of almost equal import to the worker was the fact that never before at a convention had there been gathered together so large a group of able speakers, nor had there been given more brilliant and noteworthy addresses. In each department, authorities of national fame gave of their time and talent to add to the value of the convention. Thirty-four speakers, all of note, took part in the three-day sessions.



To those who were responsible for the convention, the most striking feature was the personnel of the delegates. In proof of the established nation-wide reach of the movement, they came from San Francisco, Chicago, Duluth, Michigan, Mississippi, Minnesota, St. Louis, New York, Montreal, Toronto, Boston and Washington, as well as intervening points. In all, thirty-four different localities were represented. Each of these delegates was inspired by devotion to the cause; the sessions were marked by harmony, and fine feeling—an *esprit de corps* never before exhibited. To the observer, the ordinary layman who was a visitor in the ranks, the absolute sanity and common-sense, practical tone of the sessions was the most striking feature of the days. Although they came from all parts of the country, the delegates were yet all marked by one unfailing characteristic—practical enthusiasm. In writing of the occasion, a well-known magazine writer says: "To the present writer, next to the fact that four years do not seem to diminish the enthusiasm of the active members, the most interesting general impression given to him by the convention was the sense of practical good sense."

Mr. Winthrop Ames also writes: "I was much impressed by the spirit of the convention and the sincerity of the delegates." The atmosphere of the entire convention was one of self-sacrifice and devotion, loyalty, enthusiasm, and friendly harmony. There were no politics, no rivalry—and no hitches. Even the practical side of the sessions—the reports and business—was of importance, as an amazing amount of actual achievement was shown and plans for the future of really vital importance were decided upon.

The local Philadelphia Center, as host of the con-

vention, entertained the delegates in whole-souled and lavish fashion. Social affairs were arranged for all moments that could be spared from the actual session; but the best testimony to the merits of the speakers was the fact that the delegates could not be lured away from the regular sessions by other diversions. Many delightful affairs were, however, enjoyed, as for instance, a luncheon at the invitation of the Philadelphia Center, in the attractive rooms of the New Century Club; a reception tendered by the Philomusian Club, in their commodious new club house; a luncheon by the Plays and Players, in their club rooms, and a truly remarkable banquet as guests of the President of the Philadelphia Center; still another luncheon at the invitation of the President of the Philadelphia Center, Mr. LeBarre Jayne, at his residence; as well as an informal supper at the close of the formal sessions, when the delegates, with friendly rivalry, closed the speeches of the day. Perhaps the most unique and entertaining session was the interesting and clever performance of *Maitre Patelin*, a fifteenth-century play, given by that famous group of amateurs, the Plays and Players.

The general topic of the three days' convention was The Audiences and Dramas of the Day, and it was discussed from various angles, each day being devoted to a different department of the work. As was natural and appropriate, the first day was assigned to the field, or the Publicity and Organization Department, with the general topic of the Power of the League as a National Body. The report of this department was given by the President, Mrs. A. Starr Best, who has acted as chairman of this committee since the beginning of the organization. An excerpt from this report says: "The main effort of

the year has been devoted either to organization in towns which absolutely demanded it, or else to the arousing of interest in communities which are on the line of a purposed circuit. A general glance over the year's work will show it to have been the richest in achievement of any year. More new Centers have been added with less expense and with larger membership than in any preceding year. Since the last convention we have admitted to the list of Centers sixteen cities, as follows: Ottawa, Canada; Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids, Michigan; Athens and Atlanta, Georgia; Green Bay, Wisconsin; Indianapolis; Cincinnati; Pittsburgh; Champaign-Urbana and Decatur, Illinois; Portland and Medford, Oregon; Cleveland and Buffalo. Campaigns are well under way in Spokane, San Diego, Seattle, Greeley, Oklahoma City, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Springfield (Illinois), Nashville, Birmingham, New Orleans, Omaha, Bloomington, Rockford, Peoria, Streator, St. Joseph, Richmond, Montreal, and six Georgia towns.

“A glance at the map will show you that most of the larger cities are now in line. This is all the more astonishing when you remember that we have never made the first advances in a region, but have merely answered a definite desire for help in organizing a community. Remember again that this work of organization has been carried on without a salaried worker, without any allowance for traveling expenses, and that such organization as has been effected has been made at the expense of the locality or the officer visiting it. The department has not gone out to solicit interest. We have answered requests only, and then could not take care of all the demands. With an experienced and capable organizer, and a fund to send him from town to town, we could soon

have a network of towns doing Drama League work sufficient to carry a League play from Center to Center.

“Throughout the year, from time to time, there have been interesting and valuable articles on our work in the *American*, *Scribner's*, *Vogue*, *Everybody's*, *The Ladies' Home Journal*, *Life*, *The Dramatic Mirror*, *The Bill Board*, *The Chautauquan*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Harper's Weekly*, *Current Opinion*, *Leslie's*, and other well-known magazines. These have all been unsolicited, and usually written by outsiders as regular contributors. They have never been propaganda articles sent in by us for publicity. This means, of course, that the movement has already achieved a recognized place where it can claim a right to public attention and the interest of the community.

“A new and very striking feature of the year's work has been the fact that we have been called upon very frequently for exhaustive historical information by people desiring to write a paper on the work of the League. The fact that the schools and clubs are including the work of the League in their subjects is a very significant one, over which we rejoice heartily, since it shows again beyond dispute that the League work is established and of real value—the League having become an organization with a history. The work of the year has indeed been phenomenal. Even with our present handicap of lack of funds and workers, we have added sixteen Centers, and influenced and impressed such distant lands as Canada, England, and Australia.”

The reports from the Centers themselves showed an illuminating variety of activities and alert interest in most points. All sorts of things have been done by the Centers. In addition to the usual bulle-

tin work and the active support of League plays, eleven Centers have raised a guarantee for the three special plays brought by the League; Los Angeles has participated in a remarkable "Hans Andersen festival"; Washington, in a Fourth of July pageant; and several Centers have instituted very effective work with children. A popular activity for Centers has proved to be the offering of prizes for the best essay on Shakespeare by the public schools, or the best children's play. The response to these efforts has been earnest and vigorous; many thousand essays and a hundred or so plays have resulted. A rapid survey of the work of the year, as brought out by the reports of Centers, indicated wide and useful activity. The League can count to its credit, as a result of the year's work, a score or more study classes successfully conducted; a score or more junior classes with children; much research work; and the active support of at least three plays taken by the League on a guarantee to its Centers—in other words, a wide spreading of interest in the drama, and a concrete gathering within the theatre walls to see bulletined plays.

The report of the Treasurer showed that the League had handled directly \$11,144.78 during the year, and that it had been obliged to use all this income except a slight balance of \$578.78. Thus the member more than received his money back in literature and service.

The Secretary's report showed thirty-three Centers with a membership of over 15,000, and an affiliated membership to the League of 1,000, scattered through all of the forty-eight states and Canada. It showed also a distribution of over 100,000 pieces of literature of our own printing, exclusive of bulletins, and 50,000 announcements of books endorsed

by the League. The Secretary also stated that there are repeated requests from libraries for complete sets of our literature, to be used for reference purposes.

It was during the second day, in the session devoted to the Playgoing Committee, that the delegates had their greatest vision of future work for the organization. Under the general subject of The Guaranteed Audience, Miss Alice Houston, the National Playgoing Chairman, told of the remarkable experimental work done this year by her committee. In the face of discouraging and almost insuperable difficulties, the League managed to take four special companies—the English Players in repertory, the Irish Players, Mrs. Fiske in *Mrs. Bumpstead-Leigh*, and George Arliss in *Disraeli*—over a two-week circuit of League communities. Through the influence of the League, these players toured special towns which they would not otherwise have visited. In return for this, the League secured an advance subscription sale of seats of \$500, in order to insure a “house.” The work of securing bookings at the proper times, of avoiding local conflicts in dates, and the rivalry among managers, of overcoming the hesitancy on the part of the local theatre-goer to plan so far ahead—the thousand and one unforeseen difficulties which arose—were finally successfully met. Although the effort cost far too much in energy and in funds, it yet was successful as demonstrating beyond a doubt the great power of the plan, if properly carried out.

“The success of any undertaking lies in its result.” Judged by letters and word-of-mouth evidence from members, the audiences in some cities were appreciative to the point of enthusiasm, affording joy and stimulation to the actors. Elsewhere,

comments ranged from "the most delightful play in years," to "the poorest show ever seen." But point of view is an individual matter, and opinions will always vary.

The report of the chairman reads, in part: "Judged by the letters and testimony from those who managed the tour, the management's side felt it a step toward a future of keener and wider appreciation of the best in dramatic art. To quote Mr. Payne in regard to his tour: 'The plays are going splendidly to-night. It is the same wherever the Drama League is enthusiastic and active. This work will surely bear fruit. A high standard must be maintained for these towns; then something big may be worked up eventually.'

"The year has been the most difficult in the experience of this department, not only because its chief work has been in a pioneer field, but also because of the inherent necessity, in this work, of co-ordinating so many forces,—the theatre staffs, the actors, and those outside the theatre, the audience. . . . But in spite of the fact that this experiment has cost the League tireless effort and considerable outlay, we feel that the year's work has been profitable as a demonstration that the plan is feasible. Another season should not be so difficult, for we have our mistakes as a guide. We have kept faith with our members in sending them plays that, unaided by the League, they could not have enjoyed, and we have carried forward, from the cities in the 'night-stands,' the League idea of better plays for better audiences."

In order to have the delegates decide the question as to whether or not to continue the plan for the established circuit, after full information, the subject was discussed also by outside professional people. Mr. Winthrop Ames was therefore asked to tell the

delegates what the professional manager thought of this scheme. He spoke heartily in support of it, with no uncertain voice, saying that, from the manager's point of view, "it is bully." Mr. Ames further explained that the manager's chief difficulty lies in the fact that there is no longer a public, but, rather, four publics: "one, the intellectual public; two, the illiterate public, or the mere spectator who delights in the moving-picture show; three, the supporters of melodrama, or the sentimental public; four, the general public which wants merely to be amused. In America, the managers have lost the upper class of the public. They are busy catering to the average—the common denominator. Unfortunately, there is no 'common denominator' for the little boy at the hippodrome, who shouts at the clown's antics, and for the intelligent appreciator of Mrs. Fiske in *Rosmersholm*. Therefore the higher class has dropped out. It is these, the great silent class, that must be reclaimed for the theatre. The Drama League is giving this public a voice, and will teach the managers to listen. The managers will respond to it, for all managers are anxious to give better plays. Once a town gets a bad reputation as a theatre town, the managers shun it. The Drama League has the opportunity to teach the managers that there are audiences in these places. The 'One-Night Stand' is a large and valuable territory that has seemed to be disappearing rapidly, and the manager wants to get it back."

Another manager, Martyn Johnson, who traveled with the Irish Players on the League circuit, was asked for his testimony. "The awakening of the imaginative faculty of the American people is a big social movement. It does not mean that you need to be a high-brow. All average theatre-goers think



that the Drama League is a high-brow organization. You cannot educate the public. Persuade people that the good thing is the thing they like. The League should take out plays that will appeal to the average public, if well acted and well presented. The man who is artistic will appreciate the artistic side of it, and the general public will appreciate the pleasant entertainment. Art must be on a business basis, with faith in what it is doing.

“Next year all the Centers should coöperate with the National organization in this circuit work. The managers will give the towns what they want, if the plays are supported there. There are difficulties on all sides, but these difficulties can be overcome. This really is the big work of the Drama League, and if we coöperate we may bring about the renaissance of the drama.”

In listening to the report from the Playgoing Committee of the Centers, it was interesting to note that Chicago had bulletined eighteen plays; New York had bulletined fourteen plays; Philadelphia, fourteen plays; Washington, thirteen plays; Boston, twenty plays. As some of these plays were the same in different cities, this would mean that altogether the League had endorsed through its various Centers this year forty-five different plays. Throughout the country it has followed all plays previously bulletined, and has tried to swing support for them, wherever they have played. Figured roughly, about 300,000 bulletins have been issued by the League and its Centers this year. There seems to be much appreciation of these bulletins, especially in the smaller cities, and their value for educational purposes is great. Several of the Centers—notably Chicago and New York—felt that they had been largely instrumental in securing audiences for *The Yellow Jacket* and

*Change.* This feeling has been endorsed by the management of both those plays.

One of the most impressive addresses of the convention was the appeal made by Mrs. Otis Skinner for a campaign in support of cleaner dressing-rooms. Mrs. Skinner told at length and vividly of the dreadful conditions now existing, and made plain how much the actor had to contend with on the "night stand" circuit. "It is not reasonable to expect that a theatre where companies play but one night, where trunks are dragged in and out of dressing-rooms in all sorts of weather, can have the comforts of New York; but the occasional use of a broom and scrubbing-brush can be expected; an occasional fresh newspaper can be spread on the make-up shelf; the stage hands may be forbidden to expectorate on the stage where beautiful costumes are trailed; and it is not necessary for dressing-room partitions to be papered with lurid posters and cheap printing left over from former shows.

"In the average one-night stand the only cleaning done behind the curtain is a hurried sweeping the day the company gets in. The wash basins are never cleaned, and the lavatories are usually most unsanitary. On the stage the stage hands invariably expectorate, and while many theatres have signs prohibiting it, the rule is seldom enforced. It is impossible for the company stage manager to do anything. If he dismisses a man, he is short in his crew." Mrs. Skinner quoted as follows from the testimony of a young actress not prominent enough to share the comforts of the theatre:

"The absolute lack of outside ventilation, the dampness of some cellars, the frightfully over-heated condition of others, cause one to be eloquent. In ——— we were sixteen in one room, without a vestige of

fresh air, and with the radiators leaking hot water over us at various spots, while the entire atmosphere steamed. Sewer gas escapes in many places, especially in ——, where the poison affected our eyes so that some of us could not hold them open as the evening progressed; some of the girls were lying on the floor at the end of the performances, not able to sit up.”

Mrs. Skinner added: “I have known dressing-rooms where the floors were flooded from steam pipes; we stood on chairs to dress, and wore rubbers to the stage entrance. A towel stuffed in a window-pane to keep out zero blasts was too trivial to mention. I have known a dear old actress to contract pneumonia and die from exposure where the dressing-rooms were supposed to be heated by coal grates, but no coal was supplied. I found her breaking up a rickety chair to get the room warm enough to dress in, and finally being compelled to put on her stage costume over her street dress.

“I have known an actress-manager to buy bolts of cheesecloth and tack it along the stairway leading from the cellar dressing-room, in order that the costumes of her company might not be utterly ruined. Many players carry two sets of costumes, wearing their old ones when the theatres are filthy.

“If a manager defends himself by asking who abuses the theatres, I can say both actors and the kind of stage hands he employs. But if he ran his house with self-respecting stage hands, they could see to it that a traveling company did not deface his property. If he had a clean theatre and efficient workmen, the comforts would be respected. Now I appeal to you not to take the blame for things as they are, but to assume the responsibility. In the first place, stand by your manager; promise him financial

support if he tries to get the best plays for your town; having done this, see that your playhouse, whether it is a theatre, a skating-rink, or a town hall, is inspected by the board of health. And I hope the manager will prosecute the actor or stage hand who abuses the property."

One entire session was given up to the discussion of "What Constitutes Dramatic Material?" With open minds, the delegates listened to the views of many experts. Among the most interesting of these were a few pointed paragraphs thrown out by George Middleton when he said: "Personally I approve of frankness in the drama on sex questions. The standard by which we should judge plays is honesty to life. The ethics of an actor's part are often concealed beneath the personality of the player who creates it. This is one of the evil effects of the present 'star system.' The part must be made sympathetic in order that the star and hero may be in the good graces of the audience. The modern star is a halo on legs.

"Audiences have been taught to think in reactions that are habitual. Always it is the battle between right versus wrong—never wrong versus wrong, or right versus right. Life today is opening up new vistas. The woman movement has brought into the drama new forces. We need to get away from the old reactions. If unhappy marriages are to be treated on the stage, they should be treated honestly. 'Motives are the properties of human nature, not vices,' said Spinoza. The Drama League's Playgoing Committees have to consider the difference between sentimental and honest treatment, and to remember that it is *treatment* and not subject that determines a play's morality. Any subject that can be treated dramatically is legitimate material for the drama. Let

us have the reticence of taste, not the reticence of prudery."

Mr. Montrose Moses, in a scholarly and helpful address, supplemented these points by emphasizing the fact that honesty of treatment and truth to life are after all the main things to be considered. Other able addresses filled the afternoon, but among them were some especially noteworthy points made by Fola La Follette when she spoke on the "Psychology of Audiences." "The audience is over half the play; it can kill or make beautiful; it is always an unknown quantity. No actor ever hears the final call, 'curtain,' without a certain tense clutch in his throat. Ask yourselves when you come from the theatre, 'What kind of audience were we?' There come nights when, strive as one will, there is a deadly, icy chasm between you and the footlights, and you cannot get across it. Then there come other nights when, for no reason, all is fire, glow, and light. This differentiation is due to the audience.

"Audiences may be classified as destructive and creative. The destructive audience has five or six types. There is the most aggressive audience, that which comes with the avowed purpose of 'breaking up the show'—as the college football audience. There is the 'amateur night' audience; there is the blasé first-night audience, which does not seem happy unless the play is a failure. There is the audience that has strayed into the wrong theatre, and, expecting a farce, finds a serious drama. There is the indifferent, soggy, heavy audience, which the actor must pry up and lift over; finally there is the over-cultured, over-educated, sophisticated audience, and it is this type that strikes most terror to the actor's heart. The creative audience is all things the others are not, and a great deal more.

“In my life I have played two special matinees in which I tasted what the joys of acting might be. One was a professional matinee; the second occasion was a special performance in Chicago before a Drama League audience. So much came back from your side of the footlights that the delicate values of the play were brought out as never before.”

Of the brilliant evening session devoted to dramatic criticism, it is impossible to give an adequate idea in these few pages. The critic, Walter Prichard Eaton, explained at length the difference between professional dramatic criticism and the Drama League Bulletins by showing the special training and qualifications of the good, professional critic, and emphasized the fact that the League Bulletins are not and do not pretend to be professional dramatic criticisms. The fact that the Bulletins have a far different purpose and are valuable chiefly because non-commercial, representative of varied viewpoints and selective, was further emphasized by Dr. Richard Burton.

It was especially interesting to note that throughout the entire convention the balance was very evenly kept between play-attending and drama study. The delegates were urged equally to work for the play in the theatre and for the spread of interest in better drama. The last day of the session was devoted to “The Printed Play”—under the Educational Committee. After the reading of the report of the chairman of the Educational Committee, Mr. Theodore B. Hinckley, the delegates were aroused to keen interest in the possibilities in all these branches of the work.

This report covered very fully the elaborate work of the committee in its various departments, telling of the special study courses already prepared by the

Drama Study Committee and of those courses planned for next year; the work of the Lecture Bureau, in listing speakers and lecturers and advising with clubs desiring such help was described; details were given of the work of the Manuscript Committee, which had read many plays and given criticisms to their authors; the High School Committee was said to have nearly ready a second excellent list of plays for high schools. The report also told of the Pageant and Festival Committee, which is listing pageant and pageant material and advising and helping wherever possible.

But the departments which aroused the most immediate interest were those dealing with the children and with the older amateurs. Here the discussion became enthusiastic and earnest, and the delegates listened with responsive attention to the accounts of the work being done by the Educational Dramatic League, by the Children's Educational Theatre, and by the House of Play in Washington.

In her talk on the Children's Educational Theatre, Mrs. Minnie Herts-Heniger gave a graphic and interesting account of the beginnings of this work with children, and of its great success in lower New York, confessing:

"I learned my lesson that the dramatic instinct is a primitive impulse so deeply rooted that its fostering in the right direction may be organized in any and every educational result. I learned what nine years in the settlement had not taught: namely, to help the people create their own ideas from within, rather than to impose on them my ideals from without." Mrs. Glenna Smith-Tinnin told of the success of the work of the Washington Center, which has maintained a Children's Theatre where once a week the children act their own little plays. She spoke

of the "Story Play" when the children came to act some chosen story without scenery or properties, but with much fervor and imagination.

Miss Kate Oglebay described the earnest and capable work being done in New York by the Educational Dramatic League in its classes for training leaders and teachers, and in the special help it gives to amateur clubs needing direction. She explained, "The Educational Dramatic League is not a school of acting. We are so often asked if we find talent for the stage and develop it. We do not find or deal with dramatic talent, but with dramatic instinct, *which is universal* and is the impulse in everyone, prompting him this way or that, at one moment or another, and resulting in expression of himself that makes him an individual. Imitation is one of the worst features of amateur acting." As a result of this discussion, the centers were stirred to a realization of the great importance of work with children, and a determination to increase their activity in the junior department throughout the year.

Mr. Benedict Papot, in speaking eloquently of the older amateurs, urged the importance of developing the resources of rural communities by encouraging the formation of groups acting worthy plays. In many small towns, too small for a theatre, the dearth of amusement is appalling; there is nothing for the young people to do. These young people should be banded together under capable direction to act worth-while plays. As a member of the Amateur Committee of the League, Mr. Papot urged that these communities get in touch with the chairman of the committee, Mr. John M. Clapp, for advice and suggestions along these lines. It is the hope of the League to be able to develop this branch of the work in order to organize such groups, and ulti-



mately to have a trained director to send out to help such communities.

Perhaps the most surprising accomplishment of the year was described in the announcement by the chairman of the Publications Committee, Mr. Frank Chouteau Brown, when he told of the very remarkable edition of plays published under the auspices and direct guidance of the League. In preparing study courses for the clubs, the League early found that one great difficulty lay in the fact that there were so few inexpensive editions of good dramas. In commenting on the work of this department of publications, Mr. Brown explained how the committees had been able during the year to arrange with Doubleday, Page and Company for a special edition of plays to be chosen by the Drama League and called the Drama League Series. These plays are bound neatly and very attractively in cloth and sell at seventy-five cents each.

It is planned to issue about ten volumes a year; this year six have already been printed:

*Kindling*, by Charles Kenyon.

*A Thousand Years Ago*, by Percy MacKaye.

*The Great Galeoto*, by Jose Echegaray.

*Mary Goes First*, by Henry Arthur Jones.

*The Sunken Bell*, by Gerhart Hauptmann.

*Her Husband's Wife*, by A. E. Thomas.

Much interest was evinced by the delegates in this valuable uniform edition. They realized that there are great possibilities for such a series, and ultimately, if the fifteen thousand League members respond, almost any drama desired by them can be placed in the series.

But the convention was marked not only for its inspirational addresses and its reports of work accomplished; plans for the future,—definite ad-

ditional activities—were outlined by the Recommendations Committee and adopted by the delegates. Among these recommendations as reported by the chairman, Mr. Percival Chubb, were the following:

1. In view of the insanitary and otherwise objectionable conditions which obtain in certain theatres—principally one-night stands—it is recommended to the Drama League centers to investigate conditions and to enforce existing regulations, sanitary and otherwise, for the proper accommodation of actors.

2. It is recommended that a committee be appointed to investigate the problem of the child on the stage, and to present at the next convention its conclusions and recommendations.

3. It is suggested that a committee be appointed by the president to investigate the present price of theatre tickets, with a view to a possible reduction; the investigation is to include the bearings on this question of the ticket speculator.

4. It is recommended that the Board of Directors take steps to secure funds for the employment of a salaried officer to promote the successful operation of the circuit plan, and to do other organizing work.

5. It is further recommended that a special Shakespeare Festival Committee be appointed to report at the next convention as to the League's participation in the National Shakespeare Festival in 1916, and as its own celebration at that time.

To quote again from Mr. Eaton in the Boston Transcript, "Taking all in all, the Drama League convention showed without question that there is life in the movement, that it is not a mere flash of enthusiasm, that its destinies are being guided by men and women who are alive to the practical side of the problem, and finally that various works are

being accomplished or attempted beside the mere bulletining of good plays, some of them, one cannot but feel, of more immediate value. Chief among these is the circuit plan of guaranteed tours in the one-night stands."

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November, 1914

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A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature

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Published by

The Drama League of America

Chicago

75c A Number

\$3.00 A Year

Copyright, 1914, by Drama League of America.

Entered as second-class matter February 25, 1911, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under the Act of March 3, 1879.



# THE DRAMA

Number 16

NOVEMBER

1914

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Probably the ordinary playgoer would be swift to accept the first of two definitions once proposed by Bronson Howard: "The art of acting is the art of moving, speaking, and appearing on the stage as the character assumed would move, speak, and appear in real life, under the circumstances indicated in the play." As he suggested, this appears to be a reasonable definition; but, as he went on to explain, it is "absolutely and radically false," because it leaves out the one essential word. It ought to read: "The art of acting is the art of SEEMING to move, speak, and appear on the stage as the character assumed moves, speaks, and appears in real life, under the circumstances indicated in the play." And the experienced dramatist commented on this second definition and explained that "the actor's art is to make the people in an audience, some of them a hundred feet or more away, THINK that he is moving, speaking, and appearing like the character assumed; and, in nine cases out of ten, the only way to make them think so is NOT to be doing it; to be doing something else."

[Quoted from *On Acting*, by Brander Matthews.]

# THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature

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No. 16

November

1914

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## ALFRED CAPUS



R. ALFRED CAPUS, born in Aix in 1858, became known in 1890 by his first novel: *Qui perd gagne*, which was soon followed by three others: *Faux départs* (1891), *Monsieur veut rire* (1893), *Années d'aventures* (1894).

In these novels, Mr. Capus shows himself a realist, very original, very calm, very far seeing. He states clearly what he has seen, without pessimism, without attempt at being startling. He knows the struggle for life, the chase after the dollar, the difficulties which beset all beginnings. Psychology, the why's and wherefore's, do not seem to trouble him. His last novel, *Années d'aventures*, puts one in mind of *Gil Blas*—of a *Gil Blas* of the twentieth century, of course. Like Le Sage in his time, he knows the strange world of parasites, the ambiguous occupations which have been created by the new social conditions. His novels are straightforward, neither moral nor immoral, not even amoral, with just a tinge of irony. They are not a picture of society, but of certain types within or on the fringe of society, whose influence

upon society is dangerous and whom we must know if we are to block them.

His first successful play, *Brignol et sa fille*, was presented at the Vaudeville Theater on the twenty-third of November, 1894, and revived at the Odéon in 1901.

Brignol is a jovial, ruddy, healthy creature, a kind husband who adores his daughter. He is also a broker, always on the eve of making a fortune, but meanwhile penniless and in debt to every one. His brother-in-law, Valpierre, a straight-laced, respectable judge, who has refused for years to have anything to do with him on account of his lack of financial morality, comes to make a last attempt to extricate him:

VALPIERRE. Now, my good fellow, what do you intend doing?

BRIGNOL. This evening?

VALPIERRE. No. In a general way. What do you intend to do to get out of the lamentable situation in which the three of you are floundering?

BRIGNOL. Whose situation? To what situation do you refer?

VALPIERRE. To your own.

BRIGNOL. But my situation isn't at all lamentable. It's excellent. We are a little short just now, I'm willing to admit. But who isn't, now and then?

VALPIERRE. You owe your landlord, my sister told me. You will probably be sold out; you are surrounded by creditors—

BRIGNOL. It may be annoying, but there's nothing serious about that. There are in Paris a hundred or a hundred and fifty thousand people in exactly the same situation. There are some in the country, also.

MME. VALPIERRE. No.

BRIGNOL. No one has debts in the country?

MME. VALPIERRE. No. When one has, he is obliged to come and live in Paris.

VALPIERRE. Listen, Brignol. I'm ready to help you. I have already, and am willing to do it again, if you are willing to make an energetic resolution.

BRIGNOL. What kind of resolution?

VALPIERRE. You must go to work. You must accept a position in an office, any thing. I'll compromise with your creditors and you can settle by installments.

BRIGNOL. Become an employee—at my age! I hope you are joking. On the contrary, I can only attend to very important business which requires energy and in which I can make use of my experience.

VALPIERRE. At your age! You wish to keep on doing nothing—as you please!

BRIGNOL. That's where you are mistaken. I have fifty things going. Let one of them win out and we'll be all right—not to say wealthy.

One of the "things" which Brignol has going is an investment of thirty thousand francs intrusted to his care by a retired major, an inveterate gambler, who is trying to break himself from his passion. Brignol pays the interests regularly and liberally, but the major succumbs once more to his desire and calls for his money. Brignol, of course, does not have it and tries to gain time. The major, becoming suspicious, sends his nephew, a very rich young man. The young man falls in love with Cécile, Brignol's daughter, and finally marries her. This allows Brignol to crush his righteous brother-in-law with his slogan: "You see, everything turns out all right in the long run." The play is taken

bodily from Capus's first novel, *Qui perd gagne*, only the irony is much stronger in the play than in the novel. The sympathetic character is Brignol. It isn't the poor fellow's fault that he was born without the sixth sense. And he is so sincerely sorry when he realizes that he has stolen the major's money, that he exclaims: "Evidently, evidently, I'm wrong; I see it." Brignol did not mean to steal the money; he was on the eve of obtaining a wonderful position, on condition that he marry his daughter to a man much older than herself; and he promised the man he might marry the daughter. Of course he had not mentioned it to his daughter. Why should he think of such a trifle? But he loves his daughter and stands nobly by her when she refuses the man.

What can you say to a man of this type? That's the problem. And the play is funny, very funny.

His next play, *Rosine* (Gymnase, June 2, 1897) is the story of a modest little girl who has a hard time making a living. She was eighteen when she became an orphan and she hadn't a cent. She was in love with Perrin, whose parents refused their consent; and as she couldn't marry legally, they omitted the ceremony. Everyone thought they were married, but after five or six years, the parents of the young man got around him and he abandoned Rosine to make a rich marriage. So there she is and life is harder for her still. But she manages to live with her needle. However, the husbands of those for whom she works are too persistent, and while she does not yield, she arouses the jealousy of one of the wives and is blacklisted. Nothing more to do! This is playing the husband's game: "An apartment in Paris or starvation." Then appears Georges Desclos, a young doctor without patients.

Very much devoted to Rosine, he has made love to her since she was abandoned by Perrin, but has not mentioned marriage. How can he? He hasn't a cent. Rosine likes the young fellow, but a burned child . . . So, Desclos burns his bridges, decides to try Paris, and goes to Rosine: "We love one another; come with me; we'll either suffer or pull through together." And Rosine falls into his arms: "Let's try!"

Then appears Desclos senior, an old failure, very intelligent and very sympathetic. He is existing on a very small income and has become quite a philosopher in his way: "Children, you are going to do a foolish thing. And yet: Do it! After all, there are people who gain happiness through doing one foolish thing after another, doing it resolutely. I'm sorry I can't give you any money to help you out at the beginning.—Wait a bit.—I've saved a couple hundred dollars to repair the farm.—Well, here they are. Let the farm wait."

Just think of it! A father, a bourgeois admitting the situation and helping it! And yet, the situation goes because you feel that the author is not trying to startle you or to shock you, but is scrupulously true to nature.

In October of the same year, the Nouveautés gave Capus's third play, *Petites folles*, a very moral and optimistic comedy. The two little madcaps are what they are, solely through a spirit of imitation. They stop long before sinning; one of them coming back to her husband as soon as she discovers that he is jealous, and the other, having an appointment with her flirt just at the moment when her husband is to fight a duel, realizes that her husband is more to her than she knew. The two little butterflies do not take such a prominent part, but there are two

husbands, diversely and exquisitely philosophical, an impetuous old madcap mother, and the story of a duel as droll as possible. The plot, like the majority of Mr. Capus's plots, borders upon farce, but the characters are of high comedy. At the end of the first act, both husbands, Bridel and Leverquin, are left together:

LEVERQUIN. I believe that the mind of Mme. Varinois, our mother-in-law, is suffering from a brain storm.

BRIDEL. [*Furiously.*] She ought to get a beating.

LEVERQUIN. Why the dickens did you agree to live in the same house with her? Didn't I tell you you were foolish? A son-in-law mustn't live in the apartment above his mother-in-law. That's an axiom which holds good for all civilized nations.

BRIDEL. Could I foresee that Mme. Varinois was to have an at home?

LEVERQUIN. And build an inner staircase between your two apartments?

BRIDEL. Buy English furniture and receive young fops who would court my wife?

LEVERQUIN. Yours and mine, too! Don't forget mine!

BRIDEL. Are you beginning to size up the situation?

LEVERQUIN. I never harbored any illusions.

BRIDEL. You're going to allow your wife to compromise herself with that fool?

LEVERQUIN. How can I prevent her?

BRIDEL. The idea that Estelle may deceive you does not drive you mad?

LEVERQUIN. Why, no! I got used to it little by little; I might say that I trained myself to it.



From the first day of my marriage, I've spent a few minutes each day at this intellectual exercise: I gather my thoughts and familiarize myself with the image of unfaithfulness, and today I do not really know whether *flagrante delicto* itself would throw me off my balance.

BRIDEL. You are maddening! So you believe that your wife has a lover?

LEVERQUIN. I don't say that.

BRIDEL. You believe that she hasn't any?

LEVERQUIN. I'm not at all sure of that. At times, on seeing her come home at dinner time, I wonder: "Perhaps she is coming from Hupont's or from someone else's."—Other times, on the contrary, I think: "She is flirting, but she was pretty well brought up; Hupont amuses her, but she'll never go any further." I'm on the fence. That's my case.

BRIDEL. You've never followed Estelle?

LEVERQUIN. Never! Oh, yes! Once! But I thought she was another woman.

BRIDEL. You've never tried to know the truth, the whole truth?

LEVERQUIN. What for? Must I confess it to you, this continual uncertainty of mine is not disagreeable to me. There's some satisfaction in it, bitter satisfaction at times, but satisfaction just the same.

BRIDEL. That's no philosophy—that's vice.

LEVERQUIN. Vice is an excellent weapon of defense against the coquetry of women.

BRIDEL. You deceive her, don't you?

LEVERQUIN. Estelle? Very rarely, upon honor! I do not flee from temptation, but I do not look for it either.—All this doesn't prevent us from being a pretty good couple. I like her very much; and

I'm sure that she has a great deal of sympathy for me. We are separated only by marriage.

Whereupon, Bridel confesses his own state of mind.

Very immoral, will you say? No, it's talk—talk to cover the lack of backbone. And to my mind, this is the whole basis of Capus's theater. No man will allow himself to be contemptible in his own eyes; so he must find an excuse for himself. He must find some sort of logic and reason which will excuse his lack of character, and these excuses and reasons give us the fun. Not all of the characters of Mr. Capus lack backbone. In the next play (*Mariage bourgeois*, Gymnase, 1895) Piégeois pulls the strings. Piégeois is rich and he acquired his fortune by means which had better not be investigated. Only, having made his fortune, he has reformed.

With *Les maris de Léontine* (Nouveautés, 1900), M. Capus comes back to his first manner, that of *Brignol et sa fille*, a manner suited to his leading character, the irresponsible led by the remorseless hand of fate.

Adolphe Dubois has obtained a divorce. There was nothing else to do. Dubois is a decent enough sort of a chap, and when his former wife hadn't a cent left he could not resist her appeal and helped her out. He was weak enough to do so several times for, as he says very naively to a friend who has just loaned him two thousand francs to pay a draft of his former wife: "Goodness me! I know that it is silly, but what can I do? Divorce dissolves the marriage bonds, but it does not prevent you from having been married; and when you have loved a woman, when you have lived with her for

years, she may have treated you meanly and you may be glad to be rid of her,—but there still remains within you the sort of sympathy you may have for a little pet animal who bit you, and you cannot refuse her a bit of sugar.”

And the former wife appears. She is homeless, has just been sold out. With no place to go, she has a bright idea:

LÉONTINE. Then I had another idea.

ADOLPHE. Which was?

LÉONTINE. To ask your hospitality for a few days until my luck turns.

ADOLPHE. Here!

LÉONTINE. Of course.

ADOLPHE. Here?

LÉONTINE. To be sure.

ADOLPHE. You want to come here to stay?

LÉONTINE. Well, you are my husband; after all, that's more than every woman can say.

ADOLPHE. But, hang it, I'm not your husband!

LÉONTINE. Well, you have been.

ADOLPHE. I have, that's true; but I'm not any longer. Now, get it into your head that I am no longer your husband. We were divorced by judgment of the court.

LÉONTINE. What does that matter?

Well, she stays; Adolphe leaves the city, and, thanks to his influential friend, becomes police commissioner in a small town. There he meets Léontine again. She is married but faithless.

But, why go on? Léontine cannot help herself. What's the use; what can anyone do about it? It is a farce, and yet it is impossible to read it or to witness the performance without feeling the need of taking hold of something solid. We know that

we must compromise, that without compromise life would become unbearable—but from one compromise to another, where are we drifting?

Let me add a brief mention of Mr. Capus's succeeding plays:

*La bourse ou la vie*, Gymnase, 1900.

*La veine*, Variétés, 1911.

*La petite fonctionnaire*, Nouveautés, 1901.

*Les deux écoles*, Variétés, 1902.

*La châtelaine*, Renaissance, 1902.

*L'adversaire*, Renaissance, 1903.

*Le beau jeune homme*, Variétés, 1903.

*Notre jeunesse*, Comédie Française, 1904.

*Monsieur Piégeois*, Renaissance, 1905.

*L'attentat*, Gaîté, 1906.

*Les passagères*, Renaissance, 1906.

*Les deux hommes*, Comédie Française, 1908.

*Qui perd gagne*, Théâtre Réjane, 1908.

*L'oiseau blessé*, Renaissance, 1908.

*Un ange*, Variétés, 1909.

*L'aventurier*, Porte Saint Martin, 1910.

*Les favorites*, Variétés, 1911.

*En garde*, Renaissance, 1912.

Among his most successful plays was *La veine*, in which he exposes the philosophy that luck is everything and that there is only one thing to do,—to wait and grab it if it comes. Another success was *Les deux écoles*, in which a wife, having divorced one man, and being on the point of marrying another, who is her former husband's exact opposite, discovers that there may be two schools, but that in either of them the result is the same. So she returns to her former love. *L'aventurier* (published in this number) followed Rostand's *Chanteclair* at the Porte Saint Martin with great popular acclaim.

It is undeniable that M. Capus pleases the Pari-

sian public. His plays are more optimistic than his novels. He is a sort of detective, watching the vagaries of luck. And every time luck is in contradiction with reason, wisdom, probabilities, social order, and the like—which happens more often than we think—he immediately investigates and records his investigations for our delectation. He always seems to be on the side of those who are unworthy. He constantly violates the laws of probability, and yet there emanates from his whole play a sort of subtle general truth which sinks in and compels one to think. While the superficial reader might readily condemn him as immoral in such plays, for instance, as *Les maris de Léontine* and *Un ange*, a more attentive reading will bring a very different impression. In the first place he must be acted by ladies and gentlemen, or at least by actors who can give the impression that they are ladies and gentlemen while speaking lines often unexpected in the mouths of such characters. The audience must be sufficiently sophisticated to understand what lies beneath the words.

BENEDICT PAPOT.

## THE ADVENTURER

A Play in Four Acts by Alfred Capus  
Translated from the French by Benedict Papot

### CAST OF CHARACTERS

ETIENNE RANSON, *42 years old.*

GUEROY, *60 years old.*

JACK, *30 years old.*

ANDRÉ VAREZE, *28 years old.*

FRAMIE, *50 years old.*

THE PREFECT, *42 years old.*

COURTRAY (*a silent character*).

DAMBLEUR.

SABLIER.

GENEVIEVE, *24 years old.*

MARTHA, *30 years old.*

THE BARONESS, *45 years old.*

LUCIENNE, *18 years old.*

MME. SABLIER.

JULIETTE SABLIER.

SUZANNE SABLIER.

# THE ADVENTURER

A COMEDY IN FOUR ACTS

BY ALFRED CAPUS

ACT I

[*A terrace, with entrances at the right and the left.*]

FRAMIE. It's none of my business, Mr. Gueroy, but if I were you I would not let every Tom, Dick, and Harry visit the factory.

GUEROY. What! Not visit the factory! Nonsense! Let the doors be thrown open so that any one may see its prosperity. That's good advertising!

FRAMIE. Hm!

GUEROY. Let those two gentlemen go anywhere, even to the workshops.

FRAMIE. One of them speaks a foreign tongue.

GUEROY. Well, what of it?

FRAMIE. A great many foreigners have been settling down around here lately. They are beginning to monopolize our waterfalls.

GUEROY. They'll not get ours, I'll guarantee!  
[*ANDRÉ enters.*] Go along, and do not be afraid.  
[*FRAMIE goes out.*] You're early, my dear Congressman?

ANDRÉ. I have come to tell you that I shall not lunch with you.

GUEROY. What has happened?

ANDRÉ. I must be in Paris this evening. We are to have a caucus. The government is to be taken to task rather severely by the opposition one of these days. We must support it.

GUEROY. Good! Very good! And what is the cause of this sudden clamor?

ANDRÉ. Haven't you read the papers?

GUEROY. Not yet.

ANDRÉ. It's some colonial incident which, ordinarily, would not amount to anything. A Frenchman, I do not know who,—some adventurer, with a few companions,—had a pitched battle on one of our frontiers, in Sénégal.

GUEROY. A battle! With whom?

ANDRÉ. A tribe of natives with whom we are at peace for the time being.

GUEROY. We are at peace with every nation, thank goodness!

ANDRÉ. But not with parliamentary opposition.

GUEROY. Oh! The opposition—

ANDRÉ. It took hold of the incident; you can imagine the rest. It took sides with our countrymen,—if such people may be called countrymen. I'll not give you any details; you will read them in the papers; but the result will be a serious investigation concerning our colonial policy.

GUEROY. The cabinet has nothing to fear, I suppose?

ANDRÉ. I do not think so. The usual pitfalls, underhanded wire pulling. We'll try to block that.

GUEROY. Stand firm! You are young; that's when you must make a stand. You see, the time for opposition is all over in France now. We must be with the government. We can do nothing against it; we can do nothing without it; but with it, we can do anything.

ANDRÉ. Quite right.

GUEROY. Formerly, at your age, I had notions of independence. I made fun of the powers that be. I criticised our institutions—made believe I was



discontented. I soon understood the childishness and uselessness of that attitude. So, to-day, in all circumstances and whatever they may do, I am always with the men who direct us. And I'll give you my word that there are times when it takes great strength of character to be that.

ANDRÉ. That's why you have such enormous influence in the district.

GUEROY. I do not complain. They gave me the red ribbon some years ago. I had not even asked for it.

ANDRÉ. By the way, I'll see the secretary about it. You are a knight; that's good—but it is time that—

GUEROY. Oh! I do not care about that. The point is to have the ribbon;—knight or officer, that does not matter.

ANDRÉ. Nevertheless, I'll see about it—I shall insist.

GUEROY [*Forcefully*]. Call attention to the fact that, if it is my son that manages the factory now, I founded it. Make much of the part I played in the last election. Do not forget the support the authorities always have received from me in this district.

ANDRÉ. They owe it to you. They must make you an officer. It's your due.

GUEROY. Yes, I ought to be an officer. After that, I'll be satisfied. The other promotions do not count.

ANDRÉ. You may depend on me.

GUEROY. Thank you, my dear friend.—I cannot think of anything else of importance to say to you—so, a pleasant trip to you—and push things through! That's the thing! I'll take a look through the factory and then I'll read my papers.

ANDRÉ. And, with your permission, I shall wait for the ladies to say good-bye to them.

GUEROY. I think they are in the garden.

ANDRÉ. I took the liberty of sending word to them. [GUEROY shakes hands with ANDRÉ and goes out, taking with him the newspapers, in wrappers. GENEVIEVE enters.]

GENEVIEVE. Good morning, sir.

ANDRÉ. Sir?

GENEVIEVE. Good morning, André.

ANDRÉ. Just think, Genevieve, I am compelled to attend the session to-morrow; hence, I must start at once.

GENEVIEVE. We'll return to Paris ourselves within a week.

ANDRÉ. Then it is in Paris that I shall attend to the little formality.

GENEVIEVE. What formality?

ANDRÉ. Ask the proper parties; that is to say, your elder sister and your brother-in-law, for your hand.

GENEVIEVE. Ah!

ANDRÉ. Have you told them that I love you with all my heart, Genevieve?

GENEVIEVE. No, I have not told them—especially not in those terms. I was waiting to be quite sure of it myself.

ANDRÉ. And now?

GENEVIEVE. I am sure of it.

ANDRÉ. And as we are both free, and as it concerns only ourselves, let us set a date. Will you?

GENEVIEVE. Setting a date is somewhat serious.

ANDRÉ. Let's say at least that we'll be married this winter.

GENEVIEVE. [*Offering her hand.*] Let's.

ANDRÉ. I am very happy! I cannot find another word: I am immensely happy. And my happiness came so quickly that I am still dazzled by it. I saw you, I loved you, and in a few weeks we'll belong to one another. That's magnificent!

GENEVIEVE. There's a childish side in you that's quite refreshing.

ANDRÉ. Genevieve, tell me seriously that you love me. [*He draws her toward him.*]

GENEVIEVE. [*Seriously and warmly.*] André, I very much desire to be your wife and if you ever should love another, I should go mad. [*She changes her tone.*] Are you satisfied?

ANDRÉ. Yes.—Genevieve, I am sure that I shall make your life beautiful. With you by my side I shall be very successful; I feel it. Before knowing you, I was but faintly conscious of my ambition. Now, I know what I want. I want you to be envied, to be admired. I want you to have a dazzling life—more joy and more power than any other woman—and I want to be the one to give you all that. You see, I am very ambitious.

GENEVIEVE. Not ambitious enough, for you speak only of joy and of power and your only dream is to become Minister of Foreign Affairs, while the proper thing, André, when one is what you are, is not to have an ambition and to satisfy it, but to have an ideal and to impose it. It is, to be a man who does not resemble other men, to have a will of your own and thoughts of your own. On the day when I listen to you from the corner of the gallery, I shall think: "How true that is, how just!" On that day, yes, I'll be proud. You see, I am still more ambitious than you are.

ANDRÉ. [*Laughing.*] That's true.

GENEVIEVE. Good bye, André. I'll see you soon.  
[To MARTHA, who enters.] How much longer shall we remain here?

MARTHA. [Shaking hands with ANDRÉ.] A few days only.

ANDRÉ. I was telling Miss Genevieve that I have to leave at once; and I came to offer my apologies.—If I may do so, I shall call on you as soon as you arrive.

MARTHA. You shall be welcome, my dear sir, in Paris as well as here.

ANDRÉ. Ladies. [He goes out.]

MARTHA. My dear?

GENEVIEVE. What?

MARTHA. Mr. Vareze is charming—I do not deny it—but we have not known him very long.

GENEVIEVE. Which means?

MARTHA. Which means that marriage is, after all, more important than young ladies seem to think.

GENEVIEVE. Yes, I suspect that it does bind you to a mass of little things.

MARTHA. Which it is well not to take as a joke.

GENEVIEVE. I am not joking as much as I seem, my big sister. [She kisses MARTHA.]

MARTHA. It is strange! I am only six or seven years older than you, we have never been parted, we love one another dearly, and yet it seems to me that between our two dispositions, between our views of life, there is an abyss.

GENEVIEVE. [Laughing.] Oh, an abyss?

MARTHA. You face marriage with an audacity, with a carelessness, with the same smile you would have if you were starting for an excursion in the country. I remember how moved I was, how anxious, sad even at times. It is true that mother was with us then, and the presence of a mother makes

things more serious.—In short, my dear, think—think for a little while yet.

GENEVIEVE. And then, I shall have your consent?

MARTHA. Silly, you do not need it.

GENEVIEVE. I care for it much more than if I could not do without it.—It would be so splendid for both of us to be happy together. [JACK enters.]

JACK. You haven't seen father?

GENEVIEVE. He must be poring over the morning papers.—Good morning, brother-in-law; how is your health this morning?

JACK. Not as good as yours, but I am all right at that. [*He kisses her.*]

GENEVIEVE. Shall I tell father if I meet him?

JACK. Pray, do. [GENEVIEVE goes out.]

MARTHA. I just had a little conversation with Genevieve concerning Mr. Vareze.

JACK. Yes, I noticed it, too. But there is nothing decided between them, is there?

MARTHA. Hm! At any rate, it would be well for us to become accustomed to the idea of a possible marriage.

JACK. Plenty of time! Besides, I must make some inquiries about Vareze's financial standing—which, by the way, I have reasons to believe very good.

MARTHA. So have I—and with Genevieve's dowry these young people would be very comfortable.—Tell me, it would not inconvenience you to take out of the factory the three hundred thousand francs which constitute Genevieve's dowry?

JACK. Not at all. What a question!

MARTHA. So much the better.

JACK. I cannot understand why you should ask me such a question?

MARTHA. As business is rather poor just now, I was afraid—

JACK. Business poor! Where did you get that?

MARTHA. I have heard it.

JACK. From whom?

MARTHA. From Framie.

JACK. [*Shrugging his shoulders.*] Framie is very intelligent and very useful to us; he is a splendid manager, but he is a frightful pessimist. I'll ask you not to talk business with him.

MARTHA. [*Going to him.*] Why do you conceal your worries from me, Jack?

JACK. I am not concealing anything from you. I have no worries.—I am preoccupied like all other manufacturers.

MARTHA. No, you are not telling me the truth.—I know that we have lost a great deal of money this year. Fortunately, I am the only one who knows it. Even father does not suspect it. And what worries me most is that you dare not tell me anything, that you do not trust me. I understand, I understand—you are afraid of worrying me—but what worries me is your silence, your make-believe tranquillity. What is the matter, Jack? Tell me, I beg of you. Do not wait until the last minute.

JACK. And yet, I cannot admit disaster under pretense of reassuring you.

MARTHA. You are seeking money—I am sure of that.

JACK. [*Gayly.*] Yes, I am seeking money to enlarge our business, to allow us to face foreign competition. Nothing could be more simple than that. All French industries are in the same situation. That's the usual struggle. And my father is fully cognizant of all my plans.

[GUEROY enters, a paper in his hand.]

GUEROY. Unheard of! Fantastic! I have news of your cousin.

JACK. Of Etienne?

GUEROY. Yes, of my nephew, of this plague, this plague! We had not heard from him for ten years; it was too good to last!

JACK. What has he done now?

MARTHA. Yes?

GUEROY. [*Striking the newspaper.*] He is the cause of that incident in Africa, the incident about which there will be an investigation.—Read that! Read that! “Official News”—“The next investigation”—go on, go on. You may read too, Martha.—“In Guinea—Massacre of a tribe friendly to France.—This unwarranted slaughter is the work of a fellow countryman, Etienne Ranson.”

JACK. That’s he—no possible mistake!

GUEROY. So that, not satisfied with having almost dishonored the family formerly, the fellow is now bringing scandal upon our heads, compromising us.

JACK. We do not bear the same name; people need not know.

GUEROY. How simple-minded you are! Do you suppose that the Secretary will not find out that he is my nephew? He knows it already, probably! And when Vareze asks him for my promotion, he’ll have a fine reception! You do not take into consideration the harm such a scandal will do us, socially and in business!

MARTHA. [*Reading the paper.*] According to the paper, Etienne’s guilt is not proved nor is his share in this adventure explained.

JACK. That’s so; do not let us exaggerate things!

GUEROY. It’s easy to see you do not know the fellow! Do not deceive yourselves. I saw him at close range and I know what he is capable of. Re-

member how many times I had to get him out of trouble! I have paid over thirty thousand francs for him, and I'll never see a cent of it. Under pretense that I was his uncle, his creditors dunned me. I have had scenes even in this very room, do you hear! I had them in the streets of Grenoble. Why! if I had paid everything, my fortune would not have sufficed. No, no, he is incorrigible! He is the rotten limb that is found in every family tree and which, if not amputated, ends by causing the whole body to decay.

MARTHA. It's strange! He did not give me the impression of being a bad man.

GUEROY. Of course not! Fine fellow, very generous, his heart on his sleeve—you women call those fellows rogues and find them very sympathetic. His mother treated him like a little god. Although I kept on telling her: "You are not rearing your boy right; you do not hold him firmly enough!" all he did was wonderful! He failed in his entrance examination to the "Tech." while you made it. He was at once rewarded by a little trip through Italy to console him. For years his mother supported him in Paris, where he tried all sorts of things. And the poor woman kept on telling me from morning till night: "He will succeed! He is so intelligent!" I am glad his mother did not live to witness the result of her lack of firmness. And besides that, you should have seen him: pretentious, ironical, disdainful of the experience of people like myself, calling me an old fool in his mind when I gave him advice! Why, didn't he want to show me how I should run my factory! That's the last straw, isn't it?—A fellow that flunked the "Tech."! All that comes back to my mind now—Ah! when he left, I certainly thought I was rid of him for good!



JACK. Well, we are rid of him! He'll never dare to come back to France, not here, especially.

GUEROY. As to that, I defy him to do so! Just the same, everybody has known him around here; so you can imagine the comments when they read of his adventures in the papers. And just on the day when I have the Prefect to lunch! [*He looks through the window.*] There comes the Baroness with her daughter. Look at her smiling countenance. You may be sure she has read the paper. [*The BARONESS and LUCIENNE enter.*]

BARONESS. Well, Gueroy,—a fine story!

GUEROY. That's what I think.

MARTHA. Good morning, Lucienne.

LUCIENNE. Good morning, madam. Good morning, Mr. Jack.

BARONESS. Did your nephew send you any details?

GUEROY. No, thank goodness! I have no more relations with him.

BARONESS. Tell me, are you sure that he stayed in Africa?

GUEROY. Yes, yes. Besides, the papers say so.

BARONESS. Then I must have been seeing things!

GUEROY. How is that?

BARONESS. Because I thought I saw him last night.

GUEROY. Him! Where?

BARONESS. On the road, alongside my park. I had just taken a ride with my daughter and was getting out of the carriage when I was saluted by a rather disreputable looking fellow, ragged, with high boots, and a club in his hand.

LUCIENNE. Frightful!—He had a scar all along his cheek; I was beginning to be very much scared. Fortunately, we were near the house.

BARONESS. I looked at him sharply and then I

suddenly thought, "That must be Ranson!" He is changed, but it was he.

GUEROY. That's impossible! That would cap the climax! You must have been mistaken!

JACK. You ought to make sure.

GUEROY. How? Will you tell me how? [*To the BARONESS.*] Which way was he going when you met him?

BARONESS. Towards the village of Oisans, where his family had property formerly.

GUEROY. Oisans! That's only ten minutes' walk from here. I am going to write to his former farmer. [*He goes to his desk.*] We must be prepared at all events. [*To his son.*] You ought to send some one to the village to find out.

JACK. Yes, right away. [*He goes out.*]

LUCIENNE. May I go to say good morning to Genevieve?

GUEROY. You will find her in the garden. [*LUCIENNE and MARTHA go out.*]

BARONESS. [*To GUEROY.*] You know, I am satisfied it was he. [*She follows MARTHA.*]

[*GUEROY writes with his back to the door. RANSON enters, wearing a worn velvet jacket and boots and showing a scar on the cheek.*]

GUEROY. [*Turning.*] You!

RANSON. Why, yes, uncle, it is I. And how do you do? [*He advances.*] Come, shake hands. Hang it, I am your nephew after all! I am no tramp! Come, come, make an effort, uncle; don't be nasty! [*After some hesitation, GUEROY offers him his hand. RANSON shakes it heartily.*] Well, I am glad of that, although you do not seem very willing. Let me look at you. It's ten years since I saw you last! You haven't changed much!

GUEROY. [*Collecting his senses.*] I beg of you,

Etienne, don't gush! You are my nephew, I am willing to admit that; but I will not admit that you may go ten years without letting us hear a word about you and then come back to bring disorder into the family and compromise us all.

RANSON. I?

GUEROY. Yes, you! [*Looking him over.*] A fine state you are in! And you must have a tremendous amount of courage to come back to France after what you've done! What is that abominable affair I have just read?

RANSON. That's nothing; and the papers would not have said a word about it if that fool governor of Sénégal had not——

GUEROY. I'll ask you not to speak of the governor of Sénégal in those terms!

RANSON. He is a friend of yours?

GUEROY. I do not know him. But he is a high officer of the Republic and that's enough for me to forbid any disrespect towards him in my presence. Besides, I do not care about all that! The only thing I see is: you are the cause of the scandal which bespatters us!

RANSON. There will be no suspicion of scandal even, I assure you, my dear uncle. If need be, I'll go to Paris, I'll see the Secretary and I'll prove to him that my comrades and I acted strictly in self-defense. And I shall not tell him that I am your nephew, I'll promise you that.

GUEROY. And it is for that purpose that you came back to France?

RANSON. For that purpose—and also to see you again—and also for something else.

GUEROY. I suspected that much!—But as to that—no, that's all over.

RANSON. But—

GUEROY. That's over, I tell you, all over. I have done for you all that it was materially possible for me to do. I even got into serious trouble on your account. I'll never do it again—never;—do not expect it!

RANSON. Wait a bit, uncle, wait.

GUEROY. How do you even dare to show your face in this neighborhood where you were raised, where you played the fool, where you owe money to everybody? Why, you are foolish; your creditors are not dead! When they find out you have returned, you'll be dunned, sued, hounded.

RANSON. I know—I had some experience yesterday;—when Brachin saw me, he was as startled as if he had seen a ghost.

GUEROY. Brachin, your old farmer! You owe him at least two thousand francs.

RANSON. Two thousand five hundred.

GUEROY. And what did Brachin say?

RANSON. He was delighted to see me.—But I must tell you that I repaid him at once.

GUEROY. You paid him two thousand five hundred francs?

RANSON. With interest.—I also owed four thousand francs to Pellegrin, the jeweler.

GUEROY. I know!—Didn't he have the nerve to dun me for it in the street? [*Sneering.*] And you also gave Pellegrin his four thousand francs?

RANSON. I did.

GUEROY. What are you telling me?

RANSON. Oh! while I was at it, I paid up all my little debts.

GUEROY. And Lidot? And Poiret?

RANSON. They are paid. Unless I am mistaken I no longer owe anyone anything.

GUEROY. Really.

RANSON. I think so.

GUEROY. You do? Well, I think you are forgetting your largest creditor.

RANSON. You don't say! Who is that?

GUEROY. Me!

RANSON. I did not forget you at all, uncle! What do you think I am here for?

GUEROY. It may be to pay me back.

RANSON. Certainly.

GUEROY. You have come to pay me what you owe me?

RANSON. Do not doubt it.

GUEROY. Do you even know how much you do owe me?

RANSON. Thirty-one thousand francs. That is to say, with interest, about forty thousand, six hundred francs.

GUEROY. And you say you are going to give me—

RANSON. Forty thousand, six hundred francs.—Here they are.—Count them.

GUEROY. No need of that.

RANSON. Never mind; count them.

GUEROY. I'll take your word for it.

RANSON. I must thank you for having loaned me this money and I ask your forgiveness for having been so slow in repaying it.—And now, uncle, I'll leave you. I won't detain you any longer. Delighted to have seen you in good health. My regards to the family. [*He starts to go.*]

GUEROY. There, there! Wait a bit! Give me a chance to tell you how pleased—

RANSON. [*Protesting.*] Uncle! Uncle!

GUEROY. Yes, yes, it was a pleasant surprise.

RANSON. Glad to have been able to give it to you.

GUEROY. A quarter of an hour ago, I would have called any one a lunatic who told me I should ever

see that money again, but I do not make any bones about accepting it.

RAISON. I should hope not.

GUEROY. You did not imagine I was going to refuse it.

RAISON. I never nursed that illusion.

GUEROY. So, you have become rich?

RAISON. I? Not at all. My affairs are doing fairly well. I have a little cash on hand.—All in all, I do not complain.

GUEROY. [*Patting him on the shoulder.*] Now, now, my boy, do not try to fool your uncle! I know, I know, you have more money than you seem to have.

RAISON. You don't say.

GUEROY. A fellow does not hand back forty thousand francs to his uncle without having a pretty nest egg. But that is none of my business. So much the better for you! So much the better! Only, as you left with three hundred francs in your pocket, I would like to know how you come by such an amount?

RAISON. Well, it was hard, especially the beginning.

GUEROY. Where did you land first with your three hundred francs?

RAISON. In Australia.

GUEROY. And what did you do in Australia? [*RAISON makes a vague gesture.*] All right, all right, I understand.

RAISON. Why, no, no, uncle! You do not understand at all. You imagine that I perpetrated all sorts of rascalities, do you not? Do not believe it. I will not give you any details, because it would lead us too far, but I did not make any mischief, I assure you. You still imagine that it is impossible to live outside of France except by pillaging and murdering. That's a mistake, uncle, a big mistake! The other

parts of the world are much better organized than you think. Oh! I won't tell you that I behaved like a little saint, but one thing I'll confess to you. When you have been two or three times around the world, when you have gone against all kinds of men, when you have taken and given blow for blow, when you have been through tempest and disaster, then, uncle, you do not play smart any more. On the contrary, you feel very simple, very obedient to natural laws. You haven't taken lessons in anarchy, but in orderliness.

GUEROY. But you did not win such a fortune by crossing your arms?

RANSON. You always harp back to that; it's a fixed idea with you. No, uncle, I did not fold my arms! But, you see, in the colonies the hard part is to get the first hundred thousand francs. After that, the rest is easy.

GUEROY. And how did you get your first hundred thousand francs?

RANSON. Through an idea which occurred to me one day on the Ivory Coast, as I was going up stream in a canoe.

GUEROY. In a canoe?

RANSON. Yes, going up the river, I saw some natives who were washing out gold dust and even nuggets from dirt. They got the dirt from shallow wells not far off. I'll admit that I was very much interested.

GUEROY. Go on.

RANSON. I landed with a few comrades who were traveling with me.—We were well armed—

GUEROY. You slaughtered all the natives?

RANSON. Not at all! What a mania you have! We did not slaughter anybody. On the contrary, we exchanged our weapons for gold dust. Then we went

away, and a little later I came back with a crew of twenty natives. I got settled, we dug wells, and I began to pan out gold. All that, of course, was not without some trouble with the neighboring tribes. We negotiated; they sent us ambassadors; we bought them off; we fought a little. In short, we did all that was necessary to be left in peace. During that time, I was getting an average of thirty grams of gold daily. The first year, I dug out thirty thousand francs, with some fifteen thousand francs clear profit. I increased the number of the wells and at the end of three years my claim was panning out over one hundred thousand francs a year.

GUEROY. Clear profit?

RANSON. Clear profit. Then as it became rumored around and as competition grew annoying, I sold out at a good profit and bought a forest, a little farther inland. You see, in the colonies you have to change your business from time to time. This forest gives rubber, palm oil, honey, wax, and so forth, not counting the monkeys. I built big yards to handle these various industries and was lucky enough to be close to the first railroad built in that country. That's my story, uncle. There are some more edifying, I'll admit. But I had to live. To live is to defend oneself. I have never attacked any one, but I have always defended myself well. As to any rascality, any of those acts about which you dare not think without the blood rushing to your face—look me in the eyes, uncle—on my life, I never committed any. Once, yes, once, I was on the point of it. But something rose in me that held me back. I do not know what—ancestry, perhaps! In short, to-day the hardest is over. Whether through miracle, luck, or will-power, I did not fall. I have not been beaten. And in so far as one can answer for



himself, it seems to me that I'll remain an honest man all my life.

GUEROY. I hope so.

RANSON. By the way, I forgot to ask you about my cousin. Is he well? His wife also? Good. Have they any children?

GUEROY. One boy.

RANSON. I must make that youngster's acquaintance. For the time being, he is my heir. And that sweet little girl? Martha's sister?

GUEROY. Genevieve.

RANSON. That's it, Genevieve?

GUEROY. She is twenty-four now and still charming.

RANSON. Not married yet?

GUEROY. Not yet.

RANSON. I see that the family behaved very well during my absence. As to business—I gave a glance through the factory when I came—it seems prosperous. You are still directing it?

GUEROY. No. Jack is. I leave it to him. I give only a sort of general supervision.

RANSON. Of course. In short, everything is all right. I am very glád.

GUEROY. You are not the only one who has made money.

RANSON. It would be too bad.

GUEROY. Your cousin has a fine situation now, not only in business but socially. He spends his winters in Paris—and so do I; we are even going to buy a residence there.

RANSON. My compliments, uncle, my compliments! Jack has made his way. I don't wonder. He is very intelligent, somewhat easy going, and weak, but you have energy for both. Also, he has a very sweet wife—I have a clear remembrance of her.

GUEROY. You want to shake hands with them?

RANSON. I wouldn't mind.

GUEROY. I hope you'll have lunch with us, one of these days?

RANSON. It is very kind of you. I'll do it with pleasure.

GUEROY. Shall you remain here for some time?

RANSON. Probably. First, I am going to buy back the little property my father owned at Vilensel and which I allowed to be sold for several reasons, the chief one being that I could not help it.

GUEROY. Are you staying at Vilensel?

RANSON. Yes.

GUEROY. I would invite you to lunch to-day, but I cannot, on account of my relations with the government. We have the Prefect to lunch—the Prefect.

RANSON. I hear. But that's all right; I do not care particularly about lunching with prefects.

GUEROY. I'll see you to-morrow then?

RANSON. Yes, to-morrow. [*A servant enters with a letter.*]

GUEROY. Allow me. [*Looking at the letter.*] Hm! from the executive mansion! [*To the servant, who is leaving.*] Ask Mr. Jack to come here, please. [*Reading the letter.*] Well! Well! So you know the Prefect?

RANSON. What's his name?

GUEROY. Moutier—Theodore Moutier.

RANSON. Moutier! It must be my college chum.

GUEROY. Astonishing! He already knows that you are here.

RANSON. At your house?

GUEROY. Yes.

RANSON. I did not tell him, I assure you.

GUEROY. He wants to speak to you. He asks me to keep you to lunch this morning.

RANSON. Pleasant of him.

GUEROY. I am curious to know what he has to say to you.

RANSON. Nothing much, I assure you.

GUEROY. Are you free?

RANSON. I am.

GUEROY. Only, you don't intend to keep that rig on, do you? Have you a Prince Albert?

RANSON. I'll have one made. No, uncle, no, don't worry. I'll be presentable.

[JACK and MARTHA enter.]

GUEROY. Hurry, then. The Prefect is coming in his motor. He'll be here soon. [*He sees JACK.*] Ah!

RANSON. [*Going to meet JACK and offering him his hand.*] Good morning, Jack.

JACK. [*Astonished at first, then advancing.*] Good morning, Etienne.

MARTHA. [*Going to RANSON.*] Cousin, I am glad to see you again. [*She offers him her forehead.*]

RANSON. [*Kissing her.*] And so am I, I assure you.—How fresh and pretty, cousin!—It's a miracle!

MARTHA. [*Smiling.*] Thank you for the compliment. [*A pause ensues, during which GUEROY and JACK exchange glances.*]

RANSON. [*After a pause.*] Yes, yes, uncle will tell you all about it.—I'll be back. [*He goes out.*]

GUEROY. Yes, something incredible has just happened.—He has given me back my money.

JACK. Etienne! You don't say!

GUEROY. He handed me forty thousand francs.—I have to believe it, for—here they are!

JACK. He must have made a fortune then!

MARTHA. Oh! I am so glad!

GUEROY. There is some mystery in this.

MARTHA. Why?—One gets rich quickly in the colonies—especially an intelligent, enterprising man like Etienne.

GUEROY. I do not know whether he has become enterprising or not. It's possible. But he is as conceited and boastful as ever. You should have heard him tell me, a little while ago, how he made his first hundred thousand francs. One would have thought that he was the only man on earth who ever had made money. He spoke of the factory in depreciating terms. We'll know some day whether his fortune is as solid as ours.

JACK. Whatever may be the case, we ought to be glad that a member of the family, our own cousin, has been successful, don't you think?

GUEROY. Yes, yes, I am willing!

MARTHA. It's very fortunate.

JACK. Remember what you were fearing! I prefer to see a rich, substantial man come back than a needy relative.

GUEROY. Do you think I should have received him?

JACK. At any rate, it would have caused us some annoyance.

GUEROY. Well, I cannot help it. That fellow gets on my nerves with his assurance. He always did get on my nerves!

JACK. My opinion is that instead of shutting him off, we should be pleasant to him and lead him back to an appreciation of home and of the solidarity of the family. We should try to make him forget unpleasant memories. He is our next of kin, let's not forget that. And we live in a time when families are only too prone to scatter. Don't you think so, Martha?

MARTHA. Yes, indeed.

JACK. [*To his father.*] That's what you ought to undertake to do with your authority and the respect he has for you.

GUEROY. Oh, as to that, he was very respectful towards me; he behaved exceedingly well.

JACK. My impression is that having been alone so long, he asks nothing better than to be taken back into the fold—and follow your advice.

GUEROY. Etienne!—I could do what I pleased with him! He thinks he is very smart; he is nothing but a child, and I'll lead him by the nose.

JACK. That's what I think.

GUEROY. [*Going to the door.*] Ah! here is the Prefect. [*The PREFECT enters.*]

PREFECT. My dear Gueroy! [*Kissing MARTHA'S hand.*] Madam, my respects! [*To JACK.*] My dear friend! [*To GUEROY.*] You received my note?

GUEROY. Which was an order for me, my dear Prefect.

PREFECT. Too kind of you.

GUEROY. You are going to see my nephew, who felt highly honored by your remembrance.

PREFECT. Yes, we were college chums.

GUEROY. You shall lunch with the Baroness de Lussan and her daughter. You know them, I believe?

PREFECT. I know only the Baroness. I met her formerly, during her splendor.

GUEROY. The poor Baroness! The fact is, she has come down rather suddenly.

PREFECT. The Baron was still living then. She was—it's no slander to mention it—

GUEROY. She is still on the best of terms with him and is waiting impatiently for his return to power, which is not likely to happen in the near future.

PREFECT. One never knows! He is in the chamber again; he makes himself felt; he writes, makes speeches; his last speech was a sort of program! He has a great many supporters in the chamber. We must watch him. [*Seeing the BARONESS enter with her daughter.*] Madam.

BARONESS. Delighted to see you, my dear sir. It is many years since I have had the pleasure. Ah! those were happy times—though you were then only a sub-prefect.

PREFECT. I am charmed to learn that you have taken residence in my district.

BARONESS. Yes. I have settled here while waiting.—Waiting for what? I do not know myself. You are giving us strange politics nowadays, sir! Goodness knows how it will end. Will you allow me to introduce my daughter? [*She turns towards LUCIENNE, who is talking with MARTHA.*] Lucienne!

LUCIENNE. Mamma?

BARONESS. My daughter, sir. [*In a low voice to LUCIENNE.*] Straighthen up; you look like a school girl.

PREFECT. [*To LUCIENNE, very gallantly.*] Mademoiselle.

BARONESS. [*To the PREFECT.*] Excuse her. She is very timid.

PREFECT. [*To GUEROY.*] If we do not lunch at once, I'll ask you to take me through the factory. I have not seen it since you enlarged it.

GUEROY. Oh, we are about to enlarge it again. Come, my dear sir, I'll conduct you. [*MARTHA and the PREFECT follow GUEROY; JACK follows them. The BARONESS detains her daughter.*]

BARONESS. [*To JACK, who waits for them at the door.*] I'll follow you; I'll follow you. [*JACK goes out. To her daughter.*] You are incorrigible! How

many times must I tell you: when you are introduced to a gentleman, stand straight, look into his face, and smile! Look like a young lady, not like a pouting child!

LUCIENNE. Think of marriage.

BARONESS. Yes, you wicked child! Don't you want to go back to Paris? To shine there? To live, in short, as I lived there formerly, in luxury and success! When I remember what I was at your age! Hm!

LUCIENNE. We always have that old quarrel. Do you think that pleasant?

BARONESS. Don't you want to marry?

LUCIENNE. Yes, but not anybody. I'll marry only a man I love.

BARONESS. What is that? Please pay attention to what you are saying.

LUCIENNE. It's impossible to talk seriously with you. You always stop me. All right, I won't tell you anything more.

BARONESS. You do not mean to infer that you have already noticed some one? [*There is silence.*] You have noticed some one?

LUCIENNE. Yes.

BARONESS. Who is it?

LUCIENNE. A young man.

BARONESS. I know him?

LUCIENNE. Yes.

BARONESS. What's his name?

LUCIENNE. I can't tell you.

BARONESS. You have noticed a young man and cannot tell your mother his name?

LUCIENNE. I'll tell you later, when he is in love with me. At present, he does not love me.

BARONESS. You have lost your head.

LUCIENNE. No.

BARONESS. Is it a young man worthy of us? Rich? With a good situation? Tell me that at least.

LUCIENNE. He has a magnificent situation. He is very good looking, very elegant. He is a dream!

BARONESS. [*After thinking.*] The little deputy! André Vareze!

LUCIENNE. [*Rushing into her arms.*] Yes, mamma, yes! I cannot keep my secret any longer!

BARONESS. How long have you loved him?

LUCIENNE. I do not know! I met him yesterday. He was on horseback. He greeted me with a smile. I have been thinking of him the whole day. I love him!

BARONESS. You are absurd!

LUCIENNE. No, mamma. Only I have a will, and you haven't.

BARONESS. [*After a pause.*] Evidently. It would be ideal! [*Lowering her voice.*] But do you not know that he is paying court to Genevieve?

LUCIENNE. I leave that to you. As long as they are not married, there is hope. But you must hurry. Invite him to our house. You must be full of energy, instead of dreaming vague hopes, such as having me marry anybody.

BARONESS. Let me think! Meanwhile, keep still and come. [*The BARONESS and LUCIENNE go out. GENEVIEVE enters.*]

GENEVIEVE. [*Looking through the window.*] A gentleman! [*She leans out.*] It seems to me I know him. [*She watches him.*] Why yes, it's—[*She goes down toward the door and waits. RANSON enters.*]

RANSON. Madam.

GENEVIEVE. Mr. Ranson.—He does not recognize me! He won't recognize me unless I call him Etienne.—Good morning, friend Etienne.

RANSON. It is pretty little Genevieve.



GENEVIEVE. Herself! Kiss me at once.

RANSON. And with pleasure! [*He kisses her on both cheeks.*] Now, let me look at you. Why! it's wonderful!

GENEVIEVE. I have changed, haven't I—since the day you left and lifted me in your arms, yonder, see, at the corner of the path? And you kissed me on both cheeks just as you have done now.

RANSON. That's so. I remember.

GENEVIEVE. And do you remember what you told me when you kissed me?—No?—I did not forget, for it kept me laughing for at least a year every time I thought of it. Then, afterwards, of course, I did not find it so funny.

RANSON. And what did I say to you?

GENEVIEVE. When you put me down, you said: "You are the only decent person in the house!"

RANSON. Would you believe it, that is still my opinion.

GENEVIEVE. Hush!—Now let me look at you.

RANSON. [*Laughing.*] Am I the one who has changed?

GENEVIEVE. Yes, indeed.

RANSON. Tell me I look twice my age.

GENEVIEVE. That depends on your age.

RANSON. I am only forty-two, you know.

GENEVIEVE. [*Laughing.*] Then twice that would be a great deal. Besides, you did not exactly grow older; you have broadened out. You were slender, you know.

RANSON. I! Slender!

GENEVIEVE. Honestly.

RANSON. Hush! It's cruel to tell me that.

GENEVIEVE. But gracious! What's that on your face?

RANSON. That's an assagai thrust. The assagai

is a weapon like a spear or javelin. When it hits you, that's about the result.

GENEVIEVE. What must have happened to you during all these years! You'll tell me all about it, won't you?

RANSON. If you want me to. But you did greater things than I did.

GENEVIEVE. I?

RANSON. Yes, you grew; you became pretty, supple, dainty,—

GENEVIEVE. Enough, enough! But since you are here, you must have made up with uncle?

RANSON. Had we fallen out?

GENEVIEVE. It seemed so.

RANSON. Well, I am to lunch with you.

GENEVIEVE. Good! We'll see each other very often. We are going back to Paris in a week. You, too, of course?

RANSON. Genevieve, you are going to do me a great favor.

GENEVIEVE. Surely. What is it?

RANSON. You are going to affirm to me that you are very happy.

GENEVIEVE. Will that really please you?

RANSON. Really.

GENEVIEVE. I am very happy. And I'll confide in you bye and bye.

RANSON. Begin.

GENEVIEVE. Oh, no!—Later! When I have grown used to you again, to you and to your scar. I feel that I'll end by telling you things that I cannot tell anyone else here, you understand.—I have little opportunity.

RANSON. Yes. They are all egoists—and not of that egoism which is one of the forms of courage, at that.

GENEVIEVE. [*Laughing.*] Certainly.

[*The BARONESS, followed at length by her daughter, enters.*]

BARONESS. [*Advancing.*] My dear Ranson, I'm very glad to hear—[*She offers him her hand.*]

RANSON. Too kind of you, Baroness.

BARONESS. [*Introducing.*] My daughter. Why, where is she? [*She steps back to get her. In a low voice.*] Stand up!

LUCIENNE. Again!

BARONESS. It's the proper thing. [*Taking her by the hand.*] My daughter.

RANSON. Mademoiselle.

PREFECT. [*Entering.*] Ah, here he is! [*Advancing.*] How are you, Ranson?

RANSON. Very well. And yourself?

PREFECT. You can boast that you have given me trouble enough since your arrival.

RANSON. How so?

PREFECT. I had to watch you, to have you shadowed. Didn't you notice that you were shadowed during the last few days?

RANSON. Not at all.

PREFECT. I am informed of your slightest movements. I must admit that you did nothing objectionable. But if I were not your college chum, I'd have you under arrest, most probably, instead of lunching with you.

RANSON. Thanks! But what brought me this honor? The foolish talk there was in the papers about me?

PREFECT. Foolish talk, you call it! You placed the government in a terrible position. There is to be an investigation. The opposition makes use of you to charge the Cabinet with weakness and cow-

ardice in its colonial policy. They accuse it of re-treating before the menace of a negro king—

GUEROY. When shall we get rid of the opposition?

PREFECT. [*To RANSON.*] By the way, do you intend going to Paris?

RANSON. I am in no hurry about it, I assure you. All that does not concern me in the least.

PREFECT. Well, I declare! But, my dear fellow, you must be to-morrow at the disposal of the Secretary of Foreign Affairs at the opening of the session.

RANSON. I?

PREFECT. It was to tell you that myself that I insisted on meeting you this morning.

RANSON. And in case, for one reason or another, I should refuse to go?

PREFECT. I would see myself compelled to have you arrested immediately after luncheon and to forward you to Paris by the method usually employed in such cases.

RANSON. That's what I wanted to know. Do not worry. I'll be in Paris to-morrow.

PREFECT. You will not be surprised if you find that you are traveling with a very nice fellow.—I picked out the best I had.

RANSON. I'll have him carry my baggage.

PREFECT. Now, see here! I am willing to admit that the papers are mistaken and exaggerate things. What's the truth about this African business? You can tell us, can't you?

GUEROY. Yes, yes, Etienne, tell us.

BARONESS. That's it.

RANSON. I am willing, but really I am ashamed to tell such an uninteresting story. I have big yards over there for handling my goods. The surrounding negro tribes come regularly to steal and pillage. We drive them away with clubs and they do not seem

to mind very much. One day, they came in swarms, invaded the yard and tried to set fire to it. We got our guns while palavering. Some of my men are married and the women were beginning to lose their heads, one especially, the wife of my foreman, a Parisian, a pretty blond with pink cheeks, very bright, very amusing. She did not want to leave her husband. A big black fellow raised his assagai against her. We did not want her face spoiled—and our revolvers went off.

LUCIENNE. Good for you.

RANSON. We killed or wounded a dozen of the enemy, the others disappeared, and their king sent an embassy to the governor to complain about us.

GENEVIEVE. And the woman, was she hit?

RANSON. No, I was. I was entitled to that. I am the boss. [*To the PREFECT.*] I have all the necessary affidavits. You may write that to the Secretary.

PREFECT. You'll show them to him yourself. That seems perfectly clear to me.

GUEROY. But, nevertheless—

MARTHA. [*To whom a servant has spoken.*] Gentlemen, lunch is ready.

RANSON. [*To the PREFECT.*] Do tell my uncle that I am not a malefactor. If you do not tell him, he will never believe it.

MARTHA. I take your arm, sir.

GUEROY. [*While the guests are passing out, to RANSON.*] Let there be no misunderstanding between us. Do not imagine that I invite you because you have become rich.

RANSON. What's got into your head?

GUEROY. I invite you because you are my nephew.

RANSON. Certainly, uncle, certainly. Besides, with me, those things do not matter. You are inviting me for numerous reasons which are not very

clear to you: because I am your nephew; because you are glad to see me; because you came very near kicking me out a little while ago, and feel badly about it; because, in bygone days, you gave me good advice which I would not take; and, in short, because it happens so.

## ACT II

[*A parlor at the Gueroy's home in Paris.*]

MARTHA. You are not exaggerating, Mr. Framie; you are sure of what you say?

FRAMIE. Absolutely sure, madam. I have been with the firm for thirty years. I know all the details of the situation. I do not believe that I betray my trust in telling you; on the contrary, I believe I am doing my duty, my whole duty.

MARTHA. Yes, Mr. Framie, you do.

FRAMIE. Your husband, madam, is of that dangerous temperament which makes him play martingale in life and business. Do you know what a martingale is?

MARTHA. No.

FRAMIE. It is the system which consists in doubling up your stake indefinitely. For instance, you play a thousand francs. You lose. Then you play two thousand—and so forth—

MARTHA. Yes, I understand! It is terrible!

FRAMIE. After the small profit we made three years ago—you remember—Mr. Jack began speculating on the side. That was a great mistake. The year had not been good, but we could afford to wait for a better one. There was no cause to worry. Unfortunately, when that good year came, the profits were eaten up beforehand. You see the consequences. So Mr. Gueroy, seeing the factory prosper, never suspected that his son was speculating on his own account. That's the worst of it, because Mr. Gueroy belongs to the old school, to the patient school, and he would have dropped all that.

MARTHA. And to-day?

FRAMIE. To-day, if Mr. Jack brought you back to Paris earlier than usual, it was to face the storm. Now you know how matters stand, madam. Be cool, do not make a scene, and act when the proper time comes. Besides, you have told me that the cousin is to be appealed to. That's an excellent idea. Mr. Etienne came through with flying colors; he must be in good humor. Who got the idea?

MARTHA. My father-in-law.

FRAMIE. Yes, but your husband must have suggested it to him. [*A servant enters.*]

MARTHA. [*Answering the servant.*] Good. Show him in. [*To FRAMIE.*] Stay, it is he.

[*RANSON enters.*]

RANSON. My dear cousin. My dear Mr. Framie.

FRAMIE. Well, Mr. Etienne, you have just had a lively time. My congratulations!

RANSON. Too kind of you, my dear Mr. Framie. [*To MARTHA.*] I found, at the hotel, a charming note from Genevieve, inviting me to tea. I come to excuse myself. I have so many appointments of all kinds that it will be impossible for me—[*GENEVIEVE enters*].

MARTHA. Explain it to her.

GENEVIEVE. Good morning, Etienne.

MARTHA. But we count on you this evening.

RANSON. Yes, my dear cousin, after dinner. I dine with some friends.

MARTHA. Until this evening, then. I have to speak with Mr. Framie, and I leave you.

FRAMIE. I shall see you this evening, Mr. Etienne; madam was kind enough to invite me. [*He goes out with MARTHA.*]



GENEVIEVE. All that is very nice, only I absolutely need you this afternoon. Go and attend to your business and come back.

RANSON. And why do you need me?

GENEVIEVE. To show you to my girl friends.

RANSON. What?

GENEVIEVE. And to a gentleman who wishes to make your acquaintance. You do not seem to suspect that you are very much the rage. The papers speak only of you. Remember what has happened to you during the month. It is a dream! You were called an adventurer on the floor of the Chamber; your immediate arrest was called for; you were detained for a fortnight in a prison, where I went to visit you; and you came out with flying colors. Well, Etienne, when such things happen to a man, he has no right to avoid the admiration of young ladies.

RANSON. I feel like going back to Africa.

GENEVIEVE. Do not do anything foolish, pray. Did you ever see such a savage? You have one success after another, and yet you wear a long face. Don't you amuse yourself in Paris?

RANSON. No.

GENEVIEVE. What more do you want?

RANSON. Not only do I not amuse myself, but I have the impression that everyone, except me, is amusing himself. When I left, ten years ago, I was a vagabond, unworthy of living among serious, decent people and honorable families. To-day, it is the reverse. It seems to me that it is I, the former bohemian, who am a normal individual, and that Paris is populated by vagabonds. I do not know how to speak to men or women. I find stupid those who are considered wittiest, and ignoble—actions which seem perfectly natural. And when I stand before charming young ladies, like you, I feel

awkward and commonplace. Don't you see, if I wanted to say to you something delicate, something difficult, if I wanted to move you, I could not—I assure you that I could not. It is better for me to go.

GENEVIEVE. I'll cure you. You are suffering from misanthropy, and I do not like misanthropes.

RANSON. What a child you are! Do you even know what a misanthrope is?

GENEVIEVE. He is a man who compels you to think—which is a perfect bore. [GUEROY enters.] Don't you think, Mr. Gueroy, that he ought to come back to my tea party?

GUEROY. Assuredly. The more so, that I have to speak to him.

RANSON. To me, Uncle?

GUEROY. Yes, my boy. Jack and I have to speak to you of an idea which concerns you, and which occurred to me some time ago. I think you will like it. [*Seeing JACK enter.*] I told your cousin about it, and he approves of it.

JACK. Entirely.

GUEROY. I did not want to speak to you about it until I knew how your affairs would turn out. It looked rather dark for a while.

RANSON. Did you ever see me worry about it?

GUEROY. No, but we did.—Never mind that.—I have seen you at work now, and I've been able to study your character. You have changed a great deal, I must confess; you have become serious. It is possible now to take an interest in you.

RANSON. Thanks for your good intentions. If on my side I can be agreeable to you, I am quite willing.

GUEROY. It is not a question of being agreeable to me; it is about you, your position, your interest.

RANSON. My interest?

GUEROY. That's it.

RANSON. You puzzle me.

GUEROY. I'll explain to you bye and bye. Just now I haven't time. I am expecting news from the Chamber. I am expecting the Baroness. [*To GENEVIEVE.*] You have not seen her yet, have you?—No?—It's strange!

RANSON. I'll leave you, Uncle. I see that you are very busy.

GUEROY. Yes, be back this afternoon; don't forget.

GENEVIEVE. Try to be here at five o'clock, Etienne. Hurry. [*She accompanies him to the door and comes back.*]

GUEROY. And you did not see Vareze, either?

GENEVIEVE. No, Mr. Gueroy.

GUEROY. What are they doing? What are they doing? I asked them to keep me informed hourly. We have been in the midst of a Cabinet crisis for three days. That cannot last! How can they fail to realize the turmoil which it causes! [*To JACK.*] Did you go to the Chamber?

JACK. What for?

GUEROY. To obtain information—advance information! I wonder why I am the only one who realizes the importance of the event?

JACK. It is only politics! What has it to do with us?

GUEROY. You are hopeless! How was the Cabinet upset? Through an investigation concerning our colonial policy. Who caused the investigation? A member of our family, my nephew, your cousin! It was printed in the papers. So, we are responsible in a way. We must, perforce, be on very good terms

with the next Cabinet, since we were instrumental in upsetting the preceding one.

JACK. That is so.

GUEROY. So, you understand, I am eager to get the news. [ANDRÉ enters.] Well?

ANDRÉ. [Shaking hands with JACK and GUEROY.] Well, the rumor is being confirmed that Courtray will be intrusted with the selection of the Cabinet.

GUEROY. Courtray! Incredible! The Baroness was right, after all! She made a rush for Paris at the very beginning of the crises. So much the better! So much the better! We know Courtray. The Baroness brought him to our house.—And what do they think about it in the Chamber?

ANDRÉ. They do not quite know.

GUEROY. How do you feel about it?

ANDRÉ. I cannot tell, having supported the former Cabinet.

GUEROY. You must now support the new one.

ANDRÉ. I will, if it lasts long enough. [Going to GENEVIEVE he speaks in a low voice.] My dear Genevieve.

GENEVIEVE. Good morning, André. So you have come at last! What has become of you during these last days?

ANDRÉ. I haven't had a minute. I made two speeches. You were to come to hear them. Have you, at least, read them?

GENEVIEVE. Yes, I have read them.

ANDRÉ. And how did you like them?

GUEROY. Excellent! I think they were excellent!

ANDRÉ. Thank you! [Turning to GUEROY.] But, speaking of speeches, you must introduce me to Mr. Ranson. I must remove any misunderstanding that may exist between us. When I left Grenoble, I did not know that he was a relative of yours. On the

next day, during the session, the incident was brought up. A member of the opposition attacked the government for its failure to back our countrymen in foreign lands. Always the same old story! I took the floor and reviled the adventurers who bring shame upon the good name of France and cause disorder in our colonies. I was cheered; I lost my head and called for the arrest of Etienne Ranson.—I did not know a thing about the affair, but then politics is politics, don't you know? Then I learned that he was your cousin. Unfortunately, it was too late.

GENEVIEVE. And poor Etienne was in prison.

ANDRÉ. It's all right now. He gave perfect proofs to the commission that he had acted fully within his rights. This was unanimously conceded. Mr. Ranson was liberated. He cannot harbor any resentment towards me.

GUEROY. He does not dream of it.

GENEVIEVE. Besides, I'll take care of that.

[*The BARONESS and LUCIENNE enter.*]

BARONESS. I am late! What a day! [*She shakes hands with the men and then with GENEVIEVE.*] Good morning! Good morning! Good morning, my dear! [*LUCIENNE and GENEVIEVE kiss each other.*]

LUCIENNE. Good morning, Genevieve! Good morning, Mr. André! We heard you the other day.

ANDRÉ. You are much too kind!

LUCIENNE. How well you spoke! That was real eloquence! Wasn't it, mamma?

BARONESS. I have known for a long time that Mr. Vारेze is eloquent.

LUCIENNE. I knew it, too, but I think that this time he surpassed himself.

ANDRÉ. I am overwhelmed!

LUCIENNE. Oh, I say what I think!

GUEROY. [*To the BARONESS.*] Of course, you have seen Courtray?

BARONESS. Yes, I have just left him; we both just left him, the little one and I.

LUCIENNE. My god-father is mighty glad!

BARONESS. Now she talks! No, he is not glad, but he is ready to do his duty.

GUEROY. In short—

BARONESS. Courtray is now with the President. I need not tell you how excited I am.

ANDRÉ. You will succeed, my dear Baroness; do not doubt it.

BARONESS. I hope so! But as long as nothing is decided.—Oh! What long years I have been waiting! My patience was almost exhausted. I thought I should be compelled to keep Lucienne in the provinces and to remain there myself. Courtray is our protector; a very old friend, and my daughter's god-father. I do not have to conceal that.

GUEROY. Why should you conceal it?

BARONESS. I mention it now because I know what has been said, and the slanders that have been circulated about me.

GUEROY. All that has been forgotten, Baroness.

BARONESS. Nevertheless, I am on my guard! I haven't only friends, unfortunately!

ANDRÉ. When will you know the final results?

BARONESS. Not before this evening. [*To GUEROY.*] Oh! I forgot to tell you—you will think me very indiscreet. I told Courtray that I should spend the evening at your house with a few friends, and that he was to send me word here. But he said that he would be glad to see you again and—he will come himself.

GUEROY. That's a pleasure! My dear Baroness, you are at home here, and we are greatly flattered.

JACK. Indeed, we are.

GENEVIEVE. [*To the BARONESS.*] Will you take a cup of tea, my dear madam?

BARONESS. With pleasure.

GENEVIEVE. We'll make it in the hall. Come and help me, Mr. Varese. Are you coming, Lucienne?

LUCIENNE. Yes, Genevieve, yes. [*As GENEVIEVE and ANDRÉ go out, she says, in a low voice, to her mother.*] They get on my nerves, both of them; they exasperate me.

BARONESS. Hush, pray!

LUCIENNE. If you let them marry, I'll do something rash. Ah, mother, when I look at André, I feel like running up to him and kissing him.

BARONESS. Hush! Your lack of respect towards me cannot be tolerated, even in our set! That's enough, kiss me! Come. [*Seeing RANSON enter.*] Ah! Ranson! Delighted to see you.

RANSON. My dear Baroness! Mademoiselle. Have you been long in Paris?

BARONESS. We reached here almost as soon as you did.

LUCIENNE. We were in the Chamber of Deputies on the day you were flayed. You were not there, were you?

RANSON. No, I was not. And was it interesting?

LUCIENNE. Very dramatic. And how did it feel to be flayed?

RANSON. I was scarcely aware of it.

LUCIENNE. And when they removed the stigma and cleared you entirely, you must have been glad.

RANSON. I laughed till I almost cried.

BARONESS. Good-bye, Gueroy.

GUEROY. I'll see you again, I hope?

BARONESS. No, I am going to take a cup of tea and then—it's frightful what I have to do this afternoon. Good-bye, friends.

RANSON. [*To LUCIENNE.*] Mademoiselle. [*The BARONESS and LUCIENNE go out.*]

JACK. [*Answering RANSON.*] Father will explain to you better than I could.

RANSON. Uncle, you puzzled me greatly a little while ago. I am ready to listen to you.

GUEROY. Hm! I think you'll be rather pleased with what I am going to propose to you.

RANSON. I think so, too,—on faith.

GUEROY. Ah! In the first place, let there be no misunderstanding. Sit down. I'll begin by telling you that I do not care a rap, and I suppose that Jack does not care either, whether you accept or not what I am going to propose. You are perfectly free. I do not wish to influence you. I'll make you a proposition and I want you to answer yes or no.

RANSON. That's the way I like to answer.

JACK. But, father—

GUEROY. No, no, I do not wish to seem to force Etienne's hand and have him throw it up to me some day.

JACK. You must at least tell him the motives which guided us.

GUEROY. Of course.

JACK. We wish to wipe out former dissensions and bring the family closer together.

GUEROY. That's it.

JACK. And give back to Etienne a social position which he has always disdained, but which he must have now that he is going to live in Paris.

GUEROY. Well said! [*With a friendly tap on RANSON'S shoulder.*] You are too intelligent not to



understand that that is your weak point. For some reason or another, people are still prejudiced against you. Your name was mixed in a scandal. You have been in prison. Oh! I do not say that it is a dishonor—especially when one is innocent.

RANSON. Why! I am as popular as if I had committed a crime.

GUEROY. Popularity is one thing; respectability is another. And that's what I want you to have now. We are to see one another oftener. I shall introduce you this evening to Courtray, the next head of the Cabinet. Every one knows that you are my nephew; so your unquestioned respectability has become imperative. Now, respectability, in Paris as elsewhere, is environment, family, people who vouch for you.

RANSON. Your reasoning is all right and—

GUEROY. You know our factory in Grenoble?

RANSON. Yes.

GUEROY. It is one of the oldest in France and one of the most solid. I founded it. It is most prosperous.

RANSON. Barring a little disorder and slackness in the management, which I noticed on passing through.

GUEROY. Disorder! Where did you see disorder? You are not going to begin to give me advice?

RANSON. [*Laughing.*] No, Uncle, No!

GUEROY. When I tell you that our factory is prosperous, you can believe me.

RANSON. I do believe you.

GUEROY. Well, as you know, we both wish, Jack and I, to enlarge it still more, and to that effect, make use of large capital which is offered us from all sides. I believe I understood that you had brought back a round million.

RANSON. Yes, just about.

GUEROY. My offer, our offer, is for you to put in part, or even, if you can, the whole of this capital.

RANSON. I, uncle?

GUEROY. Yes, my dear fellow, you. And I can say that it is a fine opportunity. In this way, when anyone questions me with a more or less quizzical smile concerning the source of your fortune, I'll have but one word to say: "My nephew has large investments in my factory!"—That will be enough, I give you my word; and you will be able to present yourself anywhere. Well, are you satisfied?

RANSON. I am more than satisfied, uncle; I am touched. It proves that you no longer have the bad opinion of me that you had in the past.

GUEROY. I admit that.

RANSON. But I'll be as frank and as square as you were. I thank you heartily, but I do not accept.

GUEROY. What's that you say?

JACK. And why do you not accept?

RANSON. For two reasons.

GUEROY. I beg of you, do not tell me. I do not care to know them. What do I care? I am trying to get you out of the equivocal position in which you are floundering. You are not willing; that's your business. Good-bye.

RANSON. Do not get ruffled, uncle.

JACK. He is right. Don't. We might, though—

GUEROY. No fuss! No fuss! Etienne must not think that we need his money. I do not care a rap about his money! Do you hear! Not a rap!

JACK. But—

GUEROY. Enough! Enough!

JACK. If Etienne had reasons for refusing, he might as well tell us. What harm is there in that?

[*Going to ETIENNE.*] Come, Etienne, what are your reasons? They must be excellent, but we may discuss them. There are two, you say? What are they?

RANSON. The first is that I shall never invest a large capital in a business of which I am not absolute master.

GUEROY. Never! I am the master. Do you pretend to impose your conditions?

RANSON. I have no pretensions whatsoever, uncle.

JACK. Why get angry, father? [*To RANSON.*] Go on. As to that, we could come to an understanding. What is your second reason?

RANSON. The second reason is that I intend to leave France.

GUEROY. A pleasant trip to you.

RANSON. [*Changing his tone.*] And then, there is a third one. And it is that under all this there is something that I do not understand. You do not seem to agree. Upon my word, it seems as if one of you was concealing something from me.

GUEROY. What's that?

RANSON. You are not telling me frankly, face to face, what you are expecting of me. Come, uncle, you cannot make me believe that you were suddenly overcome by a profound affection for me. [*To JACK.*] And you did not come to love me as a brother in a few days. Then what? One of you has a purpose.—It cannot be otherwise. Well, go on,—speak,—do not be afraid to tell your little tale before me.—I am one of the family.

GUEROY. We have no little tale to tell. Remember that! And that is enough. Let's stop this.

RANSON. [*Going to JACK, who is very nervous.*] Then it's you who have something to say? Yes, it must be you. Ah, if you knew how I love frank-

ness and clearness in business and in life, you would not hesitate; you would not look at your father sideways as if you were afraid of him.

GUEROY. [*Going close to them.*] What does this mean? Jack has no more secrets or purpose than I have.

RANSON. [*Pushing GUEROY away from JACK.*] You won't tell me?

GUEROY. He has nothing to tell you.

RANSON. [*Again shoving GUEROY.*] No? Well, I'll go! Good-bye!

GUEROY. Good-bye.

JACK. [*With a motion towards RANSON.*] Etienne!

RANSON. [*Stopping.*] What? [*They stand looking at each other. MARTHA appears at the door.*]

GUEROY. [*Catching the look, he speaks violently.*] See here! Are you hiding anything from me?

JACK. No, father, nothing—nothing.—You are mistaken.

MARTHA. [*Who has heard the last two speeches.*] Etienne, do not go! Yes, father, yes, they conceal the truth from you! They conceal everything!

GUEROY. Oh!

JACK. [*Maddened.*] Martha, I forbid you!—What do you know? You do not know anything! I forbid you!

MARTHA. We are lost if we have not the courage to confess everything to father and to Etienne.—We must!—Let me—I cannot live any longer in lies and agony—I cannot stand it! [*She struggles in JACK'S arms.*]

RANSON. [*Going to JACK.*] Let her speak, can't you! If you have an abscess, lance it—instead of shivering with fear and fever. [*He takes MARTHA'S hand.*] Go on, Martha, dear, speak. Don't let any-

thing hold you back. You are a good woman! And that's where you find women—in great circumstances, when there is need of boldness and bravery! And that's how they save us! Go on, Martha, go on.

GUEROY. [*Shaking JACK.*] You have lost money?—On the Exchange?

JACK. Father!

GUEROY. Much?—Ail?—But when?

JACK. Listen.

GUEROY. [*Taking hold of him again.*] And I knew nothing of it! It is criminal to have concealed such a situation from me!

RANSON. [*Separating them.*] Damnation, uncle! Don't shake him like that! [*To JACK.*] Are you bankrupt,—yes or no?

JACK. I am on the brink of bankruptcy! In the last two years I have lost enormously! To-day, I am hounded by creditors for about eight hundred thousand francs!—They will levy on the factory.—It's impossible to find money anywhere. You are the only one who may save us!

MARTHA. [*To GUEROY.*] I beg of you, father, let us leave them alone.

RANSON. [*To JACK.*] Yes!—What you ask is possible, barely possible! It will depend.

GUEROY. We must first have an explanation, Jack and I.

JACK. [*To RANSON.*] State your terms.—I'll accept them.

RANSON. Yes.—I can straighten things out. It will be hard, but I can do it!—Only, let there be no misunderstanding. If I take the place of your creditors, there is only the factory to repay me.—And it will require a tremendous effort on my part before it repays me eight hundred thousand francs. It's

my whole life, all I possess, all I have earned in ten years, that I'll have to stake! It's a very serious proposition. I cannot do a thing like that just because of my friendship to you! I have great sympathy for your wife, also; but a man does not change his whole life out of sympathy for anyone. There must be a more powerful, a deeper reason.—Well—

JACK. Tell us! Speak!

RANSON. [*Abruptly.*] Leave me alone with Martha. I cannot tell you—neither you nor your father.—Yes, leave me; go!

GUEROY. [*Leading his son away.*] Come, come, let me find out everything; [*They go out.*]

MARTHA. I am listening, Etienne.

RANSON. [*Walking back and forth while MARTHA follows him with her eyes.*] I am very much disturbed, Martha. I do not know how to explain to you. And yet, I must—I must tell you what has occurred within me since my return to France—otherwise, you would take me for a lunatic. You do not understand? You see, Martha, in a life such as I have led, dealing with chance and adventure, the body hardens, the character becomes bitter, the whole being is stirred and re-cast—but, on the other hand, it seems that amidst all those ruins, the heart is not touched. It is like the lone child who escaped the massacre. And so—you'll understand now—I love Genevieve.

MARTHA. You, Etienne, you love—Oh!

RANSON. Yes, yes, yes! When I met again, in all her glory, the girl I had left so frail and so little, I felt my rudeness, my greed, even that longing for revenge that had carried me so far, melt away.—I had often suffered before, but in a gross and simple way, as an animal suffers from hunger and cold. Now

I realize that I am still capable of suffering like a civilized man! I love her, Martha; I love her! So what I am going to tell may seem very harsh, very cruel to you, but we must neither lie nor deceive one another. Frankness causes pain sometimes, but lies create disaster. Well, then, I do not have to ask you for Genevieve's hand, because you can no more give it to me than I can take it by force; but if I see that, some day, I may marry her, you will have my last penny and my utmost energy to get you out of trouble! If not—you won't!

MARTHA. What a blessing it would be for all of us! But, it is possible, I feel—I have a presentiment—that Genevieve may some day be your wife!

RANSON. I have a faint suspicion. She gave me to understand several times—that—that she had noticed some one. Do you know about this? Is it a woman's love against which everything crumbles, or a simple girlish love, a fancy rather than a love?

MARTHA. That's it, Etienne, that's it—yes, a fancy.

RANSON. And who is he? Is he young—very young?

MARTHA. He must be about thirty—but—no, she does not love him; she cannot love him! If she believes that, she deceives herself—Genevieve is a modern young woman, ironical and lucid. Let us hope, Etienne; let us hope.

RANSON. And then, I may be mistaken, but it seems to me that I am not a commonplace, ordinary being to her. She looks at me with eyes that are mocking, yes, mocking, but glistening at the same time. I swear to you, Martha, that she does not look upon me as an old dotard! She seems to be conscious of the sort of fascination she has over me,

and I feel sometimes that she takes pleasure in thrilling me with a smile. I cannot be mistaken in that. I cannot!

MARTHA. [*Shaking hands with him.*] No, you cannot be mistaken. Oh! Etienne! It's a long time since I have felt so relieved. I'll do the best I can. I'll question her this evening, if the occasion arises. [*FRAMIE enters.*]

FRAMIE. [*Going to MARTHA.*] Come, madam, please. Mr. Gueroy is making a scene with his son. That won't help matters.

MARTHA. I am going! I am going! [*To RANSON.*] Wait for me! Jack needs me, but I'll come back. You'll wait for me?

RANSON. Yes. [*GENEVIEVE and ANDRÉ enter as MARTHA goes.*]

GENEVIEVE. Etienne, I must introduce to you Mr. André Vareze.

ANDRÉ. I am delighted to see you, sir. I was just expressing my deep regrets over the purely political incidents which have estranged us for an instant.

RANSON. [*Surprised.*] What incidents?

GENEVIEVE. Don't you remember? Mr. Vareze, deputy? Deputy from Grenoble. It was he who called for your arrest.

RANSON. Ah, so it is! Sir, delighted. [*He offers his hand.*]

ANDRÉ. Believe me when I tell you how deeply I regret—

RANSON. The regret is mine, sir.

ANDRÉ. France needs bold men like you. I hope that we shall see more of each other.

RANSON. You are too kind, sir.

ANDRÉ. In the colonies as elsewhere, what we lack most is initiative. Good-bye, sir, till this evening.



I am very glad that we are friends. [*He offers his hand.*]

GENEVIEVE. [*Accompanying him to the door.*]  
Until this evening.

ANDRÉ. Until this evening. [*He goes out.*]

GENEVIEVE. Now that we are alone, tell me your opinion about him.

RANSON. Him? Whom?

GENEVIEVE. André—André Vazeze.

RANSON. [*Looking hard.*] Ah!

GENEVIEVE. I will not go so far as to tell you that I would refuse him if you did not like him. But really, I should be very sorry. I want you to like him, so that you may become good friends. Answer me:—how do you like him?

RANSON. Very much. Very much, indeed.

GENEVIEVE. I am so glad.

RANSON. He is even good looking.

GENEVIEVE. Yes—and I assure you that he is quite brilliant—not a bit stupid. Oh, I am so glad you like him, Etienne. You cannot imagine how grieved I should have been if he had produced a bad impression.

RANSON. Does your sister know about this?

GENEVIEVE. She may suspect it, but vaguely. You are the first to whom I told. Isn't that nice?

RANSON. You are delightful, Genevieve. Tell me—no—why should I ask you that? A girl like you does not make up her mind without having looked into the depth of her heart—without being quite sure that she loves.

GENEVIEVE. [*Gravely.*] Yes, Etienne, I love him.

RANSON. He is good looking! Have you known him long?

GENEVIEVE. Only since springtime. Mr. Gueroy

was a friend of his father, who died. His mother is dead also. He is alone, as I am. I do not know why I feel such emotion while telling you all this.

RANSON. You did right in telling me, Genevieve.

GENEVIEVE. I am sure you have a great affection for me.

RANSON. A great affection—yes, Genevieve.

GENEVIEVE. How strange! When I announced my marriage to you I expected that you would kiss me on both cheeks as you did when you met me again. And instead of that you have become grave, like a serious old brother.

RANSON. I did not mean to.

GENEVIEVE. Why aren't you as cheerful as you were when you came back from yonder?

RANSON. That will come back.

GENEVIEVE. Then kiss me on both cheeks.

RANSON. [*Kissing her.*] Yes, Genevieve. [*MARTHA enters.*]

MARTHA. Jack wishes to speak to you, Etienne.

GENEVIEVE. Until this evening. [*She leaves, smiling at RANSON.*]

RANSON. No, Martha. It's all over. I am sorry I gave you some hope a little while ago. I am going. You shall not see me again.

MARTHA. What has happened?

RANSON. I have seen Genevieve. She is in love. Her life is settled. And she confessed that to me with her smiling frankness, as she would to an older brother, without seeing my collapse, without suspecting my suffering! I cannot struggle! No, no, what can I do with that worn body of mine, with my matter of fact mind, against youth and good looks! And then she is right to give herself to a young man. So much the worse for me! When one has left his country, his family—when one has disowned even his

childhood memories, as I did—he should never come back. Oh! This return, this frightful return! Good-bye, Martha, good-bye!

MARTHA. [*Beseechingly.*] Wait, Etienne, wait! Perhaps you are mistaken. Give me time—let me speak to Genevieve. She does not know the situation. Poor girl, poor girl! She does not know that her own fortune goes with ours.

RANSON. Don't speak of that! I'll have no arrangement of that kind. Do you see me going to Genevieve with my strength and my fortune and saying to her: "Marry me, or it is ruin and misery for you"? Could I do that? It would be a crime to show such a brutal picture of life to the child.

MARTHA. Why do you refuse to see Jack? You may at least talk to him.

RANSON. No! Enough calculations! Enough business! Enough money talk! If Jack is beaten, later, if he falls too low—I shall not forget that we are kin and shall give him a helping hand. But—give him now, for nothing, my life and my fortune—I cannot do it. There are not between us the great memories, the sacred bonds which require this sacrifice.

MARTHA. [*Sobbing, her head in her hands.*] Then we are lost! We are lost—lost!

RANSON. You see—we are so little related, so far from being intimate friends, even, that we are already far apart. You think of yourselves only, and I think only of myself. Good-bye, Martha. Ascend your Calvary—I'll ascend mine.

### ACT III

[*A corner of the hall in the Paris house of the GUEROYS. A parlor is seen adjoining. At the rising of the curtain the company is assembled in several groups: GUEROY, the BARONESS and LUCIENNE; the two MISSES SABLIER, MR. SABLIER and MME. SABLIER; MARTHA and MR. DAMBLEUR; two ladies, a gentleman, ANDRÉ, GENEVIEVE and FRAMIE; COURTRAY is a silent character who is playing bridge with two gentlemen and one lady in the parlor.*]

GUEROY. [*In the parlor.*] Fine play, sir!

SABLIER. [*In the hall.*] What I admire is to see Mr. Courtray spend his evening quietly at the house of a friend on the eve of his becoming head of the Cabinet, and so, you might say, the master of France.

BARONESS. That's characteristic of him. The public does not know him. He is a much simpler man than people believe.

DAMBLEUR. Everyone is awaiting the Courtray Cabinet.

BARONESS. I would not be surprised if it were to be announced to-morrow evening. There was no time lost this afternoon. What a day!

DAMBLEUR. It seems very easy to select this Cabinet.

BARONESS. Not as easy as you think. Formerly when Cabinets lasted only a few weeks, any one would do. Nowadays, when there is a chance of remaining in power for a long time, we must have competent men.

GUEROY. [*Coming to the hall.*] The fact is that we manufacturers are thirsting for stability in the Cabinet—if I may be allowed this bold metaphor.

BARONESS. You spoke as they do on the floor of the Chamber; there is no harm in that.

LUCIENNE. [*In a group composed of the two MISSES SABLIER and another woman, to JULIETTE SABLIER.*] What, Juliette, you do not know my god-father?

JULIETTE. I know him by reputation, of course, but that's all. You see, I have never attended a session.

SUZANNE. Introduce us to Mr. Courtray, will you, Lucienne?

LUCIENNE. Do you want me to?

JULIETTE. I should say! The head of the Cabinet!

LUCIENNE. Come along. [*She leads them towards the card table.*]

GUEROY. [*Motioning to FRAMIE.*] Framie?

FRAMIE. Mr. Gueroy?

GUEROY. Where is my son? I have been looking for him everywhere.

FRAMIE. I believe he went up to his study to telephone.

GUEROY. Go and tell him that Courtray has been here for a quarter of an hour, and ask him to come down instantly. It is ridiculous that he should not be here to receive his guests—that one, especially.

FRAMIE. Yes, Mr. Gueroy. [*He goes out.*]

BARONESS. [*In the center of the group, to VAREZE.*] We may depend on you?

VAREZE. I hope you do not doubt it.

DAMBLEUR. Then, Baroness, tell us the names.

BARONESS. Impossible. I do not know anything.

DAMBLEUR. Tell us at least who is at the treasury? That's the chief point.

BARONESS. I can't very well. Besides, I do not know.

MME. SABLIER. No, my dear, no. That cannot be so!

BARONESS. [*Giving in.*] Saperbois.

A GENTLEMAN. Good! Excellent!

BARONESS. Attorney General, Marmier.

GENTLEMAN. Fine.

BARONESS. Foreign Affairs, Lapouce. General Brassel has the War Portfolio—I name only those who are sure. And yet, there may be some changes any minute.

MARTHA. [*To GUEROY in a corner.*] He must be telephoning to one of his friends. But I beg of you, father, I beseech you, do not talk again to Jack as you did before lunch. He was desperate! Oh, this is frightful!

GUEROY. I cannot forgive him. He deceived me—me, who have the moral, if not the material, responsibility of our house! He humiliated me before Ranson, my nephew! It looked as if I wanted to trick him—to deceive him.

MARTHA. Jack is punished enough, I assure you.

GUEROY. This is no time to pity him! We must avoid total disaster. How are we to do it? I do not know yet, and I cannot attend to it this evening. But to-morrow morning I'll have a final explanation with Jack! Ah! Here he is.

JACK. Has Courtray come?

GUEROY. Yes, he is playing bridge.

JACK. [*Seeing him.*] Ah! [*He goes towards him. COURTRAY rises and shakes hands.*]

MARTHA. [*To GUEROY.*] Come, father. [*They*

go towards COURTRAY. *The guests have withdrawn to the parlor.*]

FRAMIE. [*He enters, much agitated, and says to GENEVIEVE.*] Miss Genevieve—may I say a word to you? At once?

GENEVIEVE. Certainly. [*Looking at him.*] What has happened?

FRAMIE. I believe you have been informed of—

GENEVIEVE. [*Quietly.*] Yes, Mr. Framie, I know, —I know the truth, the whole truth. And I am not losing my head.

FRAMIE. Yes, you are a level headed, energetic person. I judged you long ago. That's why I come to you. Now, mind what I say. This afternoon, after your cousin had left, Mr. Jack applied to a banker. He applied in vain, I know. When he came back, there was another scene with his father—then, we talked for a few minutes. His forehead was wet with perspiration, his lips dry, his face was twitching, which shows that he could no longer control himself. And a little while ago, when I entered his study, he had just written to his wife.—I am sure of that.

GENEVIEVE. Written to his wife—now—how do you know?

FRAMIE. He had his hand over the envelope, as if to hide it; then, on learning that his father was calling for him, he arose hurriedly and put the envelope to the right among other papers. But I was watching and I had time to read Mme. Gueroy's name. Now, Miss Genevieve, I give you my word that it is vital that your sister should not receive that letter—too late! And that she must know the contents, whatever they may be, before the end of the evening.

GENEVIEVE. Oh! I understand! But what am I to do?

FRAMIE. You must go and take the letter from Mr. Jack's desk and give it to his wife, since it is addressed to her. You are the only one that can do it, Miss Genevieve.

GENEVIEVE. I, Mr. Framie? I—search Jack's papers!

FRAMIE. Yes! And I give you my word that you have no right to hesitate. If you knew how quickly these money dramas end! I have seen several. It's always the same thing! There are signs that announce them as lightning announces the storm. There's lightning in this house now. Let's try to prevent the climax.

GENEVIEVE. You are right. I'll go! You stay here.

FRAMIE. You do not need me any more. As soon as Mme. Gueroy reads the letter, she'll know what to do. At any time you'll find me in the next parlor. [*He enters the parlor, while GENEVIEVE goes up stairs. The guests stroll in from the parlor.*]

LUCIENNE. [*To ANDRÉ.*] You heard what my godfather said. I hope you are going to support him vigorously.

ANDRÉ. [*Laughing.*] I promised him to do so, and I promise it to you, mademoiselle.

LUCIENNE. He is a wonderful man.

ANDRÉ. Certainly, he is a man of wonderful capacity.

LUCIENNE. He has only one fault, and it is scarcely for me to blame him: he does everything I want.

ANDRÉ. I am convinced that you give him only good advice.



LUCIENNE. Oh, we do not intend to mix in politics, neither mother nor I. We'll be satisfied with recommending our friends, getting good berths for them and attending to their future.

ANDRÉ. But that's politics! That's all there is to it.

LUCIENNE. [*After a pause.*] Mother is very much interested in you.

ANDRÉ. Your mother does me a great honor.

LUCIENNE. Yes, sir! She told me the other day, after hearing your speech: "That young man would make a good Secretary of Foreign Affairs!"

ANDRÉ. She is too kind.

LUCIENNE. Why should you not be Secretary one of these days?

ANDRÉ. One never knows.

LUCIENNE. I hope that we shall see you oftener, now that we live in Paris?

ANDRÉ. I am overwhelmed by your kindness, mademoiselle.

LUCIENNE. It is quite natural. In the first place, there is a rumor that you are going to marry one of my good friends, my best friend, I may say, and that is enough to make us wish, mother and me, to become more intimate with you. You are going to marry Genevieve, are you not?

ANDRÉ. It's not official yet, mademoiselle; therefore, you will understand the feeling which prevents me from answering in a precise manner.

LUCIENNE. Excuse me! I was not prying into your secrets.

ANDRÉ. It's not a secret.

LUCIENNE. A mystery, then?

ANDRÉ. A very small mystery, which will not last long.

LUCIENNE. I'll congratulate you anyhow. Will

you do us the favor of coming to dinner next Sunday at my godfather's?

ANDRÉ. At Mr. Courtray's! Why—

LUCIENNE. He has not invited you. That's what you mean. He will. And meanwhile I believe that I am authorized to do so in his stead without fear of its being disagreeable to him. Until Sunday, then.

ANDRÉ. Until Sunday, mademoiselle.

LUCIENNE. I'll tell mamma. [*She goes towards her mother, after smiling at ANDRÉ.*]

BARONESS. Lucienne.

LUCIENNE. Mamma?

BARONESS. You have been in that corner, talking to this young man for a quarter of an hour. Is that proper?

LUCIENNE. I invited him to dinner next Sunday.

BARONESS. You! What audacity! That's too much!

LUCIENNE. The end justifies the means. There was nothing shocking in that. What I find shocking is that you had not already done so. I have asked you often enough.

BARONESS. [*Leading her away.*] You'll do me the favor not to leave my side this evening.

[*GENEVIEVE enters and draws near MARTHA.*]

GENEVIEVE. Let us step aside. Come this way.

MARTHA. What is it?

GENEVIEVE. Let us be calm. You know, we promised each other to be calm and courageous,—to be united;—we must look danger in the face. Jack has just written you a letter.

MARTHA. A letter to me! To me! When? Is that it? Give it to me! Where did you find this letter?

GENEVIEVE. On his desk. I went to look for it

on Mr. Framie's advice. I did right, I am sure. Do not tremble like that. Do you want me to open it for you?

MARTHA. Thank you. My eyes are blurred—I cannot see. Why did Jack write to me? [*While unsealing the letter.*] Where is Jack now? I do not see him.

GENEVIEVE. With his father—over there—seated by Mr. Courtray.

MARTHA. Good! And what does he say? Let me see—what has he to say to me? “My love, my poor Martha,—I am going to kill myself!” [*She totters.*]

GENEVIEVE. [*Reading.*] Oh!

MARTHA. [*Wishing to go.*] Leave me! Leave me!

GENEVIEVE. [*Making her sit down.*] Hush, Martha, hush! Let no one suspect. Come, dear, now that we know what he wanted to do, we'll be able to prevent him.

MARTHA. Horrible!

GENEVIEVE. They are looking at us. Let's pretend we are chatting. You are so pale. In heaven's name, Martha, try to control yourself. Let's hide this letter. Give it to me. [*She takes it and puts it into her pocket.*]

MARTHA. And he was going to—going to—how horrible!

GENEVIEVE. Now, do not keep your mind on that and worry about it;—it will not be.

MARTHA. Not this evening—but tomorrow—later! To what depth of despair he must have fallen to have thought of suicide. He must have reached the last extremity—have tried everything and failed! His cousin was his last hope.—Oh! we are lost indeed.

GENEVIEVE. What cousin? Etienne?

MARTHA. Yes.—Jack asked him for help.—He refused.

GENEVIEVE. He could help him?

MARTHA. Yes, indeed.

GENEVIEVE. You are sure of that?

MARTHA. Perfectly sure.

GENEVIEVE. Why did he refuse?

MARTHA. Because—[*She stops.*] He did not give his reasons.

GENEVIEVE. You did not know how to manage—impossible.—Wait!

MARTHA. What are you going to do?

GENEVIEVE. I am going to send him a note.

MARTHA. You!

GENEVIEVE. Yes. I had no financial discussions with him—we are very good friends.—I can ask him to call here this evening—tell him I must speak to him—

MARTHA. No, do not do that!—You—a young lady—do you not understand?—And, besides, he will not come.

GENEVIEVE. Have you quarreled?

MARTHA. No.

GENEVIEVE. Then he will come. Besides, there is nothing else to do.—I must try—

MARTHA. [*Muttering.*] Perhaps. But if he comes, what shall you say to him?

GENEVIEVE. I do not know. I'll see—I'll find something. I must dare, now! What time is it? Half-past ten. He must be with his friends yet. I'll send word by the chauffeur. Meanwhile, stay with Jack. Prevent him from going up-stairs. If he finds out that the letter is gone, it will complicate everything. Oh! He is coming for you.—Your face is calm—all right! [*She goes out.*]

JACK. [*Coming to MARTHA.*] The Baroness is asking for you.

MARTHA. [*Stopping.*] Did you speak with your father since dinner?

JACK. No, did you?

MARTHA. Yes, for an instant. He told me you would have a long conversation to-morrow.

JACK. So much the better—besides, I have found a way—a solution—which will make him more conciliatory, I hope.

MARTHA. Ah!

JACK. And—I have examined the situation thoroughly.—It is not as serious as I thought. Do not worry.

MARTHA. Oh, I am not worrying.

JACK. Where did Genevieve go?

MARTHA. I asked her to go up to Edward's room; he was awake.

JACK. He is not ill?

MARTHA. No, but he seemed a little restless this evening. So, I asked Genevieve—[*She stops, choking with emotion.*]

JACK. It will be all right.

MARTHA. [*Mastering herself.*] I hope so.

JACK. Are you coming? [*He takes a few steps. MARTHA stays back and sees GENEVIEVE entering.*]

GENEVIEVE. [*In a low voice.*] It's done. The motor has gone.

[*MARTHA follows JACK. ANDRÉ enters, laughing.*]

ANDRÉ. Your little friend is very funny.

GENEVIEVE. Who?

ANDRÉ. Mademoiselle de Lussan.

GENEVIEVE. Yes, she is. Do you like her?

ANDRÉ. How can I like any other woman?

GENEVIEVE. And what did she tell you that was so funny?

ANDRÉ. I do not remember. It was the way in which it was said.—Between ourselves, I do not believe that she is quite balanced. She is the intermediate girl, between yesterday and to-morrow.

GENEVIEVE. Then, I am the girl of yesterday.

ANDRÉ. No, Genevieve, no—you are the dateless girl—the girl as she was yesterday—as she is to-day—as she will be tomorrow, let us hope. You have accomplished the miracle of remaining well balanced with an ardent temperament and an original mind. That is not why I love you, but it is why I trust my life to you with absolute security.

GENEVIEVE. I like you immensely, André, when you tell me those things. And it seems to me that, this evening, I love you more than usual; with a deeper feeling; more seriously.

ANDRÉ. That's how I love you always.

GENEVIEVE. Yes—tell me that—and look at me with the tender eyes you have at times. I am sad this evening.

ANDRÉ. You, Genevieve, sad?

GENEVIEVE. It's nothing—do not try to guess—tomorrow when you come, it will be all over.—But this evening, truly, I am immensely sad;—I feel surrounded by threats and misfortunes. Let me tell you that, André, and do not ask me why.—Later—yes, later—I'll tell you. But it is a great relief to me not to have to restrain myself before you.—A little while ago, I felt that I was alone in the world, that no one cared for me—yes, take my hands.

ANDRÉ. They are burning.—What is the matter? Trust me; you are going to be my wife.

GENEVIEVE. Nothing can prevent me from becoming your wife; tell me that, André.

ANDRÉ. Nothing.

GENEVIEVE. You swear it to me?

ANDRÉ. I swear it to you.—So, tell me your troubles.

GENEVIEVE. No, no,—besides, it was only a foreboding—but it vanishes from my mind as I talk to you and feel that you love me.—You will believe me as unbalanced as Lucienne. But it is all over—I am confident again. You'll see, André, I'll be a true wife to you.

ANDRÉ. And you'll be the woman with whom one goes smiling through troubles, with whom effort is always joyful and rewarded.

GENEVIEVE. Yes, André, that is it! We must be courageous and hopeful! I am glad of what we said. Now, leave me. Come and see me to-morrow afternoon.

BARONESS. [*She with LUCIENNE leaves the group, saying to GUEROY.*] We'll leave you now.

GUEROY. Already?

BARONESS. Courtray is tired, I expect. So, I'll take him away. If I let him, he would play bridge until two o'clock in the morning, and to-morrow he would be exhausted.

GUEROY. Tell him, Baroness, how glad I feel that he remembered an old friend.—I know what I owe you in this circumstance.

BARONESS. I want you to feel at home at the Department of State.

GENEVIEVE. [*To LUCIENNE.*] Au revoir, Lucienne.

LUCIENNE. Au revoir, Genevieve. Now that we live in Paris I hope that we'll see each other often.

BARONESS. We'll try to lead a pleasanter existence.

LUCIENNE. It's about time. [*She kisses GENEVIEVE.*]

BARONESS. [*To ANDRÉ.*] Mr. Vazeze, I believe that Courtray wishes to speak to you before leaving.

ANDRÉ. I'll go. [*To GENEVIEVE.*] Mademoiselle. [*He bows and goes.*]

MISS DAMBLEUR. [*Advancing.*] Good-bye, Genevieve.

GENEVIEVE. Do you go so soon? [*She goes to a group of guests who are surrounding COURTRAY and getting ready to leave him.*]

GUEROY. [*To COURTRAY.*] We are very grateful, sir.

DAMBLEUR. My dear Baroness.

SABLIER. My dear Baroness.

MME. SABLIER. My dear—my dear, Lucienne.

JULIETTE. Good-bye, Lucienne.

BARONESS. [*Surrounded, she shakes hands and kisses the girls.*] My dear friends. [*To SABLIER.*] Come to-morrow at three o'clock. [*To MME. SABLIER.*] Yes, my dear, certainly. I'll be in all the afternoon. [*To a young man.*] I told you all I knew; do not go and peddle it around to the papers. [*She goes out in a whirl. The guests depart. A servant enters. GENEVIEVE sees him and goes to him quickly.*]

SERVANT. It's Mr. Ranson, Mademoiselle. I took him to the little parlor as mademoiselle told me.

GENEVIEVE. [*Turning from the guests, who are disappearing.*] All right. Ask him in. [*To MARTHA, who draws near when she motions.*] It's he. Do not leave Jack. [*MARTHA leaves as RANSON enters.*]

RANSON. Here I am, Genevieve. What do you wish?

GENEVIEVE. Thank you for coming, Etienne. I am very much moved.—When I wrote you, I had made up my mind—and now—[*She takes a letter from her pocket and gives it to RANSON.*] Here, read.



RANSON. [*Taking the letter.*] This letter—

GENEVIEVE. Is from Jack—to his wife—he wrote it this evening.—Read it, Etienne; read it!

RANSON. [*He reads.*] Yes. [*Turning to GENEVIEVE after a pause.*] What right have you to place this drama before my conscience? By what right do you choose me to decide whether this man shall live or die? Why me, rather than another? I am a stranger. This does not concern me. I told your sister, this afternoon, what reasons prevented me from taking an interest in her husband's affairs.—It is useless for me to repeat them to you.

GENEVIEVE. Oh, Etienne! This is unbearable! What! Is it you, who suddenly have become implacable and cold? You ask me why I appeal to you? Because you are my friend—and also because you are the stronger, the more intelligent, the older,—the head! I do not know why! You have the coolness, the energy.—You succeeded in life,—after many struggles, that is true, after many dangers. But, what of that? You are only the more powerful for it. So, it is quite natural that, in misfortune, we should seek your protection.

RANSON. And those are your reasons for demanding my fortune—a prodigious effort—the risking of all I gained—for—asking me to rush headlong into adventure with my own ruin in perspective, on the chance of saving whom? A family which does not care about me and which I no longer know! Genevieve, what conception have you of life? Have you often seen around you, in your own world, such disinterested sacrifice as you ask of me—as a matter of course; as if it were a duty, or simply a pretty gesture?

GENEVIEVE. I did not think of all that, Etienne;—I went to you instinctively.—It seemed to me so

worthy of you—so much in keeping with what I had discovered of your character, with all its nobility and generosity—with all the discreet and hidden pity in your heart,—that I did not hesitate. And it is especially because our family had formerly humiliated and scorned you that I thought it would be worthy of you to lift it up when it is down, and you are victorious.

RANSON. Yes, it would be worthy! It is always worthy to save any one. But your saviour—I am astonished that you have not thought of it—your natural, clearly designated saviour, is not I. It's he whom you love and who loves you. He is young; he is rich; he is in power at present. Why do you not call upon him?

GENEVIEVE. I do not know! I do not know! I did not think of it! There are confidences one dares not make to a betrothed, and which one makes naturally to a brother—a friend.

RANSON. There are certain devotions, certain sacrifices, which cannot be asked of friendship, Genevieve;—they are too great for it. Only love is capable of it. Go to your betrothed. Tell him: “I am poor; my family is ruined; I have only you!” You'll see what he answers you.

GENEVIEVE. And it is to me that you are speaking thus? To me? Oh! I feel the wicked irony in your words. You almost accuse me of personal interest; me, whom you know so well—who have spent so many intimate hours with you, when I showed myself as I was. And why do you seek to awaken my suspicion concerning the disinterestedness and nobility of him whom I love? That is the cruel part, Etienne; that is what astonishes me in you and causes me infinite grief. I have such affection for you—such liking,—and now you show yourself harsh

and without generosity. You, Etienne! You! Impossible! I must be mistaken in that! [*She holds him back.*] You are going, Etienne; you are going without answering? You will let this unfortunate man kill himself? [*She places herself before him.*] No, no! You are hiding something from me, and I want to know what it is! You shall not go without telling me! Etienne! Etienne! Why? Why do you go?

RAISON. [*Briskly, going to her.*] Because I love you! Ah! You did not understand; you did not suspect! Oh, the blindness, the tragic egoism of women in their passion! And you speak of cruelty; you, you who did not perceive my love, my mad love—who did not even foresee that I might love you some day—and who inflicted daily upon me, with artless and refined cruelty, the torture of your bright smile, of your indifferent glances, of your disdainful tenderness!—Enough of this torture—I have enough! I want to flee from it! I will no longer hear your voice, which touches my heart and rends my nerves!

GENEVIEVE. Hush, Etienne, hush! I am your sister; your devoted and faithful sister!

RAISON. A sister—you! Oh, no, Genevieve! Keep your devotion and your friendship! I do not want it! For I love you with all my soul and my blood! This love has taken possession of me! All the other events in my life disappear before it! It seems to me that until now I have neither lived nor acted—that I have met only phantoms! You are the only being that seems alive to me!

GENEVIEVE. What a misfortune! I have never been so moved. I see now what has happened, and how much you must have suffered!

RAISON. And you want me now to give you, with

my own hands, to the man who loves you! For he will not marry you after the disaster, and you know it! You ask me, who adore you, to throw you into his arms! Who is the man who would commit such a folly?

GENEVIEVE. Yes, I understand why you abandon me! Yes, that is just! And I ask nothing for myself;—I'll do the best I can. But the others—Martha—her son!

RANSON. Genevieve, I swear to you that to do what you ask me, a man would have to be a hero. Well,—I am not a hero. Take back this letter. I have not read it. I do not know what there is in it!

[*From the second parlor* MARTHA and JACK cross the hall quickly. MARTHA holds him back by the arm as he starts to ascend the stairs. They do not see RANSON and GENEVIEVE.]

MARTHA. No, you shall not go to your study—you shall not!

JACK. What does this mean?

MARTHA. I know what you are going to do—I know—I'll prevent you. [*She holds him.*]

JACK. You are mad!

MARTHA. I read it! I read it!

JACK. Read what?

MARTHA. What you wrote me! Do you think I shall leave you alone? It is you who are mad! Jack! My beloved! I beseech you! Jack!

JACK. [*Furiously.*] Who dared take this letter? Not you! You did not go up stairs. Who was it? [*He turns and sees GENEVIEVE.*] Genevieve! What is she doing here? [*He advances and sees the letter.*] Ah! [*He tears it from her hand.*] So, it was you—you, who dared go through my papers!

MARTHA. [*Rushing between them.*] Jack!

RANSON. Leave this child alone! [*He takes JACK away from GENEVIEVE.*]

MARTHA. [*To RANSON.*] Oh, you have come! Thank goodness! You'll stop him, won't you? [*She totters.*] What is the matter?

GENEVIEVE. [*Rushing to her.*] Martha! Martha!

MARTHA. It's nothing—but I—I— [*She collapses into an arm-chair.*]

GENEVIEVE. [*Kneeling before her.*] Wait—wait—here, smell this!

MARTHA. Yes, I am better—better—

RANSON. [*Taking JACK by the arm and leading him away.*] Your face is ashen! So, you were going to kill yourself! How pitiful!

MARTHA. [*With folded hands, stammering.*] Etienne! Etienne!

RANSON. [*He takes a step towards MARTHA, looks at her, then turns towards JACK and, with force, says.*] You know, if I get you out of this, I want to be master!

JACK. You consent! Etienne, you consent!—Oh, thanks! Yes, you'll be the master.

RANSON. I want to run the factory and manage it alone! I do not want anyone to interfere!

JACK. I promise! I promise!

RANSON. You'll tell me to-morrow the state of your affairs. I'll settle with all your creditors. We'll make a contract, and I'll go to work! Only, I warn you now, plainly, you must not discuss—you must obey.

JACK. Do as you please. I leave everything to you. I am worn out—disgusted—I have no strength left. [*He falls upon an arm-chair.*]

RANSON. Yes,—life was too easy for you. Every one worked for you! What one gets so easily, he loses easily!

JACK. Whatever you may do, Etienne, I'll be grateful to you forever. You have saved me.

MARTHA. [*Rising and going to RANSON.*] Oh, Etienne, thank you, thank you!

RANSON. Do not thank me! There is no cause for it! For I am not doing this through generosity or pity—and much less through calculation! I do it—I do not know why! But what is sure, is that the sentiments that guided me are not lofty! It's anger—jealousy,—perhaps a desire for revenge! I do not know! But, don't you see, it's not worth while thanking me. There may be something a little cleaner at the bottom of all this—it is that, on seeing you there, before me, I remembered the time when we were little and played together on the sand while our mothers were watching us. And so much the better if that's why I save you. [*He embraces JACK, then, turning, says.*] Good-bye, Genevieve. [*He goes out.*]

## ACT IV

[*The scene is that of the first act, except that the mountains are covered with snow. As the curtain rises, GUEROY is alone, pacing to and fro. FRAMIE enters.*]

FRAMIE. Two gentlemen wish to visit the factory.

GUEROY. I won't allow it! Let no one visit the factory!

FRAMIE. But Mr. Ranson said—

GUEROY. Who is master here? I or Mr. Ranson? Mr. Ranson is nothing here, do you hear?

FRAMIE. All right, Mr. Gueroy, all right.

GUEROY. How often must I tell you? As long as the agreement is not signed, you are to take orders from no one but me.

FRAMIE. The agreement is to be signed to-day?

GUEROY. It is to be read to-day—which is a different thing, as they will find out.

FRAMIE. And yet it is the best solution, Mr. Gueroy.

GUEROY. We'll find the money elsewhere.

FRAMIE. I don't think so. And the creditors consented to wait one month only in the hope of this arrangement going through.

GUEROY. It is perplexing, just the same, that I was never able to find out how Jack came to an understanding with his cousin. You and he have given me very vague information on this subject. I am satisfied that I was not told the whole truth!

FRAMIE. Mr. Etienne understood that it would not be a bad stroke of business. That's all.

[The BARONESS appears at the door.]

GUEROY. Never mind! There is something mysterious and sudden about it that makes me dislike the arrangement. [*Seeing the BARONESS enter.*] Leave me—and as far as those two gentlemen are concerned, do as I tell you. [*FRAMIE goes out, bowing.*] My dear Baroness—I have received your little note.

BARONESS. Here is the point, my dear friend. I want some information upon a rather delicate subject.

GUEROY. I am at your disposal.

BARONESS. The length of my stay here, and a trip into Italy which I am contemplating, depend upon your answer.

GUEROY. I am listening.

BARONESS. It is about the marriage of Genevieve and Vareze. You will pardon my indiscretion, but I have private reasons, which I shall tell you, for wishing to be informed. What is going on here? Does this trip of Genevieve conceal a breaking off, or a possibility of breaking off, with Vareze?

GUEROY. Not in the least. The marriage has been decided and will take place soon. Genevieve took advantage of an invitation from her aunt who lives in the South. She is coming back to-day. Jack and his wife went to meet her at the station.

BARONESS. That is good.

GUEROY. They like each other! I even believe they love each other. It's a splendid marriage in every respect. Don't you think so?

BARONESS. I do. Besides, it will simplify my situation towards my daughter. But, you do not understand. Tell me, Gueroy, have you ever observed my daughter?



GUEROY. Often.

BARONESS. What do you think of her?

GUEROY. I think that she is delightful;—she is a delightful child. I cannot say anything else.

BARONESS. You have never noticed anything incoherent about her?

GUEROY. You are joking! No, never.

BARONESS. So? And she appears to you to be a young girl like all other young girls?

GUEROY. She is adorable, I repeat to you.

BARONESS. Well, you reassure me. I thought she was a little unbalanced!

GUEROY. You don't say!

BARONESS. Just think! And that is what all my questions were leading to—she has fallen in love with Vारेze.

GUEROY. With André Vारेze?

BARONESS. Yes, my dear friend! She is wild about him! Isn't that frightful?

GUEROY. You don't say.

BARONESS. I do not even know how he failed noticing it. She threatens me with a scandal if she does not marry him. The young girls of to-day are astonishing! I wonder what their children will be? Fortunately, they haven't many. But, do you see my situation? I was beginning to be quiet and this affair must come. Life is not a bed of roses, I assure you! [LUCIENNE enters.] What are you coming here for? It's scarcely proper. You disturb us.

LUCIENNE. I am doing no harm. I come to congratulate Mr. Gueroy.

GUEROY. [*Surprised.*] Congratulate me!

LUCIENNE. [*Touching his button-hole.*] My godfather told me that it would probably be in January.

GUEROY. You don't say! Is that so, Baroness?

BARONESS. My daughter is a chatterbox! I wanted to surprise you. Besides, as long as it is not official—

LUCIENNE. [*Importantly.*] I'll see to that.

GUEROY. Thank you, Baroness. Thank you, my little Lucienne! [*In a low voice to the BARONESS.*] What were you telling me? The child has mighty good sense! [*FRAMIE enters.*] What is it now? What is the matter?

FRAMIE. Merlin, the foreman, wants to speak to you right away.

GUEROY. I cannot have a minute to myself! You allow me, Baroness?

BARONESS. Certainly. [*GUEROY and FRAMIE go out.*]

LUCIENNE. Did you speak to Mr. Gueroy as I asked you to?

BARONESS. Yes.

LUCIENNE. Well?

BARONESS. [*Kissing her.*] Do not think of Mr. Vareze any longer.

LUCIENNE. Then, the marriage—

BARONESS. Yes. [*LUCIENNE falls, sobbing, upon a chair. Her mother takes her hand, soothingly.*] Don't worry, my child! Don't worry, my dear! To-day, in our situation, you may marry the best man in Paris.

LUCIENNE. [*Weeping.*] I did all I could, though.

BARONESS. I should say so!

LUCIENNE. [*Weeping.*] And he did not discover that I loved him. That's the humiliating part of it, don't you see?

BARONESS. He is stupid!

LUCIENNE. [*Weeping.*] Perhaps I should have told him squarely.

BARONESS. That would have been the last straw!

LUCIENNE. Mamma, I am very unhappy.

BARONESS. No, you are not unhappy—you are nervous! That's not the same thing.

LUCIENNE. [*Rising.*] What fools men are! What fools!

BARONESS. I agree with you.

LUCIENNE. There is a fellow who is going to marry Genevieve. I am not angry with Genevieve—she is my friend. But let us be just! She is cold, cold! She does not even have a great fortune. What use may she be in a man's life? None!

BARONESS. That's not the way to reason.

LUCIENNE. Yes, it is! And if she loved him passionately I could understand. But she loves him as a well-brought-up young girl may love a young man! That's not love! I often saw them together—they do not look into each other's eyes. They do not seem to want to kiss! Ah! If I were his betrothed, it would be different, I assure you! Well, don't let us talk any more about it! I must bow before the inevitable! It makes me mad! [*ANDRÉ enters.*]

ANDRÉ. My respects, Baroness. Good morning, Miss Lucienne. You are in good health?

LUCIENNE. Yes, sir, I am.

ANDRÉ. [*To the BARONESS.*] I learned that you were here. Besides, I would not have failed to call on you this afternoon. I have so many things to say to you.

LUCIENNE. If I am in the way, I can go!

ANDRÉ. Certainly not, Mademoiselle, you are not in the way. On the contrary, I remember that you have always given me very good advice. You are well versed in politics.

BARONESS. So, then?

ANDRÉ. I'll make it as short as possible. There is a rumor in my district that Mr. Ranson is to be-

come a partner of Mr. Gueroy. I cannot conceal from you that this places me in a very delicate position. For one reason or another, Mr. Ranson is my enemy. I thought we had made up, but not at all. I know for a fact that he speaks of me—not offensively,—I would not permit that,—but—lightly, every time he can find occasion to do so. In Paris, I wouldn't pay any attention to it. In politics, we are used to that—but in my district, it's a different thing. Everything becomes serious. I'd rather be called a coward and a traitor in Paris, where people understand, than to be called a fool before my constituents. It's by silly little things like that that an election is decided. Yesterday, I dined with the Prefect at the county seat, and I saw at once what kind of campaign was going on. There were two or three newspaper men there who usually were very deferential towards me, and whom I found altogether too familiar, not to say ironical. They spoke to me as if I were one of them. The Prefect was very reticent concerning the coming elections and the spirit of the district. I caught the smiles of his wife. There are jokes about me going around. So this is a real campaign and this campaign is conducted by Ranson. It's incredible! A perfectly quiet district where there has never been any serious opposition! In short, Baroness, I need you and Courtray. You must not abandon me!

BARONESS. Certainly not, my dear friend. You may count on me.

ANDRÉ. And on you, Miss Lucienne?

LUCIENNE. I'll be frank with you. I think that my godfather has other things to do than to bother with such little affairs.

ANDRÉ. My re-election! You call that a little affair?

LUCIENNE. Certainly! It does not matter. The head of the Cabinet has other cares, I assure you.

ANDRÉ. [*Going to LUCIENNE.*] Not at all, Mademoiselle, not at all! The business of the head of the Cabinet is precisely to make sure of the re-election of those who are devoted to him.

LUCIENNE. And what proofs of devotion have you ever given him?

ANDRÉ. I've always voted for him.

LUCIENNE. You are not the only one.

ANDRÉ. [*Turning to the BARONESS.*] What is the matter with Miss Lucienne to-day? She is severe with me.

BARONESS. Do not pay any attention. She is nervous to-day.

LUCIENNE. I am not nervous. I know what I am saying.

ANDRÉ. This is frightful! You are taking sides with my enemies. [*Going to the BARONESS.*] I want an explanation! What have I done to her?

LUCIENNE. Mamma, I forbid you to tell him anything about it. I positively forbid you.

ANDRÉ. But, Baroness?

LUCIENNE. You! I hate you! And some day, you'll find out why!

ANDRÉ. Oh!

BARONESS. [*In a low voice to ANDRÉ.*] Yes, my dear—she is in love with you. That's what it is!

LUCIENNE. [*Coldly.*] Sir. [*She goes towards the door.*]

ANDRÉ. [*Going to her.*] Miss Lucienne, my dear Miss Lucienne! [*LUCIENNE passes before him and goes out.*] This is absurd! It cannot go on like this! Baroness, I must have an explanation with her. [*Going out with the BARONESS.*] I'll call at your house this afternoon.

[JACK, GUEROY and MARTHA enter.]

JACK. Do not create any difficulty, father, I beg of you.

GUEROY. And yet, I have something to say about it, I suppose.

JACK. Of course.

GUEROY. You'll allow me to read the agreement of partnership before signing it?

JACK. [*Laughing.*] Naturally! The chief point is that you do not contest the basic idea.

GUEROY. And you laugh! [*To MARTHA and JACK.*] Upon my soul I do not know what is the matter with you lately. I have never seen you so cheerful. One would think that it is a happy event that befalls us all. You would have trouble to make me believe it. Well, isn't Etienne here? [RANSON enters.]

MARTHA. Here he is.

RANSON. [*Shaking hands with GUEROY.*] Uncle.

GUEROY. Did you bring the agreement?

RANSON. Yes, uncle.

GUEROY. We'll look at it at leisure, if you have no objection.

RANSON. On the contrary, it is indispensable.

JACK. [*Cheerfully.*] It's all right, I am sure of that.

RANSON. [*To JACK.*] I drew it up as we agreed before my departure.

GUEROY. Let's see. [*They sit around the table, GUEROY center, with the agreement before him. He reads.*] Between the undersigned—that's good!

RANSON. [*To MARTHA, while GUEROY reads.*] Have you knews of Genevieve?

MARTHA. She has just arrived. You shall see her. She wishes to speak to you.

GUEROY. [*To RANSON.*] You have put in a clause concerning the employees of the factory.

RANSON. Yes, it's essential. There are among them some elements that are harmful. The workmen are excellent with one or two exceptions. I talked with them. They had some complaints to make which were mostly well founded. I promised to grant their requests. Only you have a foreman, Merlin, who must be dismissed.

GUEROY. Dismiss Merlin! You are joking. He has been here ten years, and I never had a complaint against him.

RANSON. If you keep him another month, you'll have a strike. He worries the workmen; he does not know how to give clear orders. He has a false authority—the authority which comes from the boss instead of his own personality and fitness. He is overzealous—he is unbearable.

JACK. That's so! That's so! [*To his father.*] How often did I tell you: "Merlin does not know his business."

GUEROY. All right as to Merlin—but this clause which gives you the entire direction and the deciding voice in all cases. I shall never accept that!

RANSON. See here, uncle, we must come to an understanding once for all, don't you think? Do you want to get out of the hole—yes or no? I have just studied the factory from top to bottom. It will not last two years, unless you put at its head an energetic, serious man with a will—I or another, it does not matter. Your house stands only through habit, and will crumble down at the first shock. You are playing politics; you spend your time fishing for honors; you have a mansion in Paris; you receive the head of the Cabinet—that's all right. But, in the meantime your competitors start up all around you.

They grow and they will strangle you, take my word for it. Why? Because you have neglected the chief conditions of success—the continual presence of the boss, the eye of the master which compels order. Those are old rules, but we haven't found anything better so far. When there is order, justice will triumph in the end. And so, every one works and hopes. And it goes! If you let me manage, I'll answer for everything. I'll buckle down here and stick to it. I'll get into this thing, body and soul, and if you are willing to come and see me from time to time, I'll be glad of it. Now, joking aside, those are my conditions. You have an hour to make up your mind. [*He rises.*]

GUEROY. [*Rising also.*] I have made up my mind. I'll never sign this—never! [*He puts the paper on the table and starts to leave.*]

MARTHA. Father!

JACK. [*Holding him back by arm.*] You won't, father?

GUEROY. No!

JACK. [*Bringing him back.*] Then, listen; I have not told you all. A month ago, the day before Etienne left, I was on the point of blowing my brains out. Etienne took the revolver from my hand.

GUEROY. [*Taking his hand.*] You?

MARTHA. Yes, father.

GUEROY. [*To RANSON.*] Is that true?

RANSON. I do not think he is making that up for the good of the cause.

GUEROY. [*After a pause he goes to table and signs. To RANSON.*] I thank you.

JACK. Henceforth, Etienne, you are the master.

RANSON. [*To GUEROY.*] I shall not abuse my authority, uncle; rest assured of that.



GUEROY. [*Very shakily.*] Come, my boy, come! I must be alone with you. [*He takes JACK away.*]

MARTHA. [*After a pause.*] Here we are, together again, Etienne, as we were last month; only this time, you have saved us—saved us at the expense of your peace of mind—of your happiness, perhaps. Oh, you have in me a very devoted and grateful friend, I assure you. Alas—that is all I can do.

RANSON. I believe I'll get over it, Martha. If love is the greatest obstacle which man's will may meet, it is not an insuperable obstacle. I am deeply wounded—but I am not wounded to death. And then, you see, to marry Genevieve was the conclusion of a different life. My adventurous existence does not deserve such a reward.

MARTHA. On the contrary, Etienne, it would have been the just and logical conclusion. Besides, strange as it may seem, I have not given up hope. Genevieve's letters show that she is profoundly moved and very much at sea. A little while ago, when talking to her, I no longer found her so sure of herself. It seems to me that you ought—

RANSON. Martha, no! The first condition for a cure is the will to get well. I shall attempt nothing with Genevieve. We are farther apart than you think.

MARTHA. Or less, perhaps. [*GENEVIEVE enters. MARTHA goes out but, before going, whispers to GENEVIEVE and pushes her gently towards RANSON.*]

GENEVIEVE. Listen to me, Etienne. I have come back because I received a letter from Mr. Framie, stating that Jack's affairs were going to be definitely arranged.

RANSON. They have been—a few moments ago.

GENEVIEVE. Mr. Framie tells me, in his letter, that

it is you who are going to pay me the three hundred thousand francs which belong to me.

RANSON. That is correct.

GENEVIEVE. Why give them to me at once? Why not leave them in the factory, as they were before?

RANSON. Because things have been settled a certain way, and it is impossible to change now.

GENEVIEVE. I beg of you, Etienne, keep that money under what terms you may chose—as a trust. I do not want to receive it from your hand. I cannot consent to being treated as a creditor—as an enemy. I have asked you to save the family—I did not ask you to save me!

RANSON. No, Genevieve, no! Let's make no useless gesture. Let's have no last-hour generosity. Let's not change what has been decided, settled—what is imperative.

GENEVIEVE. That is not your last word, Etienne!

RANSON. Yes, it is.

GENEVIEVE. You wish to repay me this amount—you insist upon it?

RANSON. Yes.

GENEVIEVE. When?

RANSON. Tomorrow.

GENEVIEVE. At the same time you pay the other creditors?

RANSON. At the same time.

GENEVIEVE. Very well, I'll take it. But since I am only a stranger to whom it suffices to refund the money due her, I must leave this house! Yes, I shall leave it; I'll never come back to it.

RANSON. That concerns your husband.

GENEVIEVE. My husband! In spite of what has happened between us, I feel no shame in telling you—this marriage will not take place. And if I have resolved to go, to travel, to live no longer with

Martha and her husband, I have not done it on the spur of the moment. I have been thinking of it for some time. It was only after I had thought and suffered that I made up my mind. Certain deceptions can only be forgotten in a free and independent life.

RANSON. Don't let your mind become intoxicated with words the vanity of which you have not yet perceived, which only lead you astray and deceive you concerning the veritable meaning of life. Liberty! Independence! You will not find them in revolt, but in your own heart and through your own efforts. It is not by fleeing from our sorrows that we sooth them. On the contrary, it is by knowing them and loving them. Then they become familiar to you and allow themselves to be tamed and even caressed. Your life lies straight before you. Why disturb it by imprudences and sudden gestures? You see, it is I, who, today, speak like an elder brother.

GENEVIEVE. It may be too late.

RANSON. [*Going to her and taking both her hands.*] Look at me, Genevieve. You know well that you will not go—that you cannot go like that—and that, if your sister and Jack permitted you to carry out this mad plan of yours, I would prevent you. Then, why do you threaten it?

GENEVIEVE. You would prevent me? And by what right? You have saved those who were dear to me, that is true; but what right does that give you over my thoughts or my conduct? Oh, yes—you love me—or, at least, you told me so, and you seemed sincere; but you told me with such violence, such rudeness, that I am still bruised. You brutally reproached me for my egoism and my frivolity. Did I know you loved me then? Do you think that if I had known it I would have applied to you?

Today I was happy to show you some pride, some disinterestedness—and you forbade me to do so! You seem to take revenge for the love I had for another—and which I have no more—no more. [*She lets herself fall upon a chair and sobs gently.*]

RANSON. Ah, if I were mad—or if only I were younger, what might I believe! But no—no! I do not believe what you seem to say: by your words, your looks, your tears. Ah, Genevieve, Genevieve, let me look searchingly into your soul. Do not let us deceive ourselves—for it would be horrible if I took for love what on your side is only gratitude—or surprise.

GENEVIEVE. Gratitude, Etienne! Oh, yes, indeed, I have—but it is not gratitude which causes my emotion and trembling in your presence—you ought to understand. Etienne, with all your experience you do not realize the changes which may take place in the mind of a young girl when brought face to face with certain dramas of life which she did not suspect, which she did not deem possible—and also when she discovers a character like yours. On seeing you, that evening, so generous, so strong against yourself, I was overwhelmed. I became another woman—and as I was maddened by what was taking place within me, I wished to go away from you, to disappear. But, out there I thought only of you—I still heard your accents of pain and anger—your horror of yielding me to another! And then, suddenly, your pity for the unfortunate about to die—and your sacrifice! So, you understand that I love you—you are sure of it? Tell me, Etienne, tell me!

RANSON. Yes, Genevieve, yes; I understand—you love me, it is true! Ah! I am overcome by all the memories of my life and I find nothing more to say

but: I love you! [*He clasps her in his arms; they part on seeing GUEROY enter.*]

GUEROY. Genevieve, your sister has something very important to tell you. [*GENEVIEVE goes to MARTHA and JACK, who enter.*] Yes, just think! That's quite serious. I'll tell you because you must be informed of everything now. On learning that you were becoming our partner, Vazeze came to make a scene. He pretends that if you are at the head of the factory his position will become impossible. Rot! I told him it was none of my business. He replied that under those conditions he could not marry Genevieve—and he took back his word.

RANSON. When?

GUEROY. This minute.

RANSON. Good, Uncle, very good. [*Going to MARTHA.*] Martha, will you grant me Genevieve's hand?

MARTHA. O, my dear friend, I am as happy as you are.

GUEROY. What? Well, I declare! You were in love! And I didn't notice! Kiss me, my boy! Indeed, I am an old fool!

## THE NEW RHYTHMIC DRAMA

### FOREWORD



**I**N a plea for the establishment of an American art-theatre, entitled *The Temple of a Living Art* and first published in the November DRAMA, 1913, certain ideas were outlined on the natural and best method of establishing such a theatre, and brief reference was made to the new form of drama which it is likely to call forth. Some few months later, during the second season of THE CHICAGO LITTLE THEATRE, which is a practical attempt at the empirical organization of such an art-theatre in such a method as outlined, an anonymous donor freed The Little Theatre from debt and started a reserve fund for its use, with the proviso that its directors should visit the chief European art-theatres to study methods and to test the value of their own ideas by comparing them with those practiced abroad. In the following essay, written on his way to visit these theatres, the author has attempted to define "the new rhythmic drama," as it may fittingly be called, outlining such of his main ideas on the art of the theatre as are not already expressed in *The Temple of a Living Art*, with special reference in the first part to dramatic form and principle, and in the second to the essentially religious nature of all the arts, particularly drama, and to the fundamental philosophical position on which those ideas are based. In a future essay he hopes to summarize the lessons

learned from the theory and practice of the European art-theatres visited.

PART I

*Fluid idea in appropriately conventionalized form constitutes rhythm.*

*Rhythm is a basic principle of all the arts.*

*Drama is the rhythmic fusion of movement, light, and sound.*

*Life is actuated by the will to consciousness.*

*Consciousness is illuminated by art.*

*Art, in common with all religions, needs its ritual and priesthood.*

All idea—for practical and poetical; I do not presume to speak for metaphysical, purposes—is applied observation. A observes a glass of beer, and drinks it; B observes a glass of beer, and builds a brewery; C observes a glass of beer, and signs the pledge. To Peter Bell "a primrose by a river's brim" is "a yellow primrose . . . and nothing more"; to Wordsworth that primrose becomes a symbol of God. The primrose does not change; it is the men's powers of observation and of applying observation, that is to say of connotating ideas, or, in one word, it is their *imaginings*, that differ. In the one, idea is fixed; in the other, it is fluid. All real imagination, as opposed to stupidity on the one hand and to romantic imaginings on the other, consists in the first-hand observation of any given object and the application of that observation to life by the light of experience. From imagination in this sense, from fluid idea, the artist draws his material.

It may be objected that this leaves out of account a quality of which much is made, and rightly made,—inspiration. On the contrary, the light of experience, if it be a light and not a bewildering darkness, is inspiration. Observation applies the sudden match, and all that you and I have hoped and thought, and all that humankind has dreamed and done, and all that God has suffered, all experience, all life, all this universe that we make and unmake every moment, becomes a torch, a flame, a glory, a white illumination transfiguring its content. That at least is inspiration as I know it, and the only inspiration I know.

But, to fulfill his function, the artist in any art must not merely observe, but record. To do this he formulates—adds form to—idea. And this is true not only of the artist, but of the craftsman, of whoever *makes*, whether he make boots or kingdoms or sonnets to his lady's lapdog. What differentiates the artist from all other makers, just as it differentiates all other makers from one another, is the method of formulation, or, as it is commonly called, the treatment of the subject. In the beginning all makers were artists, the man who gave form to his idea by swallowing the first oyster no less than the man who saw the first sun rise and whispered *Dawn!*\* Each gave new form, new expression, which is life, to idea; each established a new convention. All form is convention, the pen that writes these words, the page in the hand that holds them, each word itself on the page. *Page*, for example—the man who first uttered that word *page* to express his idea of that primal sheet of paper struck consciousness into flame; he was a maker, a poet; and a large section

\* I am aware that English is reputed not to have been spoken by the earlier descendants of the anthropoid ape.



of the world's inhabitants were illuminated by and accepted the form he had made, and by long usage it became to them a convention, a symbol if you will, for that papery idea. And this is true not merely of words and phrases and poems and books, but of sewers and skyscrapers and Chicago and all things made by man. But men make things for many reasons, today chiefly for commercial or utilitarian or ethical reasons; and each fits that form to the thing he makes, to his idea, which will best serve his particular end, the artist equally with the financier and the lawgiver and the priest. The artist's end, however, differs from the ends of these others in that it is neither commercial nor ethical nor utilitarian nor indeed conditioned primarily by any of those motives which cause and regulate most human conduct. What seems to be\* the idiosyncratic quality of the artist, as opposed to all other makers, is his power of illu-

\* I use the phrase *seems to be* advisedly, since in the first place the nature and function of art is too complex and controversial a subject to be expressed exactly and finally in a sentence, and since in the second place the chaotic welter of modern society has arisen largely from this very habit of differentiation between conditioning motives; most men and women use one set of motives for business and another for public and private service and keep safely under lock and key a third and entirely different set which they exhibit ceremoniously once a week in churches and on street-corners and at similar conspicuous and irrelevant places. Hence industrialism, the bloodiest and most senseless war that the world has ever waged;† hence the cruel and cowardly habit of optimism, that aggressively self-defensive cry of those who maintain that "God's in his heaven, all's right with the world," on unseasonable occasions when they obviously aren't; there is a time for rejoicing and a close season even for God. Hence, too, the lack of balance in futurism and every other -ism in art, when the attempt to create new conventions blinds the maker to incompatibility of temper between form and idea. Any artist who should try to regulate his art without reference to social and economic considerations, and with sole reference to æsthetic considerations, would find himself in a pitiable plight similar to that which has overtaken Rockefeller from Colorado. Between determinism and conditioning there is a great gulf fixed, and no determinism, be it economic, theological, æsthetic, or of any kind, has ever been accounted the part of that ripeness which is wisdom.

† This was written before July 28th, 1914.

mination; primarily, art neither profits, as commerce, nor aids, as utility, nor teaches, as ethics; primarily, art illumines. And it is this fact that conditions the artist's method of formulation, in other words his method of conventionalizing form to hold idea.

Now it is a commonplace of illuminated experience that a sense of rhythm, of what is flowing and fitting, is its distinguishing characteristic; and the artist, aware of this fact, endeavors to pour his fluid idea into a fitting and fluid form,—not necessarily fluid in itself of course, but fluid in its effect,—desiring by like means to produce a like result. So generally is this recognized that people often speak of a sonata's color or a poem's architecture, using the word appropriate to one art to express the emotion engendered by another, and thereby voicing their sense of something fluid, apposite and balanced, their sense, in fact, of rhythm. And the more fluid, apposite and balanced, the more rhythmic, that the artist can fashion his form to his idea, discovering and inventing conventions to suit his purpose, the more wide will he awaken in the onlooker or listener that state of illuminated consciousness which he aims to produce.

Rhythm, however, does not condition the modern playwright's practice. Ordinarily a play is given being today either that it may make money, or that it may excite the senses, or that it may diffuse ideas, or that it may depict certain social or economic conditions ("a slice of life"), or for a combination of such reasons, but virtually never that it may illuminate the spectator's consciousness by the transfiguration of reality into rhythm. A general practice does not commonly arise without adequate cause, and those very social and economic conditions that the playwright depicts account for the degradation of

his art. But the revolt against these conditions has begun, and the artist is seizing the opportunity which that revolt offers him to resume control of the theatre.

In order that he may utilize that opportunity to the best effect in so far as it affects dramatic convention, that is, dramatic form, he has to free his mind from all preconceptions of dramatic form, particularly from the preconception, begotten by custom, which regards a play as a thing written. The chief essential of any play is, not that it should be read, not even that it should be heard, but that it should be seen; all drama is primarily a visual conventionalization of idea, is, in fact, pantomime. And incidentally there can be little doubt that those critics who object to the modern "conversation play" on the ground that it contains no "action" base their opposition, which may be sound enough in other respects, on a misunderstanding of what the Greek word *drama* means, interpreting it as "action," instead of in its truer sense, "acting." This, together with most other practices of the modern theatre, has arisen from the fact that the "actor," forgetting his high calling as a ministrant in a religious ceremony, has allowed the "manager," the "literary man," the "star," and other estimable but irrelevant personages, to usurp his function and substitute their conditioning motives for his own.

Pantomime then, that is to say, conventionalized movement (which includes form and gesture), is a play's first requisite, and thus the "dance," in its true sense of rhythmically conventionalized movement, takes once more its rightful place as the fundamental essence of all authentic drama. The beautiful sitting dances of the South Sea Islanders, with their highly conventionalized arm and hand movements,

are more truly dramas than the brilliant but tractarian treatises of Mr. Bernard Shaw; the set posturing of marionettes represents the art of the theatre where the naturalistic school of acting betrays it; and the Imperial Russian Ballet is more closely akin to the tragedies of Aeschylus than are Ibsen's sad but untragic expressions of opinion.

Let me not be misunderstood as meaning that the folk-play\* has no place either on the stage or in dramatic art. On the contrary, the folk-play is the one new form of authentic drama, excepting always the ballet, that the modern theatre has produced, or rather reproduced. And at its highest, as in the plays of Synge, the only western dramatist of the first order since Shakespeare, it rises to a rhythmic ecstasy unsurpassed by any Greek or Japanese. But most folk-dramatists are not Synge, any more than the Empire ballet is necessarily imperial; when they are, and equally when they are not, similar arguments apply.

Now, in order that pantomime should be visible, it is obviously necessary that it be performed in light and not in darkness. Light therefore is necessary to drama; and light implies visible color, shadow, perspective, and all those harmonious subtleties of the stage-electrician's art, which are just beginning to be studied and have not yet begun to be understood. Hitherto lazy and unimaginative custom has been content to touch the predestined switch at the prompt-book moment, drowning the stage with sudden darkness or light empty of all illusion; and, if some "wizard of the switchboard" has dreamed of

\* By the folk-play, I mean drama dealing with men and women drawn to the normal human scale as opposed to heroic drama; *e. g.*, Ibsen for the most part, Galsworthy, and T. C. Murray, as opposed to Shakespeare for the most part, Sophocles, and the author of *Sakuntala*.

using the dimmer set by one who was in truth a master-mechanic ready to his hand, he has raised or lowered it in a series of half-coördinated jerks, that suggest unwilling schoolboys heaving sleepily in an ordained tug-of-war. The switchboard is in reality as sensitive and as responsive an instrument, though one not yet so highly perfected, as the violin. And it needs a master to play it. So far as I am aware, this fact has not yet been generally recognized in Europe; I know that it has not been in America, where THE CHICAGO LITTLE THEATRE, from which the idea sprang, at least so far as America is concerned, exemplifies it, alike in theory and in practice, alone of all theatres. The artist-electrician of the future will sit where the leader of the orchestra sits today, commanding the stage, and, with *his* orchestra around him, he will direct on to that stage rhythmic harmonies of fluid light, balancing them appositely with the pantomime performed before his eyes.

Conventionalized movement in light is then the fundamental basis of all drama, without which drama cannot exist, though, as its history shows, it can exist without any other intrinsic sensuous constituent, even sound. (It has one extrinsic, and one intrinsic but not sensuous, requirement, to which reference will be made later.) And it has furthermore existed hitherto without any appeal to the remaining three of man's five senses, touch, taste and smell,—except in so far as religious rituals, with their use of incense, may be considered dramatic presentations, —though it may very well be that the last, if not all, of these will eventually be utilized by some supreme master to awaken in the spectator fully illuminated consciousness. Sound on the other hand has been utilized from a very early period and, both by accepted usage and by reason of its obvious merits and

advantages, has come to be considered a virtually indispensable adjunct of drama.

Sound, as thus utilized, is of two kinds: in the first place, pure sound, which at its highest is conventionalized into music and at its lowest degenerates into merely realistic noise, like a revolver-shot or the crack of broken crockery in a hypothetical kitchen "off left"; and, in the second place, language, which in its turn is conventionalized at its highest into poetry and at its lowest remains the speech of the streets, reproduced exactly. The first kind has this advantage over the second, that it is more simple, being purely sensuous; language on the other hand differentiates man from the other animals and appeals most directly to his highest faculty, imagination, and for that reason poetry has always been accounted the highest art, except by musicians. Attempts have been made to form a third kind of sound by combining the other two. In modern times, and as far as the drama is concerned, these have resulted in Grand Opera, of which nothing more need be said. Elsewhere, however, they have produced the folk-song, at its best the most perfect, in fact the only perfect, thing in English art. Drama with the qualities and technique of folk-song would be capable of rhythmic fusion with conventionalized movement in light, and had such fusion on the ancient Greek stage.

The Russian Ballet, particularly in such a drama as *Le Sacré du Printemps*, is a modern example of the perfect rhythmic fusion attainable between movement and pure sound. Each has been conventionalized till it exactly fits the other, and each gains immeasurably by the infusion of the other. There is therefore no *a priori* reason for believing that the combination of sound, including language, with con-

ventionalized movement is harmful to drama. All depends on the nature of the sound. And the objections of Bakst, Gordon Craig, and others to the use of language in drama appear to be based on a misapprehension of its nature. They seem to think that, because most speech is unrhythmic and inharmonious, all speech must be. In Bakst's case the objection is particularly illogical, considering that such preëminent success has crowned the application of sound to his own work. As a matter of fact, conventionalized language, that is, poetry, if properly uttered, produces as pleasing an audial effect as music, which is conventionalized pure sound, and a more pleasing total effect by reason of its superior content. The proper utterance of poetry is the first step necessary for the creation of a drama with the qualities of folk-song.

The first step necessary for the creation of a drama with the technique of folk-song has been taken by the Russian Ballet again: collective creation. It is impossible to attribute any given play that they perform to any one mind exclusively. The composer, the dance-designer, the decorator, and half-a-hundred more, all work collectively and in many cases, it is to be imagined, simultaneously, for the desired end, each subordinating not merely his own personality but his own art to the greater and collective art of the whole. And it is also impossible to eliminate any of these artists, or at all events to eliminate their particular art, without detriment to that of which their art is an intrinsic part. If such impersonal devotion to an artistic cause is possible to painters, actors and musicians, it should not be impossible to poets. And, as a matter of fact, apart from the folk-song, there is a modern English example of such collective creation: Gilbert and Sullivan

are names which may not be separated. That a similar practice obtained on the ancient Greek stage seems probable to many book-students of classical drama; to the practical producers of that drama today it is a self-evident fact. Some go even further: the producers at THE LITTLE THEATRE, for example, have been empirically convinced by their work with *The Trojan Woman* and the *Medea* of Euripides that, contrary to their own previous ideas, some Greek plays were partially rehearsed in pantomime before or during their writing. A few illustrations may throw light on such theories.

Schoolmasters used to teach, and probably teach still, that the continual presence on the stage of the Chorus in the *Medea* is a blot on the play, since its failure to prevent Medea's murder of her children is incredible. In this belief, when the *Medea* was first put in rehearsal at THE LITTLE THEATRE, an endeavor was made to minimize the flaw by distracting attention from the Chorus. The harder the effort, the greater the flaw appeared, till it rendered the whole play almost ridiculous. When that *reductio ad absurdum* was reached, it became evident that Euripides knew his own business better than the schoolmasters, and a fresh start was made, with no effort this time to screen the Chorus. Immediately the whole character of the work changed; scenes that had been unconvincing to the point of puerility became packed with meaning and emotion; organic unity took the place of lifeless and disjointed melodrama; and the *crux* of the commentators became the pivot of the play. All this was true because a group of players left to themselves immediately responded to the necessity of portraying respectable Corinthian ladies torn by conflicting emotions and eventually made accessories to a series of particularly atrocious



crimes by their unbalanced judgment. The effect was naturally intensified by the fact that the pantomime conveying these things was conventionalized and not realistic.

Another incident in this same production of the *Medea* is also illuminating. At a certain point in the play Medea sends the nurse to fetch Jason; Jason comes, and presumably the nurse returns with him; shortly afterwards the two children are summoned, and their attendant would naturally accompany them. There are therefore on the stage at the same moment Medea, Jason, their children, the nurse, the attendant, and the Chorus. The scene closes with Medea's injunction to the children:

"Let your mother know  
"Soon the good tiding that she longs for . . . Go!"\*

The next words are spoken by the Chorus:

"Now I have no hope more of the children's living;  
"No hope more. They are gone forth unto death."\*

It is obvious that, between these two speeches, Jason, the children, the nurse, the attendant, and perhaps Medea, must have left the stage. When conventionalized movement is used—and the mask and the buskin are proof positive that it was used on the ancient Greek stage—an exit of such magnitude takes time; it took nearly three minutes at THE LITTLE THEATRE, and in those three minutes the whole future course of the play was affected. For the silence on the stage gave the actors an opportunity to suggest by pantomime the emotions consonant with their characters, and the wordless exhibition of Jason's self-satisfied stupidity, of the children's innocence, of the attendant's half-comic pride at being entrusted with so important a mission, of the

\* Gilbert Murray's translation.

nurse's dawning suspicion and terror, of Medea's blood-madness, and of the Chorus's appalling decision, made at that moment, not to betray her, revealed to the spectator in the most dramatic and compelling manner—*silence*—the true inwardness of what was taking place before his eyes. The attention with which the scene was invariably received proved furthermore, if proof were needed after the success of the cinematograph, that pantomime is welcome to any audience.

But the best of these examples as regards both collective creation and the precedence of pantomime over literature in drama is given by THE LITTLE THEATRE's *Passion Play*. Here, under the guidance of one directing mind,—and the directing mind is of course under all circumstances as necessary in the theatre as in any other branch of life or art,—but entirely without instruction or command, a group of fourteen people, working collectively and simultaneously, produced a completely homogeneous and artistic whole. And the fact of this coöperation, added to the nature of the subject treated, inspired in players and spectators alike that religious spirit which is the essence of all drama; incidentally it also enabled those working on the stage to overcome technical obstacles which in the early rehearsals appeared insurmountable. The play was performed entirely in dumb-show, and at no time were any lines written for or assigned to any character; but, at the end of a few weeks, each player had constructed for himself an entire and unvarying set of speeches, for silent use inside his head—they were never uttered aloud—during the course of the pantomime. If those speeches had been written down, they would have constituted a complete libretto. Whatever its intrinsic value as literature in its original state might

have proved to be, there can be little doubt that, given a poet great enough to subordinate his own art and personality to its shaping, the final result of such an experiment would make dramatic history. Parallels and analogies are familiar to every student of the old comedy or modern vaudeville, and the internal evidence is almost overwhelming that a great bulk of Shakespeare's\* work was produced in just such a manner.

In order then that language may be fused rhythmically with conventionalized movement in light, the poet must learn to work simultaneously with, or even consequently to, the actor and the electrician; and it is only by such an abdication of his throne that the poet can ever regain his kingdom. Till poetry is stripped of all rhetoric and properly uttered, it will remain a cult; after all, "the play's the thing," and every part, including poetry, must be subordinated to the whole. The poet who has learned this lesson will inevitably resume control of the theatre, directing, guiding, and inspiring, where now he merely provides a book of the words; and *praktikos* and *poiētēs*, poet and man of action, will once more become synonymous terms. To achieve this end, the poet must go back to the rudiments of his art and rediscover the first principle of technique, elimination. The English folk-singers understood that principle, the masters of Chinese painting, and the sculptors of Egypt, and therefore their work will live—indeed is living,—while Milton, Rubens, and the carver of the Laocoön, overreaching themselves, have fallen into the obscurity of library and museum. Simple things are the only ones that permanently satisfy the human soul, and the greatest master is he who uses one line where others use two.

\* I have since learnt that this is also maintained by Gordon Craig.

That is true of movement and light no less than of language, and the artist who, using the simplest methods to achieve his end, succeeds in fusing the three so rhythmically that they cannot be dissolved, will also succeed in recreating drama as a living thing. Then, and only then, with the coming of the new rhythmic drama, will art cease to be a hobby and become a religion.

MAURICE BROWNE.

*(To be Continued)*

## COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS



HERE can be no doubt that Christmas is gaining in festal spirit in this country, and that there is a growing desire to democratise the festival. There was an increase last year in the number of cities which followed the lead of New York in instituting civic celebrations at Christmas and New Year; but the desire to fall in line is often checked by the lack of material or of ideas in making up a program. This is especially true in cases where the more sombre American tradition of Christmas survives. To meet this situation a few suggestions are now offered.

Those who need advice may be counseled first of all to take stock of all possible resources in their community. What choral and musical organizations, what dramatic or dance organizations, are there which may be induced to contribute to a civic program? Pantomime or dance-drama must be included. Dancing by groups of school children who had received instruction on the playgrounds in summer, and by groups of Bavarians and Suabians who had not forgotten the folk-dances of their native land, were the brightest features in the program of the St. Louis celebration last Christmas.

The singing may be contributed by school children, by the combined choirs of churches, by people's choral societies, by patriotic clubs and associations, and by the assembled people themselves. Among the contributing choruses in New York was a negro

group of one hundred voices singing plantation songs. There is a large fund of old Christmas carols of all nations which may be drawn upon. Unfortunately, of old English carols there is now but little knowledge or remembrance. They must be brought back under the leadership of the choral societies, or by being taught in the schools; or they must be rehearsed by the people themselves.

Stress must be laid upon participation in the singing by the assembled throng; and the fact must be faced that it is very difficult to get the people to join in any singing, chiefly because they do not know the words. Experience has proved that not many can sing through to the last verse *My Country 'Tis of Thee*. At the last St. Louis celebration the only song that was heartily and completely sung was *Dixie*. Not quite so complete a bankruptcy was anticipated. The precaution was taken to have the words of half a dozen popular songs flashed by a lantern on a large screen, so that the people might read them off; but this was only partially successful. The words should be printed beforehand in the local newspapers, and, if possible, the music also should be given. People should be expected to make ready to join in the singing of these specified songs. In time, perhaps after they have been sung for a few years by the contributing choral societies, such splendid old carols as *Deck the Hall with Boughs of Holly*, *Here we Come a-Wassailing*, *The Holly and the Ivy*, *Good King Wenceslas*, and *The Boar's Head Carol* may be added to such well-known German songs as *Tannenbaum*, *Stille Nacht*, and *O du Fröhliche*, and our one or two patriotic songs of America as the leading items of the popular repertory.

In addition to singing, dancing, and pantomime

there may be the ringing of chimes from any nearby church, and selections (including one or two old chorals) by the band employed,—for a brass band there certainly should be. The giant Christmas tree with its lights and its crowning star is also almost a necessity. The lighting may be contributed (as it generously was in St. Louis) by the lighting company of the city. There will be the ceremonial at dusk of flashing out the star at a given signal, and of music or chimes; and, later, the bursting into radiance of the colored lights on the tree.

In combination with this form of celebration, which was held on Christmas Eve for about an hour, at the time when the workers of the city were on their way home, and on New Year's Eve between seven and nine in the evening, there may be, as there was in St. Louis last year, carol-singing by groups of children drawn from the Sunday schools. The undertaking was organized by the Children's Aid Society, for the benefit of which collections were made by the carollers. Each band was assigned its district, and the singing took place in front of those houses which displayed the signal of a burning candle in the front window; so that no households were bothered who did not wish to be visited. The signal lights along some streets were most picturesque. In some cases where there were large entrance halls, the singers were invited to sing indoors, but generally the band drew up in the front yard or on the steps of the visited residence or club. One group of carollers was made picturesque by the use of scarlet-hooded cloaks for the girls, which they had made themselves, and the use of lanterns and sticks by the boys. A further development of the carol-singing would be the gathering of all the bands of singers in one place at starting, so that they might sing some of the carols

together. There must be a wise selection of carols. Some of the Christmas hymns which were sung for lack of a knowledge of anything better, cannot for a moment compare with the old carols which breathed a hearty spirit of Christmas joy and cheer in the days of long ago. Cheap collections of these have now been made available by several of the music publishing houses in this country.

Each community, then, should develop a program by making the best of any resources available at the present time. Then, let them all pool their experiences, and in this way combine so as to make available an increasingly rich store of material.

One other word is necessary in view of the mixed character of our American communities. The celebrations ought to be acceptable to every element in the community; Gentile and Jew, Christian and non-Christian. This universal, non-sectarian character of the rejoicing is warranted by the universality and antiquity of the midwinter festival which we now call Christmas, but is likewise known to us in English parlance, in our poetry or in legend, by the pre-Christian name of Yuletide. The universal note, the note of democracy, the note of an all-embracing, world-wide humanity, must ring out in this festival; and this year, as never before, the emphasis upon the thought of peace may well unite us all with peculiar intimacy of appeal. It was an ancient custom to cease all strife and to cry a truce in war during the Christmas season. That fact also may be only too appropriately recalled in this year of world-strife.

PERCIVAL CHUBB.



## A SCHOOL OF THE THEATRE ARTS



THE CARNEGIE Institute of Technology opened its Department of Dramatic Arts in February of the present year, with eighteen students. The equipment was still unready, the theatre being barely completed in time for the Shakespeare's Birthday performance of *Two Gentlemen of Verona*; and the stage has not, even now, its final shape or dimensions. But many of the lines of work planned are now in active operation. A second class has been admitted, and a great part of the curriculum is being taught. The theatre is as busy as any other laboratory in the Institute. Having gone so far, we may consider the visionary stage passed, and look upon the school as a partly accomplished fact.

Carnegie "Tech" is divided into four schools, the colleges of science, industries, applied design, and the Margaret Morrison Technical School for Women. The School of Applied Design is similarly divided, and over the niches on the facade of the building are lettered the words Architecture, Painting, Sculpture, Music, Drama.

The Department of Architecture, being the oldest, has in a measure given its type to the other departments—a type of sober professional training, nowise fantastic, and never scornful of those general and essentially cultural studies which are likely to be thrown overboard by the more impetuous schools of

the Fine Arts. We think ourselves fortunate in this, since our plan for the Department of Dramatic Arts is not a brief and violent charge upon the subject, but rather a sustained siege.

Architecture, painting, and music were already housed and flourishing when we began work, and from time to time we find ourselves borrowing from all of them.

The School of Applied Design had already its requirements for admission—the usual college requirements, plus a personal interview of the prospective student with the Dean and the head of the selected department. It had already established its course of four years, leading to a degree of Bachelor of Arts, with a long list of general studies, a severe training in technical practice, and an emphasis on the cultural as well as the scientific—on appreciation and historical knowledge as well as on the application of paint to canvas. All these conditions we accepted gladly. We could not have designed a better environment in which to build a new school to be devoted to the arts of the theatre.

It was of course clear that no amount of personal interviewing would ever select for us the young people destined to become actors, or playwrights, or producers. It was also clear that the school must exist for the students, not the students for the school.

We were not, to put it quite bluntly, concerned with whether a student should become an actor or not; we were concerned that he receive a severe four years' training; that he know the drama, its history, its literature, in a measure its technic, and perhaps that he have some hint of its social implications; and we thought it readily possible to teach him many of the related crafts. With these premises the course was planned. It owes much to the broad taste and

technical knowledge of the late Dean, Charles Russell Hewlett, and much to the advice of many men in and out of the theatre: actors, dramatists, critics, managers, and mere (but educationally shrewd) professors.

During the first three years the curriculum allows the student little time to consider any high degree of personal specialization. He spends part of his first year in learning correct diction, a matter which, beginning with severe and continued exercise in reading, does not by any means end with the hours formally given over to it. He also begins drawing in the art school, and before the year is over applies this training to the sketching and tracing which are inseparable from the work in the history of costume, and in elementary scene painting. Dancing is required throughout the course, the work being done not on the stage but in the great music room. French is required, and some study of German, both leading as rapidly as possible to conversation and the reading of plays.

In a lecture course the student is required to consider the history of the theatre, treating of its growth as an institution, its architectural and technical equipment at different periods, and the various methods and customs of play production in the past; all this is supplemental to the more extensive survey of dramatic literature, to which he must give a fair share of his reading time for two years.

Historical surveys of painting and sculpture, of architecture, of furniture and decoration are all required, and all related in some measure to model-making and scene painting. The girls substitute work in costuming for scene painting, but they do not forego the survey courses on that account.

With all this, the student must still give most of

his time to the rehearsal and production of plays, for, no matter what his ultimate intention may be, he must come to see a play as a thing of movement and emotion, of sound and picture, rather than as so many pages printed in a book.

During his first months of work he deals mainly in short parts and short plays; then in Shakespeare, with a production, at least occasionally, of a Greek play. At this writing (October) *Iphigenia in Tauris* is well forward. But because it was possible for us to avail ourselves, just at this time, of the services of Mr. Padraic Colum, and because we believed that the direct touch of the work of the Irish theatre would be profitable to the students, we are postponing Euripides for a few weeks, and putting on Mr. Colum's play, *The Betrayal*, along with Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen* and Yeats's magnificent trumpet-cry of the poet, *The King's Threshold*.

This illustrates one of our favorite theories about instruction in acting, the plan of the visiting director, or guest master. We believe that great good may accrue to the student from working, for limited periods, under the instruction of different men, actors, dramatists or directors. When this is done, the visiting instructor has full swing, and matters of costume, scenery, lighting and business are all undertaken by the students in accordance with his wishes. The production of *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, with which the theatre opened its doors, was thus in charge of Mr. Donald Robertson. We have found that in this plan we have the sympathetic interest of some of the most able men in the theatre, and the students look forward to these visits with the keenest interest.

Productions of plays of modern life are to follow the drill in older and more formal manners. No set

rule underlies the choice of plays; we do the work which seems likely to help, in the doing, the greater number of the students engaged. We look forward to giving performances of plays written by our own students from time to time, as part of the regular work of those who take the course in dramatic composition. If the student can write a practicable play, surely his fellows should be ready to paint him a set and act in it; and through this he should get some view of his product other than that of the multitudinous unacted playwright who is convinced that the world conspires against him.

In the fourth year of the course we plan to relax a little the severity of our requirements, to permit more daring experiment, to allow some personal specialization. We do not know what the student will make of himself through and after this course—actor, writer, critic, manager, scene-painter? We are not vitally concerned with the question, having before us the task of sending him out a trained man or woman, with an expanded and stimulated sense of resource, and some orderly knowledge of the background of his craft.

THOMAS WOOD STEVENS.

# THE GERMAN STAGE AND ITS ORGANIZATION

## I\*

### *Introduction: The German Stage a Living Organism*



THE English and American stages have lacked a man like Ruskin. If they had had a man such as he, with such powers of persuasion, such enthusiasm, such eagerness to make propaganda, and such devoted followers as William Morris, there would have been National Theatres in London and New York long ago and Municipal Theatres in the large provincial towns of England and America, just as now-a-days there are University Arts and Crafts Schools in America and County Council Schools in England.

The German stage had the good fortune to have such a man, and moreover to have him at the right moment. That man was Friedrich Schiller. He was not only the real creator of the new German stage by giving it aim and object, but he also supplied it with excellent nourishment—at least for his time—in his own dramatic words. Like Shakespeare, he had found prepared soil. Lessing, especially, and also the somewhat pompous Professor Gottsched of Leipzig, had tilled the ground before him, and the *zeitgeist* too had helped, for only *with* this spirit, sometimes against it but never *without* it, can great men leave their mark.

\* The first of three articles prepared by Mr. Freund for *The Drama*.

Until then, the German stage had been, more or less, either the private entertainment of the reigning princes or the noisy amusement of the burghers. The former wished to enhance the splendour of their courts by magnificently mounted plays and operas, while the latter delighted in the strolling players whose clown made them laugh and whose sentimental stories wrung their hearts. Just before Schiller's advent, however, a few of the purely Court Theatres had shown a tendency to become National Theatres, and in one of them (the Mannheim National Theatre) was given such a revolutionary piece as Schiller's first play, *Die Räuber*. At that time in Germany, the idea was pressing more and more to the front that the theatre arises from other motives than the desire of the people for mere amusement—a truth which is clearly shown by its classical as well as its mediæval history—and that its functions go far deeper than the entertainment of a few hours. It was this feeling which, some years earlier, had impelled the famous actress-manager—"die Neuberin" as she was called—to burn the figure of the clown in the open market-place of Leipzig, thus indicating that she wanted the theatre given up to dramatic art instead of to buffoonery. This conviction too made Goethe devote years of his life to directing the theatre at Weimar, considering it no degradation of his genius to do so, for he held that his stage was to give example and impetus to the whole land; and from Schiller it elicited the famous utterance that the stage is a "school of morals" (*moralische Anstalt*), a saying which can never be forgotten as long as a German theatre exists, and which has, ever since, in spite of seeming contradiction, been the watchword of the

German stage. Unfortunately its meaning has often been too narrowly interpreted by people who have not grasped Schiller's ideas and have kept too rigidly to the word "moral;" often, in times of easy self-contentment when only the fleeting joys of the moment were desired, it even seemed to be forgotten altogether, but it always appeared again as a warning—as a battle-cry one might almost say—as soon as a younger generation, with new ideas and fresh vitality, came to the front. Thus, although often checked in its effect, it has nevertheless leavened the German stage throughout, and created the right conditions for an institution which, even in its incomplete stage of development, has already come very near to some of the ideals set up.

One circumstance helped to make this growth more possible in Germany than anywhere else; that was the decentralization of German political and intellectual life, whereby a number of smaller centres—like small centres of life, as it were—had been created and still flourish. Such centres enable an intellectual or artistic movement more easily to take possession of a whole nation and penetrate it, than if it comes from a single centre and travels slowly from place to place. In this way every movement is stamped in the different centres with their peculiar characteristics, and is thereby materially enriched without the sacrifice of any essential feature. The influence resulting from the characteristics and individual development of a single place with its elements of chance (for instance, the tremendous increase of population, with its natural result, namely, the commercializing of the stage as in New York, London, and, to a great extent now, in Berlin also) is more or less counteracted by the



smaller and partly independent centres as they exist in Germany, a counteraction which materially helps in keeping the whole body healthy.

What, then, is the organization of the modern German stage? Looked at casually, it appears to be a strange contradictory something, diverging into all sorts of different by-paths and apparently not as much organized as the English and American stages. This seems to be a contradiction to my previous remarks, but it only appears so. The organization of the English and American stages is clear almost to simplicity. It is the logical development of the idea that the theatre is a commercial undertaking which must suit itself, like all other industries, to the demands of the day; and thus the "long run system" in New York and the touring companies in the provinces came into being quite naturally. This all sounds very fair and good, but one thing has been forgotten in it, namely, Art. In Germany, the divergences and discrepancies are to be accounted for by the fact that the stage represents a natural growth, and as such is like a human being, who, in his struggle for existence, has had to make many compromises in order to adapt himself to circumstances, but, in spite of that, has managed through it all to keep his own ideal of life and preserve his individuality. In other words, the German stage has had to bow to Commercialism, but only as a dire necessity. And because it has never acknowledged Commercialism as its only lord and master, Commercialism, with a few exceptions in some of the larger towns, has never been allowed to shape its organization. On the contrary, the stage has developed (and is still developing) many organs of protection as, according to Darwin, every living being has to do in the battle for life. In fact, it is

just this which proves it to be a living institution. The higher the organism the more complicated it is, because it has more functions to perform. It is from all these standpoints, therefore—historical as well as morphological, so to speak—that the varied system of the modern German stage must be viewed in order to be understood and rightly estimated. Led on by Schiller's great words, it strives slowly towards at least greater unity of purpose.

### *Public Theatres*

Contrary to the custom in England and America, touring companies pure and simple play a very small role in Germany, although a certain kind of touring company has sprung up under the title *Wandertheater*, about which I shall speak in a later article. Stock companies are practically everywhere the rule. Court Theatres (*Hoftheater*) are the oldest form of theatres and of them there are about twenty at present. A few of them bear the name *Nationaltheater* (as, for example, the one in Munich), but all serve more or less the same end, namely, providing dramatic art for the *whole* population. It is quite true that in these theatres the will of the prince carries most weight, and that their whole spirit reflects his taste which, naturally enough, is more for old and tried ideals than for new ones struggling for a hearing. Compared with other theatres, these Court Theatres represent, as it were, a kind of Senate or Upper House. But they serve a very good purpose, nevertheless, for *they*, more than all the other theatres, keep the classics in vigorous life and thus preserve a glorious inheritance for the nation. It is easy to understand that a prince with such a decided will and pro-

nounced individuality as the present Emperor should want to rule his own theatres in his own way, but the worst that can be said against him is that he uses them to foster the patriotic spirit in his subjects. If that be done in the right way, I, for my part, can see no harm in it, and I do not think it can be proved that the Prussian Court Theatres, whatever one may have against them otherwise, are used for reactionary political purposes. On the other hand, much good has already been done by the Court Theatres. I need only mention the well-known Meininger Court Theatre, whose leading spirit and moving power for many years was the late Duke himself. And even at the present day, there are many towns—for example, Darmstadt, Dessau, Gera—whose princes take the greatest interest in the affairs and even in the management of their theatres. That broad-minded men consider the task of a Court Theatre to be a very far-reaching one, is shown in the words of Baron Putlitz, General-Intendant of the Stuttgart Hoftheater. He writes:

“It is the duty of every theatre, Court Theatres not excepted, to let the public know something of the state of the present-day dramatic production, and this task would not be fulfilled if the characteristic tendencies of the modern drama were not shown. And these characteristics are to be found . . . precisely in sexual questions. Now I am entirely opposed to giving, in a Court Theatre, that kind of modern French farce which treats adultery and sexual questions in a frivolous spirit, thereby exercising a bad influence; but, on the other hand, I am quite of the opinion that as soon as the author, in the treatment of his play, points to the dangers and harm in these questions, a different verdict must

be given. Such pieces should be judged entirely on their artistic and literary merits."

These sentiments are somewhat different from the argument of that out-of-date institution, the English censor, when he made the amiable proposal, apropos of a certain play on adultery, that it should be treated "more comically," otherwise he could not pass it! a state of affairs which must seem almost incredible to Americans, I should think. It is hardly necessary to add that Baron Putlitz acts up to the spirit of his words. The same spirit is apparent in the Hoftheater in Dresden, where the Art Director, Geheimrat Zeiss, offers his public an exceedingly interesting repertory consisting by no means of only classical plays.

The majority of German princes feel themselves bound to sacrifice voluntarily something for the art of the theatre as well as for other arts, and even although they personally may not always be interested in it, they nevertheless give comparatively large sums in order to keep up their Court Theatres to as high a standard as possible. Quite a number of small residency towns, such as Weimar, Gotha, Gera, Darmstadt, Oldenburg and Dessau, are thus enabled to enjoy the privilege of a good, independent theatre which otherwise neither the town nor private enterprise could possibly support. Anyone, therefore, who acknowledges the value of the art of the theatre, cannot but admit the right of existence to the Court Theatres. But in their origin as well as in their present state, they have developed naturally out of the peculiar German conditions, and no other country could have similar institutions except in their capital towns, as is the case in Denmark, Sweden and Russia. In one's mind's eye, however, one can see similar institutions in America, that is to say,

State Theatres in the capital town of each State. That this is not impossible of realization nor the mere dream of an outsider living in far-away Europe, is proved by a recent article on the American Stage in the London theatrical weekly, *The Stage*. In it the writer, under the heading, "Municipal Theatres," speaks of a bill having been agreed upon in the State of Iowa, permitting any community within the State to adopt measures for Municipal Theatres. The writer continues: "That this is not a local affair may be gathered from the fact that in every part of the United States similar schemes are afoot." There is but one step from this permission for the erection of Municipal Theatres to the State's erecting such a theatre itself, and managing it as a centre of dramatic art.

Court Theatres, then, in conjunction with Municipal Theatres (to be discussed presently) form a bulwark which will prevent the German stage from being completely sacrificed to the god of Commercialism. The tendency of the Court Theatres is to develop more and more into National Theatres proper, the duty of which will be to provide for the needs of the whole community. This is a natural development and, for art as well as for the whole nation, a most valuable one. There is no necessity, however, to force it unduly. The power of purse, which, of course, belongs to the Diets of the different German states, will bring it about quite by itself, as the same power in politics brought about a constitutional régime. The German Diets (as, for example, the Prussian one a year or two ago) have already been asked by the princes to contribute to the ever-increasing upkeep of the Court Theatres, and, in voting sums for that purpose, the Diets obtain a certain amount of influence and control over these

theatres which must increase as time goes on. The Prussian Diet, on the occasion just referred to, asked for more cheap performances for the people, as well as for various other improvements, and now, every year when the Budget is being discussed, it exercises its right to criticise the management. Another arrangement which will gradually convert Court Theatres into public ones is that Residency towns pay a subvention and thus gain a voice in the management of the theatre. This is being done, for example, in Stuttgart, Darmstadt, and Munich.

Municipal Theatres are of more recent date. The great progress which they have already made in their development is, I am convinced, largely due to a law—the fruit of the true German love of independence—carried through by one of Germany's greatest statesmen, Freiherr von Stein. This law might be called Municipal Home Rule, as it gave to single towns a large amount of individual freedom within certain bounds. It brought independent life and activity to them, each one becoming a personality, as it were, with its own individual characteristics. Citizens took an active share in municipal questions, and interest in public affairs was awakened. This at first showed itself in material things, the town taking over the management of public matters such as tramways and gas, but then it was realised that man cannot live by bread alone and the municipal bodies turned to the questions of Art. Museums and theatres sprang up. At first the towns began by leasing out their theatres as a commercial enterprise, but in many cases these leases became something quite different, namely, a subvention. The lessee, however, who often paid no rent at all, had to undertake to fulfill certain conditions. He had to promise

to keep the performances up to a certain standard, to give operà and classical and modern works, to have a company of a certain number, and to give cheap performances for the people. Many towns went even further and gave the lessee not only the building free but also light and water, or at any rate provided these necessaries at reduced prices; sometimes a sum in cash was given as well. The State had already, of its own accord, recognised the claims of Art and decreed that the tax called the "Amusement Tax," which all variety halls and circuses have to pay, should not be taken from theatres serving the interests of Art. Finally, several towns declared in favour of a real Municipal Theatre, took over the building into their own hands as an entirely municipal concern, put a director at the head, paid all expenses, and were only desirous not to have too large a deficit to cover. This step put their theatres on the same footing as the Court Theatres. Thus subsidised theatres became art institutions governed and financed by public bodies, and undoubtedly in this direction, although perhaps slowly, the development will continue. In this way there will be centres of real theatrical art distributed throughout the land, instead of confined to capital towns only. Towns like Köln, Breslau, Leipzig, Strassburg, Freiburg and Breisgau, now possess their own Municipal Theatres in the fullest sense of the word, and it can be truly said that "party politics"—that is, the predominance of any one party in the Council—has never influenced the policy of the theatres in a too pronounced degree. There is, however, no hard and fast rule according to which these theatres are run. Each town works on its own system, as the conditions are not everywhere the same.

A few statistics on subventions by municipalities may be of interest here. To an inquiry on the subject of subventions sent around to Directors of Municipal Theatres a few years ago (1906), 58 answers were received, according to which there were at that time:

21 towns granting sums in cash varying from 500 Mks. to 40,000 Mks.

36 towns, granting subsidies in other forms (heat, light, water, scenery, costumes, orchestra, etc.).

23 towns giving their theatre to the director entirely rent free.

9 towns giving all three of the above-mentioned forms of subvention.

11 towns giving a sum in cash and the theatre rent free.

19 towns giving a subsidy in other forms as well as the theatre rent free.

Other statistics, applying to Prussia only, show that 52 towns possess in all 65 theatres and concert halls. Only four of the smaller towns have financial profit from their theatres. Several towns give large sums yearly for their theatre, Leipzig, for example, contributing \$150,000. Below are figures to show how much is contributed per head by the Council (in reality the ratepayers) in 37 German towns for the upkeep of the theatres:

15 towns—more than 12 cents.

5 towns—between 8 and 12 cents.

9 towns—between 2 and 8 cents.

8 towns—up to 2 cents.

During the year in which these statistics were taken (1903) these towns together gave a sum amounting to three and a half million Marks (\$875,000) for their theatres, and a further sum of \$250,000 for the orchestra. Since then municipal



grants have greatly increased, and towns giving support of one kind or another have also considerably grown in number. As an example of a Municipal Theatre in the *fullest* sense of the term, I may specially mention Strassburg, which was one of the first towns to start such an enterprise. Some particulars of this theatre may prove of interest. Herr Wilhelmi, the late Intendant of the theatre, had the kindness to send me its yearly budget for 1910-11, and it makes most interesting and instructive reading. According to it, the expenses for that year amounted to about \$135,000, not including either rent or payment for the orchestra, which is also under the Municipality. The income of the theatre, derived from various sources (tickets, etc.) was about \$78,750, so that a deficit of \$56,250 had to be covered. Of this, \$5,000 was cleared off by the interest on a legacy left to the theatre by a wealthy man, while the rest of the deficit was covered by a sum of \$9,000 paid by the State of Alsace as subvention and a sum of \$42,250 contributed by the city of Strassburg itself. The city also bears the expense of the opera orchestra and the loss of interest on the capital outlay for the ground and theatre building, as, of course, the theatre pays no rent. A budget is made up every year by the Burgomaster to balance the income and expenses and fix the subvention for the year. The budget is then passed by the Town Council. If, as was the case in 1910-11, the subvention passed does not suffice to balance the income and expenses at the end of the season, the deficit is paid out of the municipal exchequer.

Naturally, the sum paid by the town has increased with the years, having been about \$15,000 in 1899, and \$26,750 in 1906. The chief expenses of the theatre are:

*Opera*

Director (the well-known composer, Dr. Hans Pfitzner)	} about \$28,750
6 Conductors	
22 Soloists	

*Plays*

3 Producers	} \$16,000
24 Players and others	

*Chorus*

46 members, used in opera and also as supers in plays.	} \$15,250
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*Ballet*

Ballet Mistress.	} About \$3,000 (a surprising- ly small sum)
Musical Rehearser.	
3 Soloists.	
10 Dancers.	
30 Pupils.	

Machinists, electricians, stage hands, \$20,250; costumes, about \$3,200; authors' fees, about \$3,250, and many other smaller items.

The season lasted eight months, from September 16th till May 15th, and there were altogether 283 performances, of which 6 were for the people, 5 for schools, and 2 for pupils of board schools, the tickets for the last-named being free. 109 plays and operas were given. Among these were: Ten trage-

New statistics of subventions, paid in any form to theaters by municipalities throughout Germany, are being prepared by Geheimrat Max Martorsteig for the Society of German Theatre Directors, who, as well as the powerful German Actors' Association, are trying to urge the towns to recognize the claims of the stage to public support.

dies, 26 times; 19 comedies, 52 times; 1 farce, once; 10 dialect plays, 10 times; 3 fairy plays, 18 times; 10 French plays, 10 times; 36 operas, 31 times; 5 musical comedies, 14 times; 4 ballets, 14 times.

These performances involved no less than 2,172 rehearsals. As in most German theatres, the system of subscription seats is the custom in this theatre, too, by which the price of the seat is lowered forty per cent.

It will be seen, therefore, that the policy here is not a "sound business" one, for if the unpaid rent for the building and the salaries for the orchestra be added to the above expenses, the total amount will be found to be more than a third over the whole income. But "sound business" is not the real question in this policy. Strassburg regards its theatre in a different light, namely, as a source of intellectual and artistic enjoyment for its citizens. To a certain extent, also, no doubt, it is intended as an attraction to outsiders, a role in which it proves itself of some use to tradespeople and others, even if they do not enjoy it and do not frequent it themselves; so here, at least, there is some "business" after all, which not even the keenest business man can deny. This fact ought also to dispose of the stock argument that the money of the ratepayers should not be used to satisfy "the pleasures of the few." That the main purpose aimed at is achieved as far as it can be, the above statistics seem to bear full testimony.

But Germany is not so absolutely deprived of *individual* enterprise as other countries may think. Many of the theatres called "Municipal Theatres" are neither more nor less than institutions founded by individual citizens of the town, for Germans are always ready to give generously in such cases, and

in this way beautiful theatres have been erected in many of the towns. Two of the most important theatres of this kind are in Frankfurt am Main and Hamburg. But even in such a small town as Giesen, a number of citizens (about six hundred) recently got together a sum of \$125,000 in order to have a theatre built. The towns under such circumstances, it is true, generally grant large yearly subsidies as, for example, in the case of the Frankfurt Theatre just mentioned. Through these subsidies the theatres assume more the character of public institutions and have a higher standard altogether. This system might be called the transition stage between a private theatre and a municipal theatre proper, a stage which it might be wise not to omit in founding municipal theatres.

FRANK E. WASHBURN FREUND.

## THE PAGEANT CALENDAR.



THE Roger Bacon Pageant, given at Columbia University, New York City, November 4, 5, 6 and 7, honors the seven hundredth anniversary of the birth of the great scholar. Three hundred actors participated, drawn from different departments of the University.

The pageant commences with an expression of the world's indebtedness to the thirteenth century. The great Moorish philosopher, Averroès of Cordova (1126-1196) reviews at the end of his life the gifts which the past has to bring to the century about to dawn. Then the church fathers appear in procession. Next come Justinian of Byzantium and his court, who receive and reward the codifiers of the laws. Later the court of the Caliph at Bagdad honors the commentators of Aristotle and the Arabian physicians. In connection with this scene are given Oriental dances. Charles the Great now welcomes Alcuin as the founder of the Palace School. In a short epilogue Averroès calls to him the philosophers of Spain, foretells the end of thought at Cordova, and bids the rule of the western people to come.

The second part of the pageant shows the life and spirit of the thirteenth century. In a prologue Bacon looks back over the centuries and tells of the achievements of his own time. He is a silent spectator while the romantic spirit of the western people is typified by the crusaders, the minne singers, the

troubadours, the guilds, and a feudal court of knights and estates during the visit by the Emperor.

In the prologue to the final scene Thomas Aquinas tells of the intellectual achievements of his century, showing the clash of views, and mentioning Bacon. A scene in Oxford follows, during which Bacon is received into the Franciscan orders. Then one sees Paris in its student life and medieval disputation, in which Bacon takes part. Here at the University of Paris a doctors' degree is conferred upon the great philosopher. At last Bacon, aged and alone, tells of his isolation and prophesies the fate of his views. The pageant closes with a rich view of the City of Florence at the end of the century.

CLARA FITCH,

*Chairman of the Committee on Pageants of the  
Drama League of America.*

## AID FOR THE AMATEUR



THE Amateur Committee of the Drama League of America has been formed with several objects in view. One of great importance is the raising of the efficiency of existing groups by giving them an insight into the best work being done by amateurs in the country, and an opportunity, by the League's establishment of a clearing house for information, to profit by the labor and experiences of other associations. Another aim is that of establishing in the small towns somewhat permanent groups of growing power which shall give to their community a glimpse of that better drama from which their location at present debars them.

Some notes from the chairman of the committee follow:

The correspondence of this department gives a vivid impression of the varied activity of American amateur clubs. Not many years ago our best amateurs divided attention between pretty parlor comedies like, "A Scrap of Paper," a few standard farces like "Lend Me Five Shillings," and the eighteenth-century comedies, "The Rivals" and "She Stoops to Conquer." Today they are giving the poetic plays of Percy MacKaye, Yeats, Gibson, Masfield and Maeterlinck,—the realistic serious comedies of Granville Barker and Galsworthy (even of Houghton, Brighouse and Synge, strongly marked as these last are with local color and dialect),—and

the brilliant society satire of Wilde, Hankin, George Calderon, and Maugham. The activity, moreover, is not confined to one section of the country. "Plays and Players," for example, of Philadelphia, in 1912-1913 produced nineteen works, ranging from a fourteenth century miracle play and a morality of the fifteenth century to Masefield's "Campden Wonder" and a portion of "The Adventures of Anatol," and including several original plays by members of the club. In Illinois, the Lake Forest Players have produced on their little stage within three years nearly fifty pieces, most of them translated or adapted by members of the club from contemporary French or Italian dramatists. In Logan, Utah, the local club has been giving a number of clever one-act pieces from the London music-halls, pieces which are little known in America. In Minnesota, a play of farm life has been utilized by the extension department of the state university in its "back-to-the-farm" campaign. The colleges naturally have been very active. The work of dramatic clubs at Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth and other Eastern colleges, and at Stanford and the University of California, is of course well known. The record, however, of some college clubs in the Middle West is almost as interesting; for example, at the University of Illinois the students have produced with success *The Passing of the Third Floor Back* and *The Servant in the House*. At Lake Forest College a student body of two hundred has produced some twenty-four plays in three years, eleven of them for the first time in America. It is no exaggeration to say that the American amateur is already doing his part—or her part—toward educating the theatrical public of the future. If our numberless clubs could be brought into closer ac-



quaintance, so that they could know of one another's success and experiments, better results would come.

"Finding a play" has been made easier for the American amateur in recent years. The Drama League of America issues a comprehensive list in its pamphlet, "Plays for Amateur Acting," and in its two "Selective Lists" compiled by Frank Chouteau Brown. The Drama League Center of Boston issued last winter a carefully classified list, including many titles of recent date. The Amateur Department is beginning the issue of another list, giving not only titles but also suggestions regarding general matters of production. The first section of this new list, including about a hundred and fifty plays of recent date, is now in the press. A few of the titles, which may be of value to those needing aid before the annotated list is printed, are the following:

*Long Plays.*

"The Cap and Bells," by Robert Vansittart. Comedy, in three acts, for four men and two women. 40 cents.

"Just to Get Married," by Cicely Hamilton. Comedy in three acts, for five men and five women. 40 cents.

"Thompson," by St. George Hankin and George Calderon. Comedy in three acts, for five men and five women. 60 cents.

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Some remarks on the amateur drama of England may be of interest in this connection. The work of experimenting with new plays of a non-commercial kind, which in America is being taken up by the leading amateur clubs, is done in England by the great producing associations like the Stage Society, which hire professional actors and give subscription performances, usually on Sunday evenings. Yet the amateur clubs in England are numerous and active, and country-house theatricals are familiar to all readers of English novels. The "Directory of Amateur Dramatic Clubs," published by Samuel French

and Company, London, lists about eight hundred amateur clubs in the British Isles. Some five hundred of these produce plays only, and some three hundred produce both plays and operas. There are one hundred and fifteen dramatic clubs and sixty dramatic and operatic clubs in London alone. It is interesting to note that there are several federations of amateur clubs in Great Britain, which make possible a certain degree of coöperation. The plays given by these clubs, as listed by the directory, show that they follow very closely upon the contemporary professional stage. Our American amateurs in their search for plays might get suggestions from this directory or from the frequent notes of amateur performances published in the English dramatic weeklies, *The Stage* and *The Era*.

Comparison of the work of English and American clubs brings one rather sad reflection. The English clubs act English plays; our clubs act English plays also—not, as a rule, American plays. For one reason or another we have not as yet any considerable number of American plays suitable for amateurs. Perhaps if our amateur associations were to form a league, we could stimulate the writing and publication of such plays; and we could perhaps obtain the use of professional plays for a smaller royalty than is now demanded.

In this connection I might say that in the next section of its forthcoming list of plays with notes, the Amateur Department would like very much to include some of the many plays by American writers, as yet unpublished, which might be available, under certain conditions, for amateur production. Many such plays have been given successfully by local clubs, and would be successful elsewhere if available; others, perhaps equally good, are as yet un-

tried. The Amateur Department may be able to give assistance in getting them published.

In addition, the Amateur Department would be glad to learn:

1. The names and addresses of amateur clubs, with lists of the plays which they have produced, and any comments thereon which may be of interest.
2. The names and addresses of competent coaches for amateur performances.

All communications should be addressed to the chairman, John M. Clapp, Lake Forest, Illinois.

## HOW TO SEE A PLAY

*How to See a Play*, by Richard Burton.

The Macmillan Company, New York, 1914.

The volume with this homely but illuminating title begins, in the preface, with similar simplicity and directness. "This book is aimed squarely at the theatre-goer." And the author proves himself a marksman. One is reminded, however, of the somewhat hackneyed story of the hunter who, after a long day unsuccessful in the discovery of game, exhausts his shot in casual target practice. At the moment when the last charge has been wasted, he comes upon a file of ducks. Hastily he grabs the gem in his stick pin and, cramming it into his shell, aims at the first bird. He lands his prey, and so skillful has been his aim that every other duck in the line has likewise been killed—and the jewel is discovered carefully embedded in the last victim. Mr. Burton has written a book of value not only to play-goers, but to students of the printed drama and to dramatists as well. Perhaps this general use is only to be expected since we connect drama, however enjoyed, inextricably with its presentation (for those who enjoy reading plays are those who visualize the suggested action) and since whatever is essential for the audience to know is doubly essential for the covetous—because human—playwright.

For the mature writer of plays the volume gets its interest not so much from its discussion of technique as from the two chapters devoted to the cultural opportunity the play offers and to the social

significance of the play. In America in especial the dramatist often lacks a feeling for the correlation of his works with the telling life of the country. If he could be made to feel the important position of drama as an art, and if he once understood the value of drama as education, its function in supplying properly directed emotions, sane ideas, and high ideals, he might give us a drama of which we could speak as permanent achievement. The younger playwright—of whom the land is fortunately so full—will find the technical material simple and wise, and lighted by the way with innumerable bits of salient criticism.

Aside from the two sections mentioned specifically above, there are an opening chapter, showing the relation of the play to other forms of story telling, three chapters dealing in outline with the history of English drama, and five chapters devoted to technique. The whole effort is characterized by a simplicity of treatment which makes an original analysis occasionally seem an established and obvious fact, and by the introduction of present material and of a modern point of view. Examples of the latter phase are found in an excellent discussion of the art of acting and its relation to the play; in the emphasis given the stage picture: "in drama, composition to the eye is as truly a principle as it is in painting;" in a warning, pertinent because so often unheeded even by a dramatist of Mr. Shaw's power, that the great unities of today are not of time and place but of tone, of theme and of aim, and through these of action; and in the criticism of early schools of drama as dictated largely by their environment of audience, of variously shaped theatres and of lighting.

The devoted student of drama and dramaturgy will not always agree with Mr. Burton but he will

always find good material for argument. For instance, after remarking that drama must focus on really interesting, exciting, enthusiastic moments of human doing, while the novel may take time to fill out the picture often to the point of prolixity, as in the works of Richardson, Mr. James and Mr. Bennett, he suggests that Mr. Galsworthy and Mr. Barker, for example, have tried to introduce a more careful psychology into drama with a result of only approximate success. The implication seems to be that while there is a large body of intelligent readers for Mr. James, much as he has been assailed for over-analysis of character and for involved style, there is not a corresponding audience for plays devoted to subtleties of character and of situation, however well handled. One ventures the opinion that as Mr. James finds his position increasingly certain with the years, so will the group originating in England with Mr. Barker and his contemporaries gain constant ground. Certainly the best of recent drama is proving to us that there is little in spiritual and emotional experience which cannot by a master be conveyed to the audience in external act and symbol. If proof of this has been given so clearly in the works of Flaubert, it should be equally possible in the drama, which, in representation at least, has the interpreter to convey by the play of facial expression and gesture the most minute emotion.

At a later point Mr. Burton calls attention to the new emphasis being given to character, an emphasis formerly upon plot. This is of a piece with the tendency we mention. How largely the intelligent audience of the future may construe the term "dramatic performance" is indicated by a scheme recently in successful operation at the famous art theatre, the Sea Gull Theatre of Moscow. There great novels

are interpreted by a combination of readers and actors, the performance being continuous from night to night. (It is interesting in this connection to note how we are approaching in our modern theory many of the conventions of the older Chinese theatre.)

In any elementary treatise it is perhaps wise to give only the established and conventional fact, to give the road trod by the majority of the successful and to omit reference to the other highways by which the occasional wayfarer has reached the destination with equal ease. Yet one is surprised at the unqualified support of the *scène à faire*, the "big scene," the scene of climax: "And the prepared play-goer will deny the coveted award of *well done* to any play, albeit it from famous hands and by no means wanting in good qualities, which nevertheless fails in this prime requisite of good drama: the central, dynamic scene illuminating all that goes before and follows after, without which the play, after all, has no right to existence." Are we to withhold applause from so large a portion of modern drama, especially the rich Russian works, merely to uphold our theory? Ultra-conservatism at the beginning of a period beating with enthusiasm for the expression of life in playform can never be the rule. The result is the criterion, not the mechanical devices by which it is achieved. And the indications are that the drama of the coming decade will be filled with a freedom of expression not known since the time of Elizabeth. The *scène à faire*, effective as it is in getting people into the theatre, is, even in the hands of the masters, tinged with theatricality; it has just the atmosphere of artificiality of which the modern theatre-goer is evidently coming to disapprove.

This positive statement of questions in controversy is, after all, of minor importance in the face



of the aim and the accomplishment of the volume. Says Mr. Burton: "We shall not have intelligent audiences in American theatres, speaking by and large, until theatre-goers learn to judge dramatic wares by some other test than what it costs to buy them." This call to the play-goer to recognize the value of the theatre as art and as education and to prepare himself to further its interests by study and thought is the worthy aim of this worthy book.

By BALLOU.

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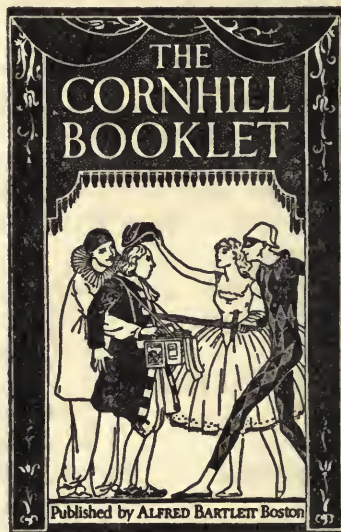
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STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION,  
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Of The Drama, published quarterly at Chicago, Ill., for April 1, 1914.

Editor—Theodore Ballou Hinckley, 6018 Jackson Park Blvd.

Managing Editor—Theodore Ballou Hinckley, 6018 Jackson Park Blvd.

Business Manager—Theodore Ballou Hinckley, 6018 Jackson Park Blvd.

Publisher—Drama League of America.

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