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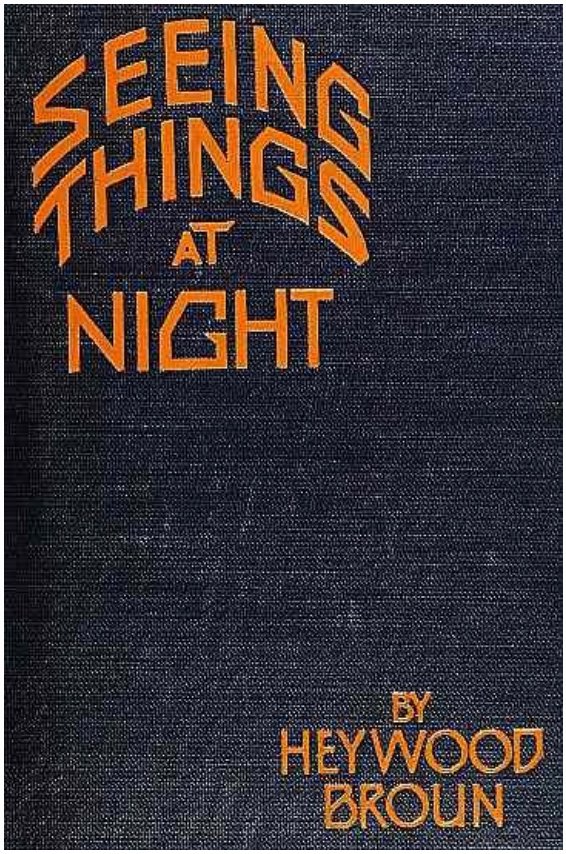

SEEING THINGS AT NIGHT

BY
HEYWOOD BROUN

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TO
HEYWOOD BROUN, 3RD

Introduction

THE first difficulty was the title. It was felt that *Seeing Things at Night* might suggest theatrical essays to the exclusion of anything else. That was not the author's intention. He meant to suggest rather newspaper articles of any sort done more or less on the spur of the moment for next day's consumption. There was also some question as to the order in which the various "pieces" should be arranged. The author was tempted to follow the example of Adolf Wolff, a free verse poet who published a volume some years ago called *Songs, Sighs and Curses*, and explained in a foreword, "When asked in what sequence he would arrange his poems, Wolff threw the manuscripts in the air, saying 'Let Fate decide.' They now appear in the order in which they were picked up from the floor."

Broun, however, feared that some of his essays might crash through the floor like the mistakes of a cannonball juggler and that others would prove so lacking in weight when put to the test that it would be necessary to pluck them from the ceiling rather than the floor. The arrangement, therefore, is premeditated though haphazard. In respect to his age the author also wishes to explain that the character, H. 3rd, who appears from time to time is his son and not his grandson. He also wishes to acknowledge the courtesy of *The New York Tribune*, *Vanity Fair*, *McCall's*, *Collier's Weekly* and *The Nation* in permitting him to reprint various articles which first appeared in their pages.

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The Fifty-first Dragon

Of all the pupils at the knight school Gawaine le Cœur-Hardy was among the least promising. He was tall and sturdy, but his instructors soon discovered that he lacked spirit. He would hide in the woods when the jousting class was called, although his companions and members of the faculty sought to appeal to his better nature by shouting to him to come out and break his neck like a man. Even when they told him that the lances were padded, the horses no more than ponies and the field unusually soft for late autumn, Gawaine refused to grow enthusiastic. The Headmaster and the Assistant Professor of Pleasaunce were discussing the case one spring afternoon and the Assistant Professor could see no remedy but expulsion.

"No," said the Headmaster, as he looked out at the purple hills which ringed the school, "I think I'll train him to slay dragons."

"He might be killed," objected the Assistant Professor.

"So he might," replied the Headmaster brightly, but he added, more soberly, "We must consider the greater good. We are responsible for the formation of this lad's character."

"Are the dragons particularly bad this year?" interrupted the Assistant Professor. This was characteristic. He always seemed restive when the head of the school began to talk ethics and the ideals of the institution.

"I've never known them worse," replied the Headmaster. "Up in the hills to the south last week they killed a number of peasants, two cows and a prize pig. And if this dry spell holds there's no telling when they may start a forest fire simply by breathing around indiscriminately."

"Would any refund on the tuition fee be necessary in case of an accident to young Cœur-Hardy?"

"No," the principal answered, judicially, "that's all covered in the contract. But as a matter of fact he won't be killed. Before I send him up in the hills I'm going to give him a magic word."

"That's a good idea," said the Professor. "Sometimes they work wonders."

From that day on Gawaine specialized in dragons. His course included both theory and practice. In the morning

there were long lectures on the history, anatomy, manners and customs of dragons. Gawaine did not distinguish himself in these studies. He had a marvelously versatile gift for forgetting things. In the afternoon he showed to better advantage, for then he would go down to the South Meadow and practise with a battle-ax. In this exercise he was truly impressive, for he had enormous strength as well as speed and grace. He even developed a deceptive display of ferocity. Old alumni say that it was a thrilling sight to see Gawaine charging across the field toward the dummy paper dragon which had been set up for his practice. As he ran he would brandish his ax and shout "A murrain on thee!" or some other vivid bit of campus slang. It never took him more than one stroke to behead the dummy dragon.

Gradually his task was made more difficult. Paper gave way to papier-mâché and finally to wood, but even the toughest of these dummy dragons had no terrors for Gawaine. One sweep of the ax always did the business. There were those who said that when the practice was protracted until dusk and the dragons threw long, fantastic shadows across the meadow Gawaine did not charge so impetuously nor shout so loudly. It is possible there was malice in this charge. At any rate, the Headmaster decided by the end of June that it was time for the test. Only the night before a dragon had come close to the school grounds and had eaten some of the lettuce from the garden. The faculty decided that Gawaine was ready. They gave him a diploma and a new battle-ax and the Headmaster summoned him to a private conference.

"Sit down," said the Headmaster. "Have a cigarette."

Gawaine hesitated.

"Oh, I know it's against the rules," said the Headmaster. "But after all, you have received your preliminary degree. You are no longer a boy. You are a man. To-morrow you will go out into the world, the great world of achievement."

Gawaine took a cigarette. The Headmaster offered him a match, but he produced one of his own and began to puff away with a dexterity which quite amazed the principal.

"Here you have learned the theories of life," continued the Headmaster, resuming the thread of his discourse, "but after all, life is not a matter of theories. Life is a matter of facts. It calls on the young and the old alike to face these facts, even though they are hard and sometimes unpleasant. Your problem, for example, is to slay dragons."

"They say that those dragons down in the south wood are five hundred feet long," ventured Gawaine, timorously.

"Stuff and nonsense!" said the Headmaster. "The curate saw one last week from the top of Arthur's Hill. The dragon was sunning himself down in the valley. The curate didn't have an opportunity to look at him very long because he felt it was his duty to hurry back to make a report to me. He said the monster, or shall I say, the big lizard?—wasn't an inch over two hundred feet. But the size has nothing at all to do with it. You'll find the big ones even easier than the little ones. They're far slower on their feet and less aggressive, I'm told. Besides, before you go I'm going to equip you in such fashion that you need have no fear of all the dragons in the world."

"I'd like an enchanted cap," said Gawaine.

"What's that?" answered the Headmaster, testily.

"A cap to make me disappear," explained Gawaine.

The Headmaster laughed indulgently. "You mustn't believe all those old wives' stories," he said. "There isn't any such thing. A cap to make you disappear, indeed! What would you do with it? You haven't even appeared yet. Why, my boy, you could walk from here to London, and nobody would so much as look at you. You're nobody. You couldn't be more invisible than that."

Gawaine seemed dangerously close to a relapse into his old habit of whimpering. The Headmaster reassured him: "Don't worry; I'll give you something much better than an enchanted cap. I'm going to give you a magic word. All you have to do is to repeat this magic charm once and no dragon can possibly harm a hair of your head. You can cut off his head at your leisure."

He took a heavy book from the shelf behind his desk and began to run through it. "Sometimes," he said, "the charm is a whole phrase or even a sentence. I might, for instance, give you 'To make the'—No, that might not do. I think a single word would be best for dragons."

"A short word," suggested Gawaine.

"It can't be too short or it wouldn't be potent. There isn't so much hurry as all that. Here's a splendid magic word: 'Rumplesnitz.' Do you think you can learn that?"

Gawaine tried and in an hour or so he seemed to have the word well in hand. Again and again he interrupted the lesson to inquire, "And if I say 'Rumplesnitz' the dragon can't possibly hurt me?" And always the Headmaster replied, "If you only say 'Rumplesnitz,' you are perfectly safe."

Toward morning Gawaine seemed resigned to his career. At daybreak the Headmaster saw him to the edge of the forest and pointed him to the direction in which he should proceed. About a mile away to the southwest a cloud of steam hovered over an open meadow in the woods and the Headmaster assured Gawaine that under the steam he would find a dragon. Gawaine went forward slowly. He wondered whether it would be best to approach the dragon on the run as he did in his practice in the South Meadow or to walk slowly toward him, shouting "Rumplesnitz" all the way.

The problem was decided for him. No sooner had he come to the fringe of the meadow than the dragon spied him and began to charge. It was a large dragon and yet it seemed decidedly aggressive in spite of the Headmaster's statement to the contrary. As the dragon charged it released huge clouds of hissing steam through its nostrils. It was almost as if a gigantic teapot had gone mad. The dragon came forward so fast and Gawaine was so frightened that he had time to say "Rumplesnitz" only once. As he said it, he swung his battle-ax and off popped the head of the dragon.

Gawaine had to admit that it was even easier to kill a real dragon than a wooden one if only you said "Rumplesnitz."

Gawaine brought the ears home and a small section of the tail. His school mates and the faculty made much of him, but the Headmaster wisely kept him from being spoiled by insisting that he go on with his work. Every clear day Gawaine rose at dawn and went out to kill dragons. The Headmaster kept him at home when it rained, because he said the woods were damp and unhealthy at such times and that he didn't want the boy to run needless risks. Few good days passed in which Gawaine failed to get a dragon. On one particularly fortunate day he killed three, a husband and wife and a visiting relative. Gradually he developed a technique. Pupils who sometimes watched him from the hill-tops a long way off said that he often allowed the dragon to come within a few feet before he said "Rumplesnitz." He came to say it with a mocking sneer. Occasionally he did stunts. Once when an excursion party from London was watching him he went into action with his right hand tied behind his back. The dragon's head came off just as easily.

As Gawaine's record of killings mounted higher the Headmaster found it impossible to keep him completely in hand. He fell into the habit of stealing out at night and engaging in long drinking bouts at the village tavern. It was after such a debauch that he rose a little before dawn one fine August morning and started out after his fiftieth dragon. His head was heavy and his mind sluggish. He was heavy in other respects as well, for he had adopted the somewhat vulgar practice of wearing his medals, ribbons and all, when he went out dragon hunting. The decorations began on his chest and ran all the way down to his abdomen. They must have weighed at least eight pounds.

Gawaine found a dragon in the same meadow where he had killed the first one. It was a fair-sized dragon, but evidently an old one. Its face was wrinkled and Gawaine thought he had never seen so hideous a countenance. Much to the lad's disgust, the monster refused to charge and Gawaine was obliged to walk toward him. He whistled as he went. The dragon regarded him hopelessly, but craftily. Of course it had heard of Gawaine. Even when the lad raised his battle-ax the dragon made no move. It knew that there was no salvation in the quickest thrust of the head, for it had been informed that this hunter was protected by an enchantment. It merely waited, hoping something would turn up. Gawaine raised the battle-ax and suddenly lowered it again. He had grown very pale and he trembled violently. The dragon suspected a trick. "What's the matter?" it asked, with false solicitude.

"I've forgotten the magic word," stammered Gawaine.

"What a pity," said the dragon. "So that was the secret. It doesn't seem quite sporting to me, all this magic stuff, you know. Not cricket, as we used to say when I was a little dragon; but after all, that's a matter of opinion."

Gawaine was so helpless with terror that the dragon's confidence rose immeasurably and it could not resist the temptation to show off a bit.

"Could I possibly be of any assistance?" it asked. "What's the first letter of the magic word?"

"It begins with an 'r,'" said Gawaine weakly.

"Let's see," mused the dragon, "that doesn't tell us much, does it? What sort of a word is this? Is it an epithet, do you think?"

Gawaine could do no more than nod.

"Why, of course," exclaimed the dragon, "reactionary Republican."

Gawaine shook his head.

"Well, then," said the dragon, "we'd better get down to business. Will you surrender?"

With the suggestion of a compromise Gawaine mustered up enough courage to speak.

"What will you do if I surrender?" he asked.

"Why, I'll eat you," said the dragon.

"And if I don't surrender?"

"I'll eat you just the same."

"Then it doesn't make any difference, does it?" moaned Gawaine.

"It does to me," said the dragon with a smile. "I'd rather you didn't surrender. You'd taste much better if you didn't."

The dragon waited for a long time for Gawaine to ask "Why?" but the boy was too frightened to speak. At last the dragon had to give the explanation without his cue line. "You see," he said, "if you don't surrender you'll taste better because you'll die game."

This was an old and ancient trick of the dragon's. By means of some such quip he was accustomed to paralyze his victims with laughter and then to destroy them. Gawaine was sufficiently paralyzed as it was, but laughter had no part in his helplessness. With the last word of the joke the dragon drew back his head and struck. In that second there flashed into the mind of Gawaine the magic word "Rumplesnitz," but there was no time to say it. There was time only to strike and, without a word, Gawaine met the onrush of the dragon with a full swing. He put all his back and shoulders into it. The impact was terrific and the head of the dragon flew away almost a hundred yards and landed in a thicket.

Gawaine did not remain frightened very long after the death of the dragon. His mood was one of wonder. He was enormously puzzled. He cut off the ears of the monster almost in a trance. Again and again he thought to himself, "I didn't say 'Rumplesnitz'!" He was sure of that and yet there was no question that he had killed the dragon. In fact, he had never killed one so utterly. Never before had he driven a head for anything like the same distance. Twenty-five

yards was perhaps his best previous record. All the way back to the knight school he kept rumbling about in his mind seeking an explanation for what had occurred. He went to the Headmaster immediately and after closing the door told him what had happened. "I didn't say 'Rumplesnitz,'" he explained with great earnestness.

The Headmaster laughed. "I'm glad you've found out," he said. "It makes you ever so much more of a hero. Don't you see that? Now you know that it was you who killed all these dragons and not that foolish little word 'Rumplesnitz.'"

Gawaine frowned. "Then it wasn't a magic word after all?" he asked.

"Of course not," said the Headmaster, "you ought to be too old for such foolishness. There isn't any such thing as a magic word."

"But you told me it was magic," protested Gawaine. "You said it was magic and now you say it isn't."

"It wasn't magic in a literal sense," answered the Headmaster, "but it was much more wonderful than that. The word gave you confidence. It took away your fears. If I hadn't told you that you might have been killed the very first time. It was your battle-ax did the trick."

Gawaine surprised the Headmaster by his attitude. He was obviously distressed by the explanation. He interrupted a long philosophic and ethical discourse by the Headmaster with, "If I hadn't of hit 'em all mighty hard and fast any one of 'em might have crushed me like a, like a—" He fumbled for a word.

"Egg shell," suggested the Headmaster.

"Like a egg shell," assented Gawaine, and he said it many times. All through the evening meal people who sat near him heard him muttering, "Like a egg shell, like a egg shell."

The next day was clear, but Gawaine did not get up at dawn. Indeed, it was almost noon when the Headmaster found him cowering in bed, with the clothes pulled over his head. The principal called the Assistant Professor of Pleasaunce, and together they dragged the boy toward the forest.

"He'll be all right as soon as he gets a couple more dragons under his belt," explained the Headmaster.

The Assistant Professor of Pleasaunce agreed. "It would be a shame to stop such a fine run," he said. "Why, counting that one yesterday, he's killed fifty dragons."

They pushed the boy into a thicket above which hung a meager cloud of steam. It was obviously quite a small dragon. But Gawaine did not come back that night or the next. In fact, he never came back. Some weeks afterward brave spirits from the school explored the thicket, but they could find nothing to remind them of Gawaine except the metal parts of his medals. Even the ribbons had been devoured.

The Headmaster and the Assistant Professor of Pleasaunce agreed that it would be just as well not to tell the school how Gawaine had achieved his record and still less how he came to die. They held that it might have a bad effect on school spirit. Accordingly, Gawaine has lived in the memory of the school as its greatest hero. No visitor succeeds in leaving the building to-day without seeing a great shield which hangs on the wall of the dining hall. Fifty pairs of dragons' ears are mounted upon the shield and underneath in gilt letters is "Gawaine le Cœur-Hardy," followed by the simple inscription, "He killed fifty dragons." The record has never been equaled.

How To Be a Lion Tamer

The Ways of the Circus is a decidedly readable book, rich in anecdotes of the life of circus folk and circus animals. The narrator is an old lion tamer and Harvey W. Root, who has done the actual writing, has managed to keep a decidedly naïve quality in the talk as he sets it down. There is a delightful chapter, for instance, in which Conklin tells how he first became a lion tamer. By gradual process of promotion he had gone as far as an elephant, but his salary was still much lower than that of Charlie Forepaugh, the lion man. There were three lions with the circus, but Charlie never worked with more than one in the cage at the time. Conklin got the notion that an act with all the lions in action at once would be a sensational success. He was not sure that it could be done, as he had had no experience with lions. The only way to find out was to try. Accordingly Conklin sneaked into the menagerie alone, late at night, to ascertain whether or not lions lay along his natural bent.

"The animals seemed somewhat surprised at being disturbed in the middle of the night," he says, "and began to pace rapidly up and down their cages. I paid no attention to this, but opened the door of each cage in succession and drove them out. Then I began as sternly as I could to order them round and give them their cues.

"Except, perhaps, for an unusual amount of snarling, they did as well for me as for Charlie. I put them through their regular work, which took fifteen or twenty minutes, drove them back, and fastened them into their own cages and climbed down on to the floor from the performing cage, much elated with my success. I had proved to myself that I could handle lions."

Conklin then goes on to tell how he gave a secret exhibition for the proprietor of the circus and convinced him of his skill. In fact, the proprietor promised that he should become the lion tamer of the show as soon as Charlie Forepaugh's contract ran out. Conklin goes on to say that he himself was very particular for the sake of safety not to let Charlie know of this arrangement. And in explaining his timidity, he writes, "He was a big fellow with a quick

temper."

This almost emboldens us to believe the old story of the lion tamer and his shrewish wife. Coming home late from a party, he feared to enter the house and so he went to the backyard and crept into the cage with the lions. There it was that his wife discovered him the next morning, sleeping with the lions, and she shook her fist and shouted through the bars, "you coward!"

To be sure as Mr. Conklin tells it there seems to be no great trick in being a lion tamer. Take, for instance, the familiar stunt in which a trainer puts his head into a lion's mouth and you will find upon close survey that it is nothing to worry about. "This never failed to make the crowd hold its breath, but it was not as risky as it seemed," says Conklin, "for with my hold on the lion's nose and jowl I could detect the slightest movement of his muscles and govern my actions accordingly." Mr. Conklin does not develop the point, but we suppose that if he detected any intention on the lion's part of closing his mouth he would take his head out in order to make it easier for the animal.

Mr. Conklin also corrects a number of misapprehensions about lions which may be of use to some readers. Contrary to popular belief, you have nothing to worry about if any of your lions insist on walking up and down. "A lion that will walk round when you get in the cage with him is all right, as a general thing," explains Conklin, "but look out for the one that goes and lies down in a corner."

To be sure, there is something just a little disturbing in the afterthought indicated in "as a general thing." Our luck is so bad that we wouldn't feel safe in a cage with a lion even if he ran up and down. In fact, we would be almost willing to wager that ours would be one of the unfortunate exceptions which didn't know the rule and so would do his bit toward providing it.

In another respect the lion tamer is a little more specific about lions and therefore more helpful. "It is true, though," he adds, "that you should never let one get behind you if you can help it, though in many of the acts it is not possible to keep all of them in front of you all the time." We can understand this advice, though it is not altogether clear to us just what we would do if a lion tried to get behind us. Of course, we would tell him not to, but after that we should be somewhat at a loss. We have never believed in being rough with lions. Probably we would let him have his way just to avoid argument. As a matter of fact we would have no great objection to having all our lions behind us if only we could keep far enough in front.

"A lion that growls frightfully and acts very ferocious when you are outside the cage may be one of the easiest to handle and get work out of when once you are actually in the cage; and on the other hand, a lion that is mean and dangerous to do anything with in the cage may be exceptionally docile from the outside and allow you to pet him freely."

This should go a long way toward solving the problems of lion tamers. All you have to do before a performance is to make a test from outside the cage. Try to pat your lion and pull his ears. If he growls and bites your hand you will know at once that you may come in and go about your business with perfect safety. On the other hand, if he meets your caresses by rolling over on his back and purring it is up to you to call off the show or send for your understudy.

The unfortunate fate of such a substitute is described by Conklin with much detail and, we fear, a little relish. The man in question took Conklin's job when he struck for a raise in salary. Things went well enough during the first performance until the very end, and then it was the fault not of the lion but of the substitute, for the trainer was ignorant of one of the cues which had become a part of the act.

"I had taught George to jump for me as I went out the door," writes Conklin. "It had been done by blowing on his nose and then jumping back as you would play with a dog. It always made a great hit with the crowd, who supposed it had seen a lion try to eat a man and that I had had a very narrow escape. I worked it this way: After I had finished the rest of my act I would get George all stirred up and growling. Then I would fire my pistol two or three times and jump out of the cage as quickly as I could. At the same time George would give a big lunge and come up against the door which I had just shut behind me. George had learned the trick so well that I frequently had to turn on him once or twice and work him farther back from the door before I dared attempt getting out."

Unfortunately the substitute had missed all this part of the act. He started out of the cage and George jumped at him and the man was not prepared to dodge. The moral seems to be that nobody should covet another man's job, not even that of lion taming.

Some readers we suppose will find Mr. Conklin's lion stories unwelcome because they may tend to take away their illusions. It is not to be denied that he has to some extent rubbed the gilt off the gingerbread by writing that the record for all the lions he has known consists of one substitute trainer and a cow. His whole attitude toward lions is contemptuous in its calm and so is the attitude of practically everybody else in the book with the exception of the cow and the substitute trainer. Even they suffered a little, at first, from overconfidence.

On the night down in Philadelphia when Wallace, the big lion, escaped from his cage in winter quarters nobody grew excited. O'Brien, the owner of the show, did not even get up, but called through the door "Go git Conklin!" The preparations of the trainer were simple. First he got an iron bar and then he found the lion and hit him on the end of the nose. "After a few minutes," he adds, "I had him safely locked in again."

Lions, for all their air of authority, seem to be easily dominated. They're not so much wicked as weak. Anybody with a little firmness can twist them around a finger, possibly not the little finger, but any of the others. It is a great pity that lions should be like that. To be sure, the information ought not to come as a surprise to anybody who is familiar with the Bible. The condition we have mentioned has existed for a long time. As far as we know, Daniel had not so much as an iron bar when he went into the den. He overawed the lions with nothing more than faith.

Perhaps it is not quite fair to go on as if lions were the only living creatures in all the world who are swayed and cowed by firmness and authority. The same weakness may be found now and then among men. All too many of us if hit on the nose with iron bars, either real ones or symbols, do little more than lions in similar circumstances. We may growl and roar a little, but we do not show resentment in any efficient way. And like the lions, we are singularly

stupid in not making working alliances with our fellows against the man with the iron bar. By and by we begin to go through the hoops as if the procedure were inevitable. Having made a protest we feel that our duty is done.

It is a great pity. Lions ought to know better. The man who stares you in the eye and squeezes hard in a handshake may come to the bad end which you wish him, but it is unlikely that he will ever be eaten by lions. Something else must be devised for him. Even outside the circus he is likely to go far. Anybody who can shake a little personality can be ringmaster in this world. And we, all of us who have none, do nothing about it except to obey him. Camels we can swallow easily enough, but we strain at the natty dresser.

Still we did manage to find a few bits of information in *The Ways of the Circus* which were brand new to us. If, for instance, a rhinoceros escaped from his cage just what would you do to get him back again? That is, if he were the sort of rhinoceros you wanted back. At first glance it seems rather a problem, but any reader of Mr. Conklin's book could arrange it for you without difficulty. Nothing is needed but carrots and a stout heart. The carrots you scatter profusely about the floor of the cage, and when the rhinoceros returns to get them you slam down the door, and there he is.

H. G. Wells of England

H. G. Wells in his *Outline of History* seldom seems just an Englishman. He fights his battles and makes most of his judgments alone and generally in defiance of the traditions of his countrymen, but he is not bold enough to face Napoleon Bonaparte all by himself. The sight of the terrible little Corsican peeping over the edge of the thirty-eighth chapter sends Wells scurrying from his solitude into the center of a British square. It must be that when Wells was little and bad his nurse told him that if he did not eat his mush or go to bed, or perform some other necessary function in the daily life of a child, Old Bony would get him. And Wells is still scared. He takes it out, of course, by pretending that Napoleon has been vastly overrated and remarks that it was pretty lucky for him that he lost Trafalgar and never got to England, where troops would have made short work of him.

Nelson, Wells holds, was just as great a figure in his own specialty as Napoleon in his, but if so it seems a pity that he did not rise to Wellsian heights of strategy and lose Trafalgar so that Napoleon might land and be defeated by British pluck and skill. Then, indeed, might Waterloo have been won upon the cricket fields of Eton.

Not only does Wells insist on regarding Napoleon through national lenses but through moral ones also. Speaking of his accession as First Consul, Wells writes: "Now surely here was opportunity such as never came to man before. Here was a position in which a man might well bow himself in fear of himself, and search his heart and serve God and man to the utmost."

That, of course, was not Napoleon's intent. His performance must be judged by his purpose, and it seems to us that Wells doesn't half appreciate how brilliant was the stunt which Napoleon achieved. "He tried to do the impossible and did it." Man was no better for him and neither was God, but he remains still the great bogy man of Europe, a bogy great enough to have frightened Mr. Wells and marked him. Here was a man who took life and made it theatrical. It was an achievement in popular æsthetics, if nothing else, but Wells doesn't care about æsthetics. Perhaps even a moral might be extracted from the life of Napoleon. He proved the magic quality of personality and the inspiration of gesture. Some day the same methods may be used to better advantage.

The institution of the Legion of Honor Wells calls "A scheme for decorating Frenchmen with bits of ribbon which was admirably calculated to divert ambitious men from subversive proceedings." But these same bits of ribbon and the red and green ones of the Croix de Guerre and the yellow and green of the Médaille Militaire were later to save France from the onrush of the Germans. Without decorations, without phrases and without the brilliant and effective theatrical oratory of French officers, from marshals to sub-lieutenants, France would have lost the great war. Everybody who saw the French army in action realized that its morale was maintained during the worst days by colored ribbons and florid speeches. Even the stern and taciturn Pershing learned the lesson, and before he had been in France three months he was about making speeches to wounded men in which he told them that he wished that he, too, were lying in hospital with all their glory. Personally, it never seemed to me that Pershing actually convinced any wounded doughboy of his enthusiasm for such a change, but he did not use the gesture with much skill. He lacked the Napoleonic tradition.

Another American officer, a younger one, said, "If I ever have anything to do with West Point I'm going to copy these Frenchmen. They do it naturally, but we've got to learn. I'm going to introduce a course in practical theatricalism. Now, if I were a general, as soon as I heard of some little trench raid in which Private Smith distinguished himself I'd send a staff officer down on the sly to find out what Smith looked like. Then I'd inspect that particular organization and when I got to Smith my aide would nudge me and I'd turn, as if instinctively, and say, 'Isn't that Private Smith who distinguished himself on the evening of January 18 at 8 o'clock? I want to shake your hand, Smith.' Why, man, the French army has been living and breathing on stuff like that for the last two years."

It is an easy matter to satirize the heroic and theatrical gesture. The French themselves did it. Once in the Chamber of Deputies, late in the war, a Radical member, who didn't care much for the war, anyway, and still less for the Cabinet, arose and said: "This morning as I was walking in the streets of Paris a little before dawn I saw three camions headed for the front, and I stopped the first driver and said, 'Ah, I am overjoyed to see that at last the ministry is awake to the needs of our brave poilus and is sending supplies to the front. What is it that you carry—ammunition, clothing, food?' But the driver shook his head and said, 'No; Croix de Guerre.'"

But the satire does not cut too deeply, for Croix de Guerre played just as important a part in winning the war as food or ammunition or clothing. I heard a French colonel once cry to a crowd of prisoners returned from Germany, broken and ill: "Now, let us hear you shout that which it has been so long forbidden to you to say, 'Vive la France!'" And as he spoke his arm shot up into the air and his voice rang like a trumpet call, and everybody within sound of the man straightened up and thrilled as if he had just heard of a great victory. It was fine art for all the fact that it was probably also sincere.

No, when Napoleon had himself crowned in Nôtre Dame it was not, as Wells says, "Just a ridiculous scene." Napoleon realized that a play can be staged in a cathedral or upon a battlefield just as well as in a theater, and that man, who may come in time to be the superman of whom Wells dreams is still a little boy sitting in the gallery, ready to applaud and to shout for any dressed-up person who knows how to walk to the center of the stage and hold it.

Promises and Contracts and Clocks

"I am one of those people," says the flapper in *Beauty and Mary Blair*, "to whom life is a very great puzzle. So many people seem to get used to living, but I don't. I can't seem to get up any really satisfactory philosophy or find anybody or anything to help me about it. I want everything, little or big, fixed up in mind before I can proceed.

"Even as a very small child I always wanted my plans made in advance. Once, when mother had a bad sick headache, I sat on the edge of her bed and begged her to tell me if she thought she was going to die, so if she was I could plan to go and live with my Aunt Margaret. I was an odious infant, but all the same, I really wanted to know, and that's the way I am to this day! I want to know what the probabilities are, in order to act accordingly."

And without doubt she was odious, but only in the same way that practically everybody else is odious, for we live in a world which is governed by promises and contracts and clocks. If there actually is any such thing as free will, aren't we the idiots to fetter it! The chances of doing things on impulse are being continually diminished. There are points in the city now where it is not possible to cross the street without the permission of the policeman.

"Stop," "Go," "Keep Off the Grass," "No Trespassing," "Beware of the Dog," "Watch Your Hat and Overcoat," "Positively No Checks Cashed," "Do Not Feed or Annoy the Animals"—how can a free and adventurous soul survive in such a world? Don Marquis has celebrated the exploit of one brave rebel, we think it was Fothergil Finch, who strode into the monkey house and crying "Down with the tyranny of the capitalist system," or words to that effect, threw a peanut into the baboon's cage. We know an even bolder soul who makes a point of never watching his hat and overcoat in direct defiance of the edict, but he says that the world has become so cowed by rules that nothing ever happens.

Even the usual avenues of escape have been beset with barbed wire. There was liquor, for instance. There still is, but the prohibitionists have been devilishly wise. By arranging that it shall be ladled out by prescriptions, no matter how lavish, they have reduced drinking to the prosaic level of premeditation along with all the other activities of the world. Things have come to such a pass that drinking has now been restricted to men with real executive ability. It is no longer the solace of the irresponsible, but the reward of foresight.

Once the easy escape from dull and set routine lay in stepping on board a steamer and sailing for distant and purple shores. They are not so purple any more. No traveler can feel much like a free and footloose adventurer after he has spent two weeks in conference with the State Department, presented a certificate confirming the fact of his birth, gathered together the receipts of his income tax payments and obtained a letter from his pastor. Even though he go to the ends of the earth the adventurer travels only by the express and engraved permission of the United States government. Oceans and mountain ranges cannot alter the fact that he is on a leash. Of course, to free souls the whole system is monstrous. The fact that a man suddenly feels a desire to go to Greece on some rainy Tuesday afternoon is no sign at all that he will still want to go two weeks come Wednesday. The only proper procedure for the rebel is to obtain passports for a number of places for which he has not the slightest inclination on the hope that some day or other through a sudden change of wind he may be struck with yearning.

Train journeys are almost as bad as sea voyages. Go into any railroad station in town and ask the man at the window for a ticket and he will invariably inquire "Where do you want to go?" No provision is made for the casual traveler without a destination. The query "What trains have you got?" meets with scant courtesy. Our own system is to shop for trains. It is possible to walk up and down in front of the gates and look over the samples before making a selection, but our practice is to take the first one. To be sure this has let us into going to a good many places to which we didn't want to go, but it has also saved us from visiting any number of others to which we ought to go. Moreover, confidentially, we have one trick by which we slash through the red tape of railroad precision. Only last Thursday we told the man with a great show of determination that we wanted to go to Poughkeepsie and bought a ticket for that place. Then, when the conductor wasn't looking we slipped off at Tarrytown.

Going to the theater, getting married or divorced are all carried on under the same objectionable conditions. "Seats eight weeks in advance" say the advertisements of some of the popular shows and others. How can anybody possibly want to do something eight weeks in advance? It makes taking in a matinée a matter as dignified to all intents and purposes as writing a will or doing some other service for posterity.

There are in this country statesmen who worry from time to time that people do not marry as young as they used to, if at all. How can it be expected that they will? The life force is powerful and may prevail, but nature never had within its intent a license, witnesses, bridesmaids, a plain gold ring, a contract with the caterer, a bargain with the

printer and an engagement with the minister.

Alcoholic Liquors

"The moment, now, had arrived for a Daiquiri," writes Joseph Hergesheimer in his *San Cristobal de la Habana*. "Seated near the cool drip of the fountain, where a slight stir of air seemed to ruffle the fringed mantone of a bronze dancing Andalusian girl, I lingered over the frigid mixture of Don Bacardi, sugar and a fresh, vivid green lime.

"It was a delicate compound, not so good as I was to discover later at the Telegrafo, but still a revelation, and I was devoutly thankful to be sitting at that hour in the Inglaterra with such a drink. It elevated my contentment to an even higher pitch, and, with a detached amusement, I recalled the fact that farther north prohibition was now in effect. Unquestionably the cocktail on my table was a dangerous agent, for it held in its shallow glass bowl slightly incrusted with undissolved sugar the power of a contemptuous indifference to fate; it set the mind free of responsibility; obliterating both memory and to-morrow, it gave the heart an adventitious feeling of superiority and momentarily vanquished all the celebrated, the eternal fears."

We wonder what they put into Mr. Hergesheimer's Daiquiri. It seems to us a rather optimistic and romantic account of the effect of a single cocktail. One of the reasons why we were reconciled to prohibition was the fact that we invariably felt cheated whenever we read any loving essay about rum. In the theater, too, again and again we saw some character raise a glass to his lips and immediately begin to sing about young love in May if he happened to be the hero, or fall down a flight of steps if he were cast as the low comedian. We tried earnestly enough, but these experiences were never duplicated for us. No songs came to our lips, nor comic tumbles to our feet. Nor did we ever participate in Mr. Hergesheimer's "contemptuous indifference to fate." It was not for us in one cocktail; no, not in many.

Occasionally, it was possible to reach a stage where we became acutely conscious of the fact that Armenians were being massacred and that Ireland was not yet free. And later we have known a very persuasive drowsiness. But as for contempt and a feeling of superiority and a freedom from the eternal fears, we never found the right bottle. There was none which opened for us any door of adventure. Once, we remember, while on our way from the office to Seventy-second Street, we rode in the subway to Van Cortlandt Park and, upon being told about it, traveled back to Atlantic Avenue. It was a long ride for a nickel, but it hardly satisfied us as authentic adventure.

Even the romantic stories of our friends generally seem to us inadequate. Only to-day A. W. said, "You should have come to the party. We played a new game called 'adverbs.' You send somebody out of the room and choose an adverb, and when she comes back you've got to answer all the questions in the spirit of that adverb. You know rudely, quickly, cryptically, or anything like that. And then Art did a burlesque of the second act of *Samson and Delilah* and Elaine passed out completely, and every time anybody woke her up she'd say, 'Call me a black and white ambulance.' You had ought to have come."

We couldn't have added anything to that party. When it came our turn to answer the questions in the adverb game it would be just our luck to have the chosen word "gracefully" or "seductively" or something like that, and probably the burlesque was no good anyhow unless one could get into the spirit of the thing. That is our traditional failure. Right at the beginning of a party we realize that it is our duty to get gay and put ice down people's backs and all that, and it terrifies us. Whenever a host says "Here, drink some more Scotch and liven up" we have the same sinking feeling that we used to get when one of our former city editors wrote in the assignment book opposite our name: "Go up to the zoo and write me a funny story."

The whole trouble with life so far is that too much of it falls into assignments. We're not even content to let our holidays just happen. Instead we mark them down on a calendar, and there they stay as fixed and set as an execution day. There are times, for instance, when we feel like turning over a new leaf and leading a better life and giving up cigarettes, but when we look at the calendar it isn't New Year's at all, but Fourth of July, and so nothing can be done about it. Columbus Day or Washington's Birthday generally comes just about the time we've worked up an enthusiasm for Lincoln, which has to go to waste, and the only strong impulse we ever had to go out and cut loose was spoiled because we noticed that everybody we met was wearing a white flower in his buttonhole and we remembered that it was Mother's Day. There are even times when we don't want to play cards or travel on railroad trains or read the newspapers or go to the movies, but these times never synchronize with Sunday.

When we first took up drinking we hoped that this would be one of the avenues of escape from schedule and assignment, but it didn't work out. Even here there were preliminaries and premeditation. First of all, it was necessary to cultivate a taste for the stuff, but that was only a beginning. There were still ceremonies to be complied with. Drunkenness never just descended on anybody like thunderstorm, rain or inspiration. It was not possible to go to sleep sober and wake up and find that somehow or other you had become intoxicated during the night. Always an act of will was required. A fixed determination, "I'm going to get drunk," must first be set, and then the rum has to be ordered and poured out and consumed pretty regularly. In fact, we never could look at a bottle without feeling that the label probably bore the express direction, "Take ten times every hour until relief is obtained." Even before the Volstead act liquor was spiritually a prescription rather than a beverage.

We never had the strength of character to get any good out of it. It's a fallacy, of course, to think of a chronic drunkard or a chronic anything as a person of weak will. Indeed, as a matter of fact, his will is so strong that he has been able to marshal all his energies into one channel and to make himself thereby a specialist. In all our life we have never met but two determined men. One took a cold bath every morning and the other got drunk every night.

Some of My Best Friends Are Yale Men

"Oh, Harvard was old Harvard when Yale was but a pup,
"And Harvard will be Harvard still when Yale has all gone up,
"And if any Eli———"

THIS is about as far as the old song should be carried. Perhaps it is too far. Our plea to-day is for something of abatement in the intensity of the rivalry between Harvard and Yale. To be sure we realize that the plea has been made before unsuccessfully by mightier men. Indeed it was Charles W. Eliot himself, president of Harvard, who rebuked the students when first they began to sing, "Three cheers for Harvard and down with Yale." This, he said, seemed to him hardly a proper spirit. He suggested an amendment so that the song might go, "Three cheers for Harvard and one for Yale." Such seventy-five percent loyalty was rejected. Yale must continue to do its own cheering.

Naturally, it is not to be expected that Yale and Harvard men should meet on terms of perfect amity immediately and that the old bitterness should disappear within the time of our own generation. Such a miracle is beyond the scope of our intention. Too much has happened. Just what it was that Yale originally did to Harvard we don't profess to know. It was enough we suppose to justify the trial of the issue by combat four times a year in the major sports. Curiously enough, for a good many years Yale seemed to grow more and more right if judged in the light of these tests. But the truth is mighty and shall prevail and the righteousness of Harvard's cause began to be apparent with the coming of Percy Haughton. God, as some cynic has said, is always on the side which has the best football coach.

Our suggestion is that whatever deep wrong Yale once committed against Harvard, a process of diminution of feeling should be allowed to set in. After all, can't the men of Cambridge be broadminded about these things and remember that nothing within the power of Yale could possibly hurt Harvard very much? Even in the days when the blue elevens were winning with great regularity there should have been consolation enough in the thought that Harvard's Greek department still held the edge. Seemingly nobody ever thought of that. In the 1906 game a Harvard half-back named Nichols was sent in late in the game while the score was still a tie. On practically the first play he dropped a punt which led directly to a Yale touchdown and victory.

Throughout the rest of his university career he was known in college as "the man who dropped the punt." When his brother entered Harvard two years later he was promptly christened, and known for his next four years, as "the brother of the man who dropped the punt."

Isn't this a little excessive? It seems so to us, but the emphasis has not yet shifted. Only a month or so ago we were talking in New Haven before an organization of Yale graduates upon a subject so unpartisan as the American drama —though to be sure Harvard has turned out ten playwrights of note to every one from Yale—and somehow or other the talk drifted around to football. In pleading for less intensity of football feeling we mentioned the man who dropped the punt and his brother and told how Yale had recovered the fatal fumble on Harvard's nineteen-yard line. Then, with the intention of being jocose, we remarked, "The Yale eleven with characteristic bulldog grit and courage carried the ball over the line." To our horror and amazement the audience immediately broke into applause and long cheers.

Some of my best friends are Yale men and there is no basis for the common Harvard assumption that graduates of New Haven's leading university are of necessity inferior to the breed of Cambridge. Still, there is, perhaps, just a shade of difference in the keenness of perception for wit. Practically all the Harvard anecdotes about Yale which we know are pointed and sprightly, while Yale is content with such inferior and tasteless jibes as the falsetto imitation which begins "Fiercely fellows, sift through." Even the audience of graduates to which we referred was singularly cold to the anecdote about the difference in traditions which prevails at New Haven and at Cambridge. "When a Yale man is sick, the authorities immediately assume that he is drunk. When a Harvard man is drunk, the authorities assume that he is sick."

Nor were we successful in retelling the stirring appeal of a well-known organizer who was seeking to consolidate various alumni bodies into a vast unified employment agency for college men. "There should be," he cried, "one great clearing house. Then when somebody came for a man to tutor his children we could send him a Harvard man and if he needed somebody to help with the furnace, we'd have a Yale graduate for him."

Joking with undergraduates we found still more disastrous. After the last Harvard-Yale football game—score Harvard 9, Yale 0, which doesn't begin to indicate the margin of superiority of the winning team—we wrote an article of humorous intent for a New York newspaper. Naturally our job as a reporter prevented us from being partisan in our account of the game. Accordingly, in a temperate and fairminded spirit, we set down the fact that, through the connivance of the New York press, Yale has become a professional underdog and that any Harvard victory in which the score is less than forty-two to nothing is promptly hailed as a moral victory for Yale.

Developing this news angle for a few paragraphs, we eventually came to the unfortunate fist fight between Kempton of Yale and Gaston of Harvard which led to both men being put out of the game. It was our bad luck to see nothing but the last half second of the encounter. As a truthful reporter we made this admission but naturally went on to add, "Of course, we assume that Kempton started it." For weeks we continued to receive letters from Yale undergraduates beginning, "My attention has been called to your article" and continuing to ask with great violence how a reporter could possibly tell who started a fight without seeing the beginning of it. Some letters of like import were from Princeton men.

Princeton is always quick to rally to the defense of Yale against Harvard. This suggests a possibly common meeting ground for Harvard and Yale. Of course, they can hardly meet on the basis of a common language for the speech of Yale is quite alien. For instance, they call their "yard" a "campus." Also, there are obvious reasons why they cannot meet as equal members in the fellowship of educated men. Since this is a nonpartisan article designed to promote good feeling it will probably be just as well not to go into this. Though football is the chief interest at New Haven, Yale men often display a surprising sensitiveness to attacks on the scholarship of their local archaeologists. Nor will religion do as a unifier. Yale is evangelical and prays between the halves, while Harvard is mostly agnostic,

if it isn't Unitarian. No, just one great cause can be discovered in which Harvard men and Yale men can stand shoulder to shoulder and lift their voices in a common cause. Each year some public spirited citizen ought to hire Madison Square Garden and turn it over to all graduates and undergraduates of Harvard and of Yale for a great get-together meeting in which past differences should be forgotten in one deep and full throated shout of "To Hell with Princeton!"

Bacillus and Circumstance

IT is evening in the home of Peter J. Cottontail. The scene is a conventional parlor of a rabbit family of the upper middle class. About the room there is the sort of furniture a well-to-do rabbit would have, and on the shelves the books you would naturally expect. *Leaves of Grass* is there, of course; possibly *Cabbages and Kings*, and perhaps a volume or two of *The Winning of the West*, with a congratulatory inscription from the author. The walls have one or two good prints of hunting scenes and an excellent lithographic likeness of Thomas Malthus, but most of the space is given over to photographs of the family.

In the center of the room is a small square table, the surface of which is covered with figures ranged in curious patterns such as 2 × 5 = 10, and even so radical an arrangement as 7 × 8 = 56. At the rise of the curtain Peter J. Cottontail is discovered seated in an easy chair reading the current edition of *The New York Evening Post*. He is middle-aged and wears somewhat ill fitting brown fur, tinged with gray, and horn-rimmed spectacles. He looks a little like Lloyd George. As a matter of fact, his grandfather was Welsh. The actor should convey to the audience by means of pantomime that he has made more than a thousand dollars that afternoon by selling Amalgamated Cabbage short, and that there will be a tidy surplus for himself even after he has fulfilled his promise to make up the deficit incurred by the charity hop of the Bone Dry Prohibition Union. Now and again he smiles and pats his stomach complacently. It is essential that the actor should indicate beyond the peradventure of a doubt that Peter J. Cottontail has never touched spirituous or malt liquors or anything containing more than two per cent of alcohol per fluid ounce.

As P. J. Cottontail peruses his paper the ceiling of the room is suddenly plucked aside and two hands are thrust into the parlor. One of the hands seizes Mr. Cottontail, and the other hand, which holds a hypodermic needle, stabs the helpless householder and injects into his veins the contents of the needle. It is a fluid gray and forbidding. There is no sound unless the actor who plays Cottontail chooses to squeak just once.

Here the curtain descends. It rises again almost immediately, but five days are supposed to have elapsed. Mr. Cottontail is again seated in the center of the room, and he is again reading *The Evening Post*. The property man should take pains to see that the paper shall be dated five days later than the one used in the prologue. It might also be well to change the headline from "Submarine Crisis Acute" to "Submarine Crisis Still Acute." It is also to be noted that on this occasion Mr. Cottontail has removed his right shoe in favor of a large, roomy slipper. On the opposite side of the table sits Mrs. Cottontail. She is middle-aged but comely. A strong-minded female, one would say, with a will of her own, but rather in awe of the ability and more particularly the virtue of Mr. Cottontail. Yet Mr. Cottontail is evidently in ill humor this evening. He takes no pleasure in his paper, but fidgets uneasily. At last he speaks with great irritation.

MR. COTTONTAIL—Is that doctor ever coming?

MRS. COTTONTAIL—I left word at Doctor Cony's house that you were in a good deal of pain, and that he should come around the minute he got home. (*The door bell rings.*) Here he is now. I'll send him up. (*She goes out the door, and a few moments later there enters Dr. Charles Cony. He is a distinguished and forceful physician, but a meager little body for all that. He carries a black bag.*)

DR. CONY (*removing his gloves and opening the bag*)—Sorry I couldn't get here any sooner, but I've been on the go all day. An obstetrician gets mighty little rest hereabouts, I can tell you. Well, now, Mr. Cottontail, what can I do for you? What seems to be the trouble?

COTTONTAIL (*pointing to the open door, and lifting one finger to his mouth*)—Shush!

DR. CONY—Really! (*The physician crosses the room in one hop and closes the door.*)

COTTONTAIL—The pain's in my foot. My big toe, I think, but that's not what worries me—

DR. CONY (*breaking in*)—Pains worse at night than it does during the daytime, doesn't it? Throbs a bit right now, hey?

COTTONTAIL—Yes, it does, but that isn't the trouble.

DR. CONY—That's trouble enough. I'll try to have you loping around again in a month or so.

COTTONTAIL—But there's more than the pain. It's the worry. I haven't told a soul. I thought at first it might be a nightmare.

DR. CONY—Dreams, eh? Very significant, sometimes, but we'll get to them later.

COTTONTAIL—But I'm afraid it wasn't a dream.

DOCTOR—What wasn't a dream?

COTTONTAIL—Last Tuesday evening I was sitting in this room, quietly reading *The Evening Post*, when suddenly something tore the ceiling away, and down from above there came ten horrible pink tentacles and seized me in an iron grasp. Then something stabbed me with some sharp instrument. I was too frightened to move for several minutes, but when I looked up the ceiling was back in place as if nothing had touched it. I felt around for the wound, but the only thing I could find, was a tiny scratch that seemed so small I might have had it some time without noticing it. I couldn't be sure it was a wound. In fact, I tried to make myself believe that the whole thing was all a dream, until I was taken sick to-night. Now I'm afraid that the sword, or whatever it was that stabbed me, must have been poisoned.

DR. CONY (*sharply*)—Let me look at your tongue. (Cottontail complies.) Seems all right. Hold out your hands. Spread your fingers. (*He studies the patient for a moment.*) Nothing much the matter there. (*Producing pen and paper.*) If it was only March now I'd know what to say. Let's see what we can find out about hereditary influence. Father and mother living?

COTTONTAIL—I had no father or mother. I came out of a trick hat in a vaudeville act.

DR. CONY—That makes it a little more difficult, doesn't it? Do you happen to remember what sort of a hat?

COTTONTAIL (*a little proudly*)—It was quite a high hat.

DR. CONY—Yes, it would be. What color?

COTTONTAIL—Black and shiny.

DR. CONY—That seems normal enough. I'm afraid there's nothing significant there. (*Anxiously.*) No fixed delusions? You don't think you're Napoleon or the White Rabbit or anything like that, do you? Do you feel like growling or biting anybody?

COTTONTAIL—Of course not. There's nothing the matter with my brain.

DR. CONY—Perhaps you went to sleep and dreamed it all.

COTTONTAIL—No, I distinctly saw the ceiling open and I felt the stab very sharply. I couldn't possibly have been asleep. I was reading a most interesting dramatic review in *The Evening Post*.

DR. CONY—But you weren't stabbed in the big toe, now, were you?

COTTONTAIL—Well, no.

DR. CONY—And you will admit that the ceiling's just the same as it ever was?

COTTONTAIL—It looks the same from here. I haven't called any workmen in yet to examine it.

DR. CONY—Take my advice and don't. Just let's keep the matter between ourselves and forget it. I'm afraid you've been working too hard. Drop your business. Do a little light reading, and after a bit maybe I'd like to have you go to a show. Something with songs and bunny-hugging and jokes and chorus girls. None of this birth control stuff. I don't see how any self-respecting rabbit could go to a play like the one I saw last night. (*He goes to his instrument case and produces a stethoscope.*)

DR. CONY—Have you had your heart examined lately?

COTTONTAIL (*visibly nervous*)—No.

DR. CONY—Any shortness of breath or palpitation?

COTTONTAIL—I don't think so.

DR. CONY—If that's a vest you have on, take it off. There, now. (*He stands in front of Cottontail with his stethoscope poised in the air. Cottontail is trembling. Dr. Cony allows the hand holding the stethoscope to drop to his side and remarks provocatively*), I'll bet you Maranville doesn't hit .250 this season.

COTTONTAIL (*amazed*)—Really, sir, I never bet. No, never. I don't know what you are talking about, anyway.

DR. CONY—That's all right, that's all right. Don't agitate yourself. Just a little professional trick. I wanted to calm you down. Now (*he makes a hurried examination*), Mr. Cottontail, I don't want you to run. I don't want you to climb stairs. Avoid excitement and don't butter your parsnips. Fine words are just as good, no matter what anybody may tell you, and they don't create fatty tissue. Of course, you've got to have some exercise. You might play a little golf. Say, about three holes a day.

COTTONTAIL (*sadly*)—Three holes?

DR. CONY—Yes, that will be enough.

COTTONTAIL (*musing*)—It's a little tough, doctor. I can still remember the day I won my "H" at dear old Hassenpfeffer in the 'cross-country run. I had the lungs and the legs then. Even now I can feel the wind on my face as I came across the meadow and up that last, long hill. They were cheering for me to come on. I can tell you I just leaped along. It was nothing at all for me. If I'd sprinted just a bit sooner I could have been first in a hop. Anyhow, I was second. There was nobody ahead of me but the Tortoise. (*Cheerlessly*) Three holes of golf a day!

DR. CONY—Come, come, sir, be a rabbit. There's no cheating nature, you know. You had your fun, and now you must pay.

COTTONTAIL—What's the matter with me?

DR. CONY—Plain, old-fashioned gout.

COTTONTAIL—What does that come from?

DR. CONY (*with evident relish*)—From too much ale or porter or claret or burgundy or champagne or sherry or Rhine Wine or Clover Clubs or Piper Heidsieck or brandy or Bronxes or absinthe or stingers, but the worst of all and the best of all is port wine.

COTTONTAIL (*horrified*)—You mean it comes from drinking?

Dr. Cony—In all my twenty-five years of professional practice I have never known a case of gout without antecedent alcoholism.

COTTONTAIL (*much relieved*)—Well, then, it can't be gout. I've never taken a drink in my life.

Dr. Cony—In all my twenty-five years of professional experience I've never made an incorrect diagnosis. It is gout.

COTTONTAIL—But I'm president of the Bone Dry Prohibition Union.

Dr. Cony—The more shame to you, sir.

COTTONTAIL—What shall I do?

DR. CONY—Obey my instructions implicitly. A good many doctors will tell you that they can't cure gout. Undoubtedly they are right. They can't. But I can. Only you simply must stop drinking. Cutting down and tapering off to ten or twelve drinks a day won't do. You must stop absolutely. No liquor at all. Do you understand? Not a drop, sir.

COTTONTAIL (*his nose violently palpitating with emotion*)—I never took a drink in my life. I'm president of the Bone Dry Prohibition Union. I was just sitting quietly reading *The Evening Post*—

DR. CONY—Save that story for your bone-dry friends. I have nothing to do with your past life. I'm not judging you. It's nature that says the alcoholic must pay and pay and pay. I'm only concerned now with the present and the future, and the present is that you're suffering from alcoholism manifested in gout, and the future is that you'll die if you don't stop drinking.

COTTONTAIL—I tell you I promised my Sunday school teacher when I was a boy that I would always be a Little Light Bearer, and that I would never take a drink if I lived to be a hundred.

DR. CONY—Don't worry, you won't live that long, and don't take on so. You're not the first one that's had his fun and then been dragged up by the heels for it. Cheer up. Remember the good times that are gone. Life can't be all carrots, you know.

COTTONTAIL—But I never had any good times.

DR. CONY—Oh, yes, you did, I'll warrant you. There must have been many merry nights as the bottle passed around the table. (*With evident gusto*) Maybe there was a rousing song—"When Leeks Are Young in Springtime"—or something like that, and I wouldn't be surprised if now and again there was some fluffy little miss to sing soprano to your bass. Youth! Youth! To be young, a rabbit and stewed. (*Quoting reminiscently*) "A leaf of lettuce underneath the bough." After all, salad days are the best days. I never meet an old rabbit with gout but I take off my hat and say, "Sir, you have lived."

COTTONTAIL (*wildly*)—It's not true. I never lived like that. I never took a drink in my life. You can ask anybody. Nobody ever saw me take a drink.

DR. CONY—That's bad. You solitary drunkards are always the hardest to handle. But you've simply got to stop. You must quit drinking or die, that's all there is to it.

COTTONTAIL—This is terrible. It must have been that poisoned sword. I tell you, I was just sitting here quietly, reading *The Evening Post*—

DR. CONY—My dear sir, please rid yourself right away of the alcoholic's habit of confusing cause and effect. He thinks he's sick because green elephants are walking on him, while, as a matter of fact, green elephants are walking on him because he's sick. It's terribly simple, when you stop to figure it out.

COTTONTAIL—You don't think I saw any pink monster come through the ceiling?

DR. CONY—On the contrary, I'm sure you did. But the point is, you mustn't see him again, and the only way to avoid seeing him is to quit drinking. Your fun's done. Now, be a good patient and tell me you'll stop drinking—

COTTONTAIL—I tell you I never had any fun. I never had any fun—

DR. CONY—Well, strictly speaking, it isn't the fun that hurts you, it's the rum. You must stop, even if you hate the stuff. Do you understand?

COTTONTAIL (*hysterical*)—I can't stop, I can't stop; I never started, I can't stop—

DR. CONY—Very well, sir, I must insist on taking the only measure that will save your life. (*He steps to the door and calls*) Mrs. Cottontail, will you come here immediately?

(*Enter Mrs. Cottontail.*)

COTTONTAIL—My dear—

DR. CONY—If you please, madame. Let me explain first. You can have it out with your husband later. I'm sorry to tell you, Mrs. Cottontail, that your husband has gout. He has contracted it from excessive drinking. You knew, of course, that he was a heavy drinker?

MRS. COTTONTAIL (*surprised, but not in the least incredulous*)—I couldn't go so far as to say I knew it.

DR. CONY—He must stop or he'll die.

COTTONTAIL (*rapidly and wildly*)—I can explain everything, my dear. The doctor's all wrong. The whole trouble is somebody pulled the roof off the other day and stabbed me with a poisoned sword. I was right here in this room. I was just quietly reading *The Evening Post*. I knew no good would come of our moving into this new apartment house, with its fancy wire and green paint and free food, and all the rest of it.

DR. CONY (*to Mrs. Cottontail, who aids him in ignoring the patient*)—You can see for yourself, madame, just how rational he is. I leave him in your care, Mrs. Cottontail. Don't let him out of your sight. Try and find out where he gets his liquor. If he pleads with you for a drink, be firm with him. Follow him everywhere. Make him obey. It won't be hard in his enfeebled condition. I'll be around to-morrow. (*To Cottontail*) Remember, one drink may be fatal.

(*Exit Dr. Cony.*)

COTTONTAIL—My dear, it was a pink monster, with an enormous dagger. It lifted off the ceiling—

MRS. COTTONTAIL—Peter, can't you even be temperate in your lies?

COTTONTAIL (*sinking helplessly in his chair*)—My dear, I was just sitting quietly, reading *The Evening Post*—

MRS. COTTONTAIL—You brute! I always had a feeling you were too good to be true.

COTTONTAIL (*feebly and hopelessly*)—I was just sitting, reading *The Evening Post* (*his voice trails off into nothingness. He sits motionless, huddled up in the chair. Suddenly he speaks again, but it is a new voice, strangely altered.*) Mopsy, give me *The Sun*.

MRS. COTTONTAIL (*looking at him in amazement*)—What do you say?

COTTONTAIL (*His muscles relax. His eyes stare stupidly. He speaks without sense or expression*)—*The Sun! The Sun! The Evening Sun!*

(*He is quite mad.*)

(*Curtain.*)

Death Says It Isn't So

THE scene is a sickroom. It is probably in a hospital, for the walls are plain and all the corners are eliminated in that peculiar circular construction which is supposed to annoy germs. The shades are down and the room is almost dark. A doctor who has been examining the sick man turns to go. The nurse at his side looks at him questioningly.

THE DOCTOR (*briskly*)—I don't believe he'll last out the day. If he wakes or seems unusually restless, let me know. There's nothing to do.

He goes out quietly, but quickly, for there is another man down at the end of the corridor who is almost as sick. The nurse potters about the room for a moment or two, arranging whatever things it is that nurses arrange. She exits l. c., or, in other words, goes out the door. There is just a short pause in the dark, quiet room shut out from all outside noises and most outside light. When the steam pipes are not clanking only the slow breathing of the man on the bed can be heard. Suddenly a strange thing happens.

The door does not open or the windows, but there is unquestionably another man in the room. It couldn't have been the chimney, because there isn't any. Possibly it is an optical illusion, but the newcomer seems just a bit indistinct for a moment or so in the darkened room. Quickly he raises both the window shades, and in the rush of bright sunlight he is definite enough in appearance. Upon better acquaintance it becomes evident that it couldn't have been the chimney, even if there had been one. The visitor is undeniably bulky, although extraordinarily brisk in his movements. He has a trick which will develop later in the scene of blushing on the slightest provocation. At that his color is habitually high. But this round, red, little man, peculiarly enough, has thin white hands and long tapering fingers, like an artist or a newspaper cartoonist. Very possibly his touch would be lighter than that of the nurse herself. At any rate, it is evident that he walks much more quietly. This is strange, for he does not rise on his toes, but puts his feet squarely on the ground. They are large feet, shod in heavy hobnail boots. No one but a golfer or a day laborer would wear such shoes.

The hands of the little, round, red man preclude the idea that he is a laborer. The impression that he is a golfer is heightened by the fact that he is dressed loudly in very bad taste. In fact, he wears a plaid vest of the sort which was brought over from Scotland in the days when clubs were called sticks. The man in the gaudy vest surveys the sunshine with great satisfaction. It reaches every corner of the room, or rather it would but for the fact that the corners have been turned into curves. A stray beam falls across the eyes of the sick man on the bed. He wakes, and, rubbing his eyes an instant, slowly sits up in bed and looks severely at the fat little man.

THE SICK MAN (*feebly, but vehemently*)—No, you don't. I won't stand for any male nurse. I want Miss Bluchblauer.

THE FAT MAN—I'm not a nurse, exactly.

THE SICK MAN—Who are you?

THE FAT MAN (*cheerfully and in a matter of fact tone*)—I'm Death.

THE SICK MAN (*sinking back on the bed*)—That rotten fever's up again. I'm seeing things.

THE FAT MAN (*almost plaintively*)—Don't you believe I'm Death? Honest, I am. I wouldn't fool you. (*He fumbles in his pockets and produces in rapid succession a golf ball, a baseball pass, a G string, a large lump of gold, a receipted bill, two theater tickets and a white mass of sticky confection which looks as though it might be a combination of honey and something—milk, perhaps*)—I've gone and left that card case again, but I'm Death, all right.

THE SICK MAN—What nonsense! If you really were I'd be frightened. I'd have cold shivers up and down my spine. My hair would stand on end like the fretful porcupine. I'm not afraid of you. Why, when Sadie Bluchblauer starts to argue about the war she scares me more than you do.

THE FAT MAN (*very much relieved and visibly brighter*)—That's fine. I'm glad you're not scared. Now we can sit down and talk things over like friends.

THE SICK MAN—I don't mind talking, but remember I know you're not Death. You're just some trick my hot head's playing on me. Don't get the idea you're putting anything over.

THE FAT MAN—But what makes you so sure I'm not Death?

THE SICK MAN—Go on! Where's your black cloak? Where's your sickle? Where's your skeleton? Why don't you rattle when you walk?

THE FAT MAN (*horrified and distressed*)—Why should I rattle? What do I want with a black overcoat or a skeleton? I'm not fooling you. I'm Death, all right.

THE SICK MAN—Don't tell me that. I've seen Death a thousand times in the war cartoons. And I've seen him on the stage—Maeterlinck, you know, with green lights and moaning, and that Russian fellow, Andreyeff, with no light at all, and hollering. And I've seen other plays with Death—lots of them. I'm one of the scene shifters with the Washington Square Players. This isn't regular, at all. There's more light in here right now than any day since I've been sick.

THE FAT MAN—I always come in the light. Be a good fellow and believe me. You'll see I'm right later on. I wouldn't fool anybody. It's mean.

THE SICK MAN (*laughing out loud*)—Mean! What's meaner than Death? You're not Death. You're as soft and smooth-talking as a press agent. Why, you could go on a picnic in that make-up.

THE FAT MAN (*almost soberly*)—I've been on picnics.

THE SICK MAN—You're open and above board. Death's a sneak. You've got a nice face. Yes; you've got a mighty nice face. You'd stop to help a bum in the street or a kid that was crying.

THE FAT MAN—I have stopped for beggars and children.

THE SICK MAN—There, you see; I told you. You're kind and considerate. Death's the cruellest thing in the world.

THE FAT MAN (*very much agitated*)—Oh, please don't say that! It isn't true. I'm kind; that's my business. When things get too rotten I'm the only one that can help. They've got to have me. You should hear them sometimes before I come. I'm the one that takes them off battlefields and out of slums and all terribly tired people. I whisper a joke in their ears, and we go away, laughing. We always go away laughing. Everybody sees my joke, it's so good.

THE SICK MAN—What's the joke?

THE FAT MAN—I'll tell it to you later.

Enter the Nurse. She almost runs into the Fat Man, but goes right past without paying any attention. It almost seems as if she cannot see him. She goes to the bedside of the patient.

THE NURSE—So, you're awake. You feel any more comfortable?

The Sick Man continues to stare at the Fat Man, but that worthy animated pantomime indicates that he shall say nothing of his being there. While this is on, the Nurse takes the patient's temperature. She looks at it, seems surprised, and then shakes the thermometer.

THE SICK MAN (*eagerly*)—I suppose my temperature's way up again, hey? I've been seeing things this afternoon and talking to myself.

THE NURSE—No; your temperature is almost normal.

THE SICK MAN (*incredulously*)—Almost normal?

THE NURSE—Yes; under a hundred.

She goes out quickly and quietly. The Sick Man turns to his fat friend.

THE SICK MAN—What do you make of that? Less than a hundred. That oughtn't to make me see things; do you think so?

THE FAT MAN—Well, I'd just as soon not be called a thing. Up there I'm called good old Death. Some of the fellows call me Bill. Maybe that's because I'm always due.

THE SICK MAN—Rats! Is that the joke you promised me?

THE FAT MAN (*pained beyond measure*)—Oh, that was just a little unofficial joke. The joke's not like that. I didn't make up the real one. It wasn't made up at all. It's been growing for years and years. A whole lot of people have had a hand in fixing it up—Aristophanes and Chaucer and Shakespeare, and Mark Twain and Rabelais—

THE SICK MAN—Did that fellow Rabelais get in—up there?

THE FAT MAN—Well, not exactly, but he lives in one of the most accessible parts of the suburb, and we have him up quite often. He's popular on account of his after-dinner stories. What I might call his physical humor is delightfully reminiscent and archaic.

THE SICK MAN—There won't be any bodies, then?

THE FAT MAN—Oh, yes, brand new ones. No tonsils or appendixes, of course. That is, not as a rule. We have to bring in a few tonsils every year to amuse our doctors.

THE SICK MAN—Any shows?

THE FAT MAN—I should say so. Lots of 'em, and all hits. In fact, we've never had a failure (*provocatively*). Now, what do you think is the best show you ever saw?

THE SICK MAN (*reminiscently*)—Well, just about the best show I ever saw was a piece called "Fair and Warmer," but, of course, you wouldn't have that.

THE FAT MAN—Of course, we have. The fellow before last wanted that.

THE SICK MAN (*truculently*)—I'll bet you haven't got the original company.

THE FAT MAN (*apologetically*)—No, but we expect to get most of them by and by. Nell Gwyn does pretty well in the lead just now.

THE SICK MAN (*shocked*)—Did she get in?

THE FAT MAN—No, but Rabelais sees her home after the show. We don't think so much of "Fair and Warmer." That might be a good show for New York, but it doesn't class with us. It isn't funny enough.

THE SICK MAN (*with rising interest*)—Do you mean to say you've got funnier shows than "Fair and Warmer"?

THE FAT MAN—We certainly have. Why, it can't begin to touch that thing of Shaw's called "Ah, There, Annie!"

THE SICK MAN—What Shaw's that?

THE FAT MAN—Regular Shaw.

THE SICK MAN—A lot of things must have been happening since I got sick. I hadn't heard he was dead. At that I always thought that vegetable truck was unhealthy.

THE FAT MAN—He isn't dead.

THE SICK MAN—Well, how about this "Ah, There, Annie!"? He never wrote that show down here.

THE FAT MAN—But he will.

THE SICK MAN (*enormously impressed*)—Do you get shows there before we have them in New York?

THE FAT MAN—I tell you we get them before they're written.

THE SICK MAN (*indignantly*)—How can you do that?

THE FAT MAN—I wish you wouldn't ask me. The answer's awfully complicated. You've got to know a lot of higher math. Wait and ask Euclid about it. We don't have any past and future, you know. None of that nuisance about keeping shall and will straight.

THE SICK MAN—Well, I must say that's quite a stunt. You get shows before they're written.

THE FAT MAN—More than that. We get some that never do get written. Take that one of Ibsen's now, "Merry Christmas"—

THE SICK MAN (*fretfully*)—Ibsen?

THE FAT MAN—Yes, it's a beautiful, sentimental little fairy story with a ghost for the hero. Ibsen just thought about it and never had the nerve to go through with it. He was scared people would kid him, but thinking things makes them so with us.

THE SICK MAN—Then I'd think a sixty-six round Van Cortlandt for myself.

THE FAT MAN—You could do that. But why Van Cortlandt? We've got much better greens on our course. It's a beauty. Seven thousand yards long and I've made it in fifty-four.

THE SICK MAN (*suspiciously*)—Did you hole out on every green or just estimate?

THE FAT MAN (*stiffly*)—The score is duly attested. I might add that it was possible because I drove more than four hundred yards on nine of the eighteen holes.

THE SICK MAN—More than four hundred yards? How did you do that?

THE FAT MAN—It must have been the climate, or (*thoughtfully*) it may be because I wanted so much to drive over four hundred yards on those holes.

THE SICK MAN (*with just a shade of scorn*)—So that's the trick. I guess nobody'd ever beat me on that course; I'd just want the ball in the hole in one every time.

THE FAT MAN (in gentle reproof)—No, you wouldn't. Where you and I are going pretty soon we're all true sportsmen and nobody there would take an unfair advantage of an opponent.

THE SICK MAN—Before I go I want to know something. There's a fellow in 125th Street's been awful decent to me. Is there any coming back to see people here? (*A pause.*)

THE FAT MAN—I can't explain to you yet, but it's difficult to arrange that. Still, I wouldn't say that there never were any slumming parties from beyond the grave.

THE SICK MAN (*shivering*)—The grave! I'd forgotten about that.

THE FAT MAN—Oh, you won't go there, and, what's more, you won't be at the funeral, either. I wish I could keep away from them. I hate funerals. They make me mad. You know, they say "Oh, Death, where is thy sting?" just as if they had a pretty good hunch I had one around me some place after all. And you know that other—"My friends, this is not a sad occasion," but they don't mean it. They keep it sad. They simply won't learn any better. I suppose they'd be a little surprised to know that you were sitting watching Radbourne pitch to Ed. Delehanty with the bases full and three balls and two strikes called. Two runs to win and one to tie.

THE SICK MAN—Will Radbourne pitch?

THE FAT MAN—Sure thing.

THE SICK MAN—And, say, will Delehanty bust that ball?

THE FAT MAN—Make it even money and bet me either way.

THE SICK MAN—I don't want to wait any longer. Tell me that joke of yours and let's go.

The light softens a little. The room is almost rose color now. It might be from the sunset. The Fat Man gently pushes the head of the Sick Man back on the pillow. Leaning over, he whispers in his ear briefly and the Sick Man roars with laughter. As his laughter slackens a little The Fat Man says, "I'll meet you in the press box," and then before you know it he's gone. The Sick Man is still laughing, but less loudly. People who did not know might think it was gasping. The Nurse opens the door and is frightened. She loudly calls "Doctor! Doctor!" and runs down the corridor. The Sick Man gives one more chuckle and is silent. The curtains at one of the windows sway slightly. Of course, it's the breeze.

(*Curtain.*)

The Library of a Lover

THE responsibilities of a book reviewer, always heavy, sometimes assume a gravity which makes it quite impossible for them to be borne on any single pair of shoulders. We have received a letter to-day upon which so much depends that we hesitate to answer without requesting advice from readers. It is from a young man in Pittsburgh who identifies himself merely by the initials X. Q., which we presume to be fictitious. He writes as follows:

"As a reader of the book columns of *The Tribune* I am humbly requesting your assistance in the matter of a little experiment that I desire to perform. I find myself highly enamored of a superlatively attractive young lady who has, however, one apparent drawback to me. That lies in the fact that she has never cultivated a taste for really worth while reading. Such reading to me is one of the greatest of life's pleasures. Now, my idea is this: that this reading taste may be developed by the reading of a number of the best books in various lines. I have decided upon an experiment wherein a list of fifty books shall be furnished by you and a serious attempt made by the young lady to read them. When she has completed this reading I shall ask her to make a thoroughly frank statement as to whether a reading habit has been cultivated which will enable her to enjoy good literature. I would appreciate very much your furnishing me a list of fifty of the very best books which you consider suitable for the experiment which I have in mind. The lady in question has read but little, but has completed the regulation high school course and in addition has taken two years at one of the recognized girls' schools of the country."

Obviously, the making of such a list involves a responsibility which we do not care to assume. We do not like to risk the possibility that our own particular literary prejudices might rear a barrier between two fond hearts. After all, as somebody has said, fond hearts are more than Conrads. However, we do venture the suggestion that if the young man's intentions are honorable, fifty books is far too great a number for the experiment which he has in mind. We have known many a young couple to begin life with no possession to their name but a common fondness for the poems of W. E. Henley. We have known others to marry on Kipling and repent on Shaw.

Of course, it would be a great deal easier for us to advise the young man if we knew just what sort of a wife he wanted. If she likes *Dombey and Son* and *Little Dorrit* it seems to us fair to assume that she will be able to do a little plain mending and some of the cooking. On the other hand, if her favorite author is May Sinclair, we rather think it would be well to be prepared to provide hired help from the beginning. Should she prefer Eleanor H. Porter, we think there would be no danger in telling the paperhangers to do the bedroom in pink. After all, if she is a thoroughgoing follower of Pollyanna and the glad game, you don't really need any wall paper at all. It would still be

her duty to be glad about it.

But we are afraid that some of this is frivolous and beside the point, and we assume that the young man truly wants serious advice to help him in the solution of his problem. Since marriage is at best a gamble, we advise him earnestly not to compromise his ardor with any dreary round of fifty books. Let him chance all on a single volume. And what shall it be? Personally, we have always been strongly attracted by persons who liked *Joan and Peter*, but we know that there are excellent wives and mothers who find this particular novel of Wells's dreary stuff. There are certain dislikes which might well serve as green signals of caution. A young man, we think, should certainly go slow if she does not like *An Inland Voyage*, or *Virginibus Puerisque*, or *The Ebb Tide* or *Sentimental Tommy*. He should take thought and ask himself repeatedly, "Is this really love?" if she confesses a distaste for *Tono Bungay*, or *Far from the Madding Crowd*, or *Cæsar and Cleopatra*. And if she can find no interest in *Conrad in Quest of His Youth*, or *Mary Olivier* or *Huckleberry Finn*, let him by all means stipulate a long engagement. But if she dislikes *Alice in Wonderland* let the young man temporize no more. It is then his plain duty to tell her that he has made a mistake and that what he took for love was no more than the passing infatuation of physical passion.

A Bolt from the Blue

JOHN ROACH STRATON died and went to his appointed kingdom where he immediately sought an audience with the ruler of the realm.

"Let New York be destroyed," shouted Dr. Straton as he pushed his way into the inner room. The king was engaged at the moment in watching a sparrow fall to earth and motioned the visitor to compose himself in silence, but there was an urgency in the voice and manner of the man from earth which would not be denied. "Smite them hip and thigh," said Dr. Straton and the king looked down at him and asked, "Is the necessity immediate?"

"Delay not thy wrath," said Dr. Straton, "for to-day on thy Sabbath sixty thousand men, women, and children of New York have gathered together to watch a baseball game."

The ruler of the realm looked and saw that 11,967 persons were watching the Yankees and the White Sox at the Polo Grounds.

"A good husky tidal wave would confound them," urged Straton, but the king shook his head.

"Remember the judgment you heaped upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah," suggested Straton.

The ruler of the realm nodded without enthusiasm. "I remember," he said, "but as I recollect it didn't do much good."

Dr. Straton's bright hopefulness faded and the king hastened to reassure him. "We can think up something better than that," he said, and had the visitor been an observant man he might have noticed that the streets of the kingdom were paved with tact. "Now there was the Tower of Babel," said the ruler of the realm reflectively, "that was a creative idea. That was a doom which persisted because it had ingenuity as well as power. That's what we need now."

Suddenly there dawned in the face of the king an idea, and it seemed to Dr. Straton as if he were standing face to face with a sunrise. The doctor lowered his eyes and he saw that the men and the women Sabbath breakers of New York were all upon their feet and shouting, though to his newly immortal senses the din came feebly. "Now," he said, with an exultation which caused him to slip into his old pulpit manner, "let 'em have it."

But the king with keener vision than Dr. Straton, saw that it was the ninth inning, the score tied, runners on first and second, and Babe Ruth coming to bat. "The time has not come," said the king, and he pushed the doctor gently and made him give ground a little. And they waited until two strikes had been pitched and three balls. The next one would have cut the heart of the plate, but Babe Ruth swung and the ball rose straight in the air. Up and up it came until it disappeared from the view of all the players and spectators and even of the umpires. Soon a mighty wrangle began. Miller Huggins claimed a home run and Kid Gleason argued that the ball was foul. The umpires waited for an hour and then, as the ball had not yet come down, Dineen was forced to make a decision and shouted "Foul!" while the crowd booed. One of the pop bottles injured him rather badly and there was a riot for which it was necessary to call out the reserves. Everybody went home disgruntled and a month later the Lusk bill abolishing Sunday baseball was passed.

And all the time the ball continued to rise until suddenly the king, thrusting out his left hand, caught it neatly and slipped it into his pocket. It was not a conventional pocket, for there were planets in it and ever-lasting mercy and other things. For a long time Dr. Straton had been awed into silence by the mighty miracle, but now he spoke, reverently but firmly.

"I beg your pardon," he said, "but you will observe that there is a sign in the baseball park which says 'All balls batted out of the diamond remain the property of the New York Baseball Club and should be thrown back!'"

The ruler of the realm smiled. "You forget," he answered, "that if I threw the ball back from this great height it might strike a man and kill him, it might crash through a huge office building, it might even destroy the Calvary Baptist Church."

Then for the first time a touch of sharpness came into the voice of Dr. Straton. "All that is immaterial," he said. "I

think I know my theology well enough to understand that law is law and right is right, come what may."

"Oh, but it's not nearly as simple as all that," remonstrated the king. "There are right things which are so harsh and unpleasant that they become wrong; and wrong things which are, after all, so jolly that it's hard not to call them right. Why, sometimes I have to stop a fraction of a century myself to reach a decision. It's terribly complicated. The problem is infinite. No mere man, quick or dead, has any right to be dogmatic about it."

"Come, come," said Dr. Straton, and now there was nothing but anger in his voice, "I've heard all those devilish arguments before. When I came here I thought you were God and that this was Heaven. I know now that there's been a mistake. God is no mollycoddle."

He turned on his heel and started to walk away before he remembered that he was a Southern gentleman as well as a clergyman and bowed stiffly, once. Then he went to the edge of the kingdom and jumped. Where he landed it would be hard to say. Only a carefully trained theologian could tell.

Inasmuch

ONCE there lived near Bethlehem a man named Simon and his wife Deborah. And Deborah dreamed a curious dream, a dream so vivid that it might better be called a vision. It was not yet daybreak, but she roused her husband and told him that an angel had come to her in the vision and had said, as she remembered it, "To-morrow night in Bethlehem the King of the World will be born." The rest was not so vivid in Deborah's mind, but she told Simon that wise men and kings were already on their way to Bethlehem, bringing gifts for the wonder child.

"When he is born," she said, "the wise men and the kings who bring these gifts will see the stars dance in the heavens and hear the voices of angels. You and I must send presents, too, for this child will be the greatest man in all the world."

Simon objected that there was nothing of enough value in the house to take to such a child, but Deborah replied, "The King of the World will understand." Then, although it was not yet light, she got up and began to bake a cake, and Simon went beyond the town to the hills and got holly and made a wreath. Later in the day husband and wife looked over all their belongings, but the only suitable gift they could find was one old toy, a somewhat battered wooden duck that had belonged to their eldest son, who had grown up and married and gone away to live in Galilee. Simon painted the toy duck as well as he could, and Deborah told him to take it and the cake and the wreath of holly and go to Bethlehem. "It's not much," she said, "but the King will understand."

It was almost sunset when Simon started down the winding road that led to Bethlehem. Deborah watched him round the first turn and would have watched longer except that he was walking straight toward the sun and the light hurt her eyes. She went back into the house and an hour had hardly passed when she heard Simon whistling in the garden. He was walking very slowly. At the door he hesitated for almost a minute. She looked up when he came in. He was empty handed.

"You haven't been to Bethlehem," said Deborah.

"No," said Simon.

"Then, where is the cake, and the holly wreath, and the toy duck?"

"I'm sorry," said Simon, "I couldn't help it somehow. It just happened."

"What happened?" asked Deborah sharply.

"Well," said Simon, "just after I went around the first turn in the road I found a child sitting on that big white rock, crying. He was about two or three years old, and I stopped and asked him why he was crying. He didn't answer. Then I told him not to cry like that, and I patted his head, but that didn't do any good. I hung around, trying to think up something, and I decided to put the cake down and take him up in my arms for a minute. But the cake slipped out of my hands and hit the rock, and a piece of the icing chipped off. Well, I thought, that baby in Bethlehem won't miss a little piece of icing, and I gave it to the child and he stopped crying. But when he finished he began to cry again. I just sort of squeezed another little piece of icing off, and that was all right, for a little while; but then I had to give him another piece, and things went on that way, and all of a sudden I found that there wasn't any cake left. After that he looked as if he might cry again, and I didn't have any more cake and so I showed him the duck and he said 'Ta-ta.' I just meant to lend him the duck for a minute, but he wouldn't give it up. I coaxed him a good while, but he wouldn't let go. And then a woman came out of that little house and she began to scold him for staying out so late, and so I told her it was my fault and I gave her the holly wreath just so she wouldn't be mad at the child. And after that, you see, I didn't have anything to take to Bethlehem, and so I came back here."

Deborah had begun to cry long before Simon finished his story, but when he had done she lifted up her head and said, "How could you do it, Simon? Those presents were meant for the King of the World, and you gave them to the first crying child you met on the road."

Then she began to cry again, and Simon didn't know what to say or do, and it grew darker and darker in the room and the fire on the hearth faded to a few embers. And that little red glow was all there was in the room. Now, Simon could not even see Deborah across the room, but he could still hear her sobbing. But suddenly the room was flooded with light and Deborah's sobbing broke into a great gulp and she rushed to the window and looked out. The stars

danced in the sky and from high above the house came the voice of angels saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Deborah dropped to her knees in a panic of joy and fear. Simon knelt beside her, but first he said, "I thought maybe that the baby in Bethlehem wouldn't mind so very much."

H. 3rd—The Review of a Continuous Performance

MARCH 1, 1919.—"Do you know how to keep the child from crying?" began the prospectus. "Do you know how always to obtain cheerful obedience?" it continued. "To suppress the fighting instinct? To teach punctuality? Perseverance? Carefulness? Honesty? Truthfulness? Correct pronunciation?"

We pondered. Obviously, our rejoinder must be: "In reply to questions NOS. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 the answer is in the negative."

The prospectus said that all this would be easy if you bought the book.

"Instead of a hardship," the advertisement said, "child training becomes a genuine pleasure, as the parent shares every confidence, every joy and every sorrow of the child, and at the same time has its unqualified respect. This is a situation rarely possible under the old training methods. And what a source of pride now as well as in after years! To have children whose every action shows culture and refinement—perfect little gentlemen and gentlewomen."

This gave us pause. After all, we were not certain that we wanted a little gentleman who washed behind the ears, wore blue velvet and took his baths with a broad "a." We felt that he might expect too much from us. It might cramp our style to live with a person entirely truthful, punctual, persevering, honest and careful. Also, we were a little abashed about sharing confidences. The privilege of becoming a confidant would involve a return in kind, and it would not be a fair swap. It seemed to us that the confessions of the truthful, honest, careful and persevering child could never be half so interesting as our own.

We were also a little bit discouraged over the promise to suppress the fighting instinct. We did not feel qualified for the job of making it up to him by chastising the parents of the various boys along the block who drubbed him. And yet we were not entirely dissuaded until we read something of the manner in which the new method should be applied. It was hard to thrust aside the knowledge of how to keep the child from crying. But, then, the book said: "No matter whether your child is still in the cradle or is eighteen years old, this course will show how to apply the right methods at once. You merely take up the particular trait, turn to the proper page and apply the lessons to the child. You are told exactly what to do."

It wasn't that we were afraid that somebody else around the house might get hold of the book and turn it on us. That risk we might have faced. But a quotation from Abraham Lincoln in the prospectus itself brought complete disillusion. "All that I am and all that I ever hope to be I owe to my mother." That's what Abraham Lincoln said, according to the prospectus. It seemed, perhaps, like halving the proper acknowledgments, and yet it lay in the right direction. But what of the punctual, persevering and truthful child brought up under the new method? We could see only one acknowledgment open to him. We pictured his first inaugural address, and seemed to hear him say: "All that I am to-day I owe to Professor Tunkhouser's book on *The Training of Children*. If I am honest you have only to look on page 29 to know the reason. It is true that I have persevered to gain this high office, and why should I not, seeing that I was cradled in page 136?"

Of course, if he had not overlooked the chapter on proper gratitude he might upon maturity return the purchase price of Professor Tunkhouser's volume. That seemed almost the most to be expected.

And so we let him cry, and are going on in the old, careless way, hoping to be able, unscientifically enough, to lick a working amount of truth and general virtue into him at such time as that becomes necessary. However, we did write to the publisher to ask him if by any chance he had a book along the same lines about Airedale puppies.

JUNE 5, 1919.—"Izzie gonna teachie itty cutums English or not?" asks Prudence Brandish in effect in her book *Mother Love in Action*, and proceeds to protest vigorously against the practice of bringing up children on baby talk. It is true that parents deserve part of the blame, but babies ought to be made to realize that some of the responsibility is theirs. Often they talk the jargon themselves without any encouragement whatever. Indeed, they have been known to cling to muddled words and phrases in spite of the soundest reasoning which all their parents could bring to bear on the matter. H. 3rd, for instance, has been told repeatedly that the word is "button," and yet he goes on calling it "bur" or "but" or something like that.

We feel very strongly that he should get it straight, because it is the only word he knows. He tried "moma" and "dayday" for a while, but abandoned them when he seemed to sense opposition against his attempt to use them broadly enough to include casual friends and total strangers. R., who comes from Virginia, could not be made to abandon a narrow-minded point of view about H.'s conception of his relation to the ashman.

"But" seems much more elastic and does not involve the child in questions of race prejudice and other problems which he does not fully comprehend as yet. The round disks on a coat are "buts," and H. seems satisfied that so are

doorknobs and ears and noses. He is, to be sure, not quite content that all should be sewn on so firmly. There seems to be no limit to his conception of the range of his one word "but." If he could get his hands on the Washington Monument or the peak of the Matterhorn, we feel sure that he would also classify these as buttons.

Much may be done with one word if it be used cosmically in this way. For the sake of H. we have been trying to develop a theory that all the problems of the world may be stated in terms of buttons. We intend to point out to him that if he finds a gentleman with two buttons on either hip to which suspenders are attached, he may safely set him down as a conservative. If, in addition, the gentleman wears another gold button tightly wedged into a starched collar just below his chin he may be classified as an exponent of a high protective tariff and a Republican majority in the Senate. From gentlemen with no buttons, either at the hips or the neck, he may expect to hear about the soviet experiment in Russia and the status of free speech in America.

We intend to tell H. that he is not far wrong in his attempt to limit language to the one word "but" or "bur," since all the world struggles in religion, in politics and in economics are between those who believe in buttoning up life a little tighter and those who would cut away all fastenings and let gravity do its worst or best. However, we have told him fairly and squarely that we will not let him in on this simplifying and comforting short cut to knowledge until he can make the word come out clearly and distinctly—"button."

SEPTEMBER 3, 1919.—H. 3rd lay back in his carriage with his arms folded across his stomach and said nothing. I tried to make conversation. I pointed out objects of interest, but met no response. He smiled complacently and was silent. Even carefully rehearsed bits of dialogue such as "Who's a good boy?" to which the answer is "Me," and "Is your face dirty," to which the answer is "No," failed to move him to speech. I tried him in new lands with strange sights and pointed out the camels, and buffaloes and rhinoceri of the zoo, hoping that he would identify some one of them in his all-embracing "dog," which serves for every member of the four-footed family. But still he smiled complacently and was silent. I began to feel as if I were an Atlantic City negro wheeling a tired business man down the Boardwalk.

Suddenly the possible value of suggestion came to me, and I turned to the right and finally brought up at the foot of Shakespeare's statue in the mall. And here again I sought to interest him in the English language. "Man," said I, rather optimistically, pointing to the bronze. H. 3rd looked intently, and taking his hands from his stomach answered "Boy." "Man," I repeated. "Boy," said H. 3rd. And so the argument continued for some time without progress being made by either side. At last I stopped. Is it possible, I thought, that in this curious statue the sculptor has succeeded in giving some suggestion of "sweetest Shakespeare, fancy's child," which is communicated to H. 3rd and fails to reach me? I looked again and gave up this theory for one more simple and rational. Without question it was the doublet and hose which confused him. Never, I suppose, had the child seen me, or the janitor, or the iceman or any of his adult male friends clad in close fitting tights such as Shakespeare wore. And then I looked at the doublet. No, there was no denying that in this particular statue it appeared uncommonly like a diaper.

SEPTEMBER 5, 1919.—W. H. Hudson points the way to an interesting field of speculation in one of the early chapters of *Far Away and Long Ago*, in which he speaks of his mother.

"When I think of her," he writes, "I remember with gratitude that our parents seldom punished us, and never, unless we went too far in our domestic dissensions or tricks, even chided us. This, I am convinced, is the right attitude for parents to observe, modestly to admit that nature is wiser than they are, and to let their little ones follow, as far as possible, the bent of their own minds, or whatever it is that they have in place of minds. It is the attitude of the sensible hen toward her ducklings, when she has had frequent experience of their incongruous ways, and is satisfied that they know best what is good for them; though, of course, their ways seem peculiar to her, and she can never entirely sympathize with their fancy for going into the water. I need not be told that the hen is, after all, only stepmother to her ducklings, since I am contending that the civilized woman—the artificial product of our self-imposed conditions—cannot have the same relation to her offspring as the uncivilized woman really has to hers. The comparison, therefore, holds good, the mother with us being practically stepmother to children of another race; and if she is sensible, and amenable to nature's teaching, she will attribute their seemingly unsuitable ways and appetites to the right cause, and not to a hypothetical perversity or inherent depravity of heart, about which many authors will have spoken to her in many books:

"But though they wrote it all by rote
They did not write it right."

The very dim race memory of old tribal and even primitive life which is in all of us is much stronger in children than in grown-ups. They are closer to the past than their elders, and although we hear a great deal about maternal instinct, it is probable that it is a much slighter and more limited thing than the instinct of a young child.

I have noticed, for instance, that without any help from me H. 3rd has learned to fall with amazing skill. He can trip over the edge of the carpet, do a somersault ending on the point of his nose and come up smiling, unless some grown-up makes him aware of his danger by crying out in horror. He did not copy it from me. I have never even undertaken to teach him by precept or illustration. The difficult trick of relaxing in midair is his own contribution. He cannot be said to have learned it. He seems always to have had it. At the age of eight months he pitched headlong out of his carriage and landed on top of his head without so much as ruffling his feelings. It may be fantastic, but I rather think that his skill in preparing for the bump by a complete relaxation of every muscle is a legacy from some ancestor back in the days when knowing how to fall was of vital importance, since even the best of us might, upon special occasions, miscalculate the distance from branch to branch.

So strong is my faith in the child's superior memory of primitive life that if the hallboy were to call me up on the telephone to-morrow to say that there was an ichthyosaurus downstairs who wanted to see me, I would not think of deciding what to do about it without first consulting H. 3rd.

Curiously enough, Hudson relates one incident which might well be cited in support of the theory that the child is equipped at birth with certain protective instincts, but he passes it over with a different explanation. He says that on a certain afternoon his baby sister, who could scarcely walk, was left alone in a room, and suddenly came toddling to the door shrieking "ku-ku," an Argentine word for danger, which was almost her single articulate possession. Her parents rushed into the room and found a huge snake coiled up in the middle of the rug. The child had never seen a snake before, and there was much speculation as to how she knew it was dangerous.

"It was conjectured," writes Hudson, "that she had made some gesture to push it away when it came onto the rug, and that it had reared its head and struck viciously at her."

It seems to us that a much more plausible explanation lies in the theory that this child who had never seen a snake profited from some old racial memory of the danger of serpents.

Unfortunately, under modern conditions some restrictions must be put on the liberty of small children. I have been told that a child knows instinctively that he must not put his hand into a fire, but he has no age-grounded instinct not to touch a radiator. Still, it might be fair to say that in most New York apartment houses none of them would be hot enough to hurt him much. I can testify that children of less than two years of age are not equipped with any inherited protective knowledge about matches, pins, cigarette stubs, $5 bills, or even those of larger denominations; bits of glass, current newspapers or magazines, safety razor blades (for which, of course, there is an excuse, since the adjective may well mislead a child), watches or carving knives. But all these articles are too recent to come within the scope of inherited primitive knowledge.

DECEMBER 17, 1919.—We read Floyd Dell's *Were You Ever a Child?* to-day and found him remarking: "People talk about children being hard to teach and in the next breath deplore the facility with which they acquire the 'vices.' That seems strange. It takes as much patience, energy and faithful application to become proficient in a vice as it does to learn mathematics. Yet consider how much more popular poker is than equations! But did a schoolboy ever drop in on a group of teachers who had sat up all night parsing, say, a sentence in Henry James, or seeing who could draw the best map of the North Atlantic states? And when you come to think of it, it seems extremely improbable that any little boy ever learned to drink beer by seeing somebody take a tablespoonful once a day."

Most of this is true. The only trouble with all the new theories about bringing up children is that it leaves the job just as hard as ever.

We believe in the new theories for all that. They work, we think, but, like most worth while things, they are not always easy. For instance, H. 3rd came into the parlor the other day carrying the carving knife. Twenty years ago I could have taken it away and spanked him, but then along came the psychologists with their talk of breaking the child's will, and sensible people stopped spanking. Ten years ago I could have said, "Put down that carving knife or you'll make God feel very badly. In fact, you'll make dada feel very badly. You'll make dada cry if you don't obey him." But then the psychoanalysts appeared and pointed out that there was danger in that. In trying to punish the child by making him feel that his evil acts directly caused suffering to the parent there was an unavoidable tendency to make the child identify himself with the parent subconsciously. That might lead to all sorts of ructions later on. The child might identify himself so completely with his father that in later life he would use his shirts and neckties as if they were his own.

Of course, I might have gone over to H. 3rd and, after a short struggle, taken the carving knife away from him by main force, but that would have made him mad. He would at length have suppressed his anger and right away a complex would begin in his little square head.

Picture him now at thirty—he has neuralgia. Somebody mentions the theory of blind abscesses and he has all his teeth pulled out. No good comes of it. He goes to a psychoanalyst and the doctor begins to ask questions. He asks a great many over a long period of time. Eventually he gets a clue. He finds that when H. 3rd was eight years old he dreamed three nights in succession of stepping on a June bug.

"Was it a large, rather fat June bug?" asks the doctor carelessly, as if the answer was not important.

"Yes," says H. 3rd, "it was."

"That June bug," says the doctor, "was a symbol of your father. When you were twenty months old he took a Carving knife away from you and you have had a suppressed anger at him ever since. Now that you know about it your neuralgia will disappear."

And the neuralgia would go at that. But by that time I'd be gone and nothing could be done about this suppressed feud of so many years' standing. My mind went through all these possibilities and I decided it would be simpler and safer to let H. 3rd keep the carving knife as long as he attempted nothing aggressive. A wound is not so dangerous as a complex.

"And, anyhow," I thought, "if he can make that carving knife cut anything he's the best swordsman in the flat."

DECEMBER 20, 1919.—Our attitude toward H. 3rd and the carving knife turns out to have been all wrong. We received a letter from Floyd Dell to-day in which he points out that no Freudian could possibly approve our policy of

non-interference. Mr. Dell says we should have used force to the utmost.

"Psychoanalytically speaking," he writes, "I think you were wrong about H. 3rd and the carving knife. There is really no Freudian reason why, when he came carrying it into the parlor, you should not have gone over to him and, 'after a short struggle,' taken it away from him by main force. Of course, that would have made him mad. But what harm would that have done?... Unless, of course, you had previously represented yourself to him as a Divine and Perfect Being. In that case his new conception of you as a big bully would have had to struggle with his other carefully implanted and nourished emotions—and his sense of the injustice of your behavior might have been 'repressed.'

"But you know quite well that you are not a Divine and Perfect Being, and, if you consider it for a moment from the child's point of view, you will concede that his emotional opinion of you under such circumstances, highly colored as it is, has its justification. When you yourself want something very much (whether you are entitled to it or not) and when some one (however righteously) keeps you from getting it, how do you feel? But you know that you live in a world in which such things happen. H. 3rd has still to learn it, and if he learns it at his father's knee he is just that much ahead. The boys at school will teach it to him, anyway. The fact is, parents are unwilling that their children should hate them, however briefly, healthily and harmlessly.

"The Victorian parent spanked his offspring and commanded them to love him any way. The modern parent refrains from spanking (for good reasons) and hopes the child will love him. The Freudian parent does not mind if his children do hate him once or twice a day, so long as they are not ashamed of doing so. If H. 3rd swats his father in an enraged struggle to keep possession of the precious carving knife he is expressing and not repressing his emotions. And so long as he has done his best to win he is fairly well content to lose. What a child doesn't like is to have to struggle with a big bully that he mustn't (for mysterious reasons) even try to lick! The privilege of fighting with one's father, even if it does incidentally involve getting licked, is all that a healthy child asks for. Never fear, the time will come when he can lick you; and awaiting that happy time will give him an incentive for growing up. Quite possibly you don't want him to grow up; but that is only another of the well-known weaknesses of parents!"

DECEMBER 22, 1919.—Concerning H. 3rd and the carving knife I am gratified to find support for my position from Dr. Edward Hiram Reede, the well-known Washington neurologist, who finds that from the point of view of H. 3rd there was soundness in my policy of non-interference.

"Speaking for him," he writes, "I commend your action. Urged as he is by the two chief traits of childhood, at the present time—curiosity and imitation—I see no reason for direct coercion. So long as the modern child is environed by a museum, as the modern home appears, his curiosity must always be on edge, and if each new goal of curiosity is wrested from him by the usual 'Don't!' or the more ancient struggle for possession instead of by a transference of interest, then the contest will be interminable.

"H. 3rd by right of experience looks upon the armamentarium of the kitchen as his indisputable possessions and can hardly be expected to except a carver. The deification of the parent occurs in accord with the ancestor worship of primitive forebears, and the father will remain the god to the child so long as observation daily reveals the parent as a worker of miracles. Parental self-canonization is not at all necessary to produce this."

DECEMBER 23, 1919.—Recently, a reader wrote to inform us that in her opinion we were a "semi-Bolshevist," and added, "your style is cramped by this demi-semi attitude, and your stuff seems a little grotesque both to conservatives and radicals." This seemed fair comment to us and we confessed frankly that we were not a conservative and on clear and pleasant days not quite a radical. This business of sticking to the middle of the road, with perhaps a slight slant to the left, seems ever so difficult. One is ambushed and potted at from either side. Seemingly, even in our confession we have again offended, for Miss Mora M. Deane writes:

"As it happens I have just read your comment on my letter; and since you have turned out to be merely an egotist who twists an adverse criticism to his own advantage, I must now add to my letter that part which I lopped off considerately. This precisely because I did not know you were an egotist. The deleted part which originally closed the letter follows:

"At any rate I have lately heard intelligent persons from both camps saying, 'Heywood Broun is responsible for my going to see some pretty rotten plays and for reading some stupid books.'

"I myself should like to warn you against letting Heywood 3rd ever read Floyd Dell's book. The very idea of his advising about children leaves a bad taste in the mouth. You'll be sorry some day if you ever take him seriously."

Of course, Miss Deane does wisely to let us have the deletion. First impulses are usually sound.

And in one respect Miss Deane has scored more heavily than she could well have realized. Her warning that I should protect H. 3rd from radical literature touches an impending tragedy in my life. Almost by intuition Miss Deane seems to realize that the child and I are not in agreement in our political opinions. Of the fifteen or twenty words in which H. 3rd is proficient one is "mine" and another is "gimme." When he goes to the park he wears a naval uniform with the insignia of an ensign on his left arm. There is gold braid on his cap. Moreover, H. 3rd has in his own right two Liberty bonds, a card of thrift stamps, a rocking-horse, a railroad, a submarine, three picture books, an automobile and a Noah's ark. Any effort to socialize a single one of these holdings is met by a protest so violent that I cannot help but realize that the child's sense of property rights is strongly developed. That is, his own property rights, for he is often inclined to dispute my title to cigarette stumps, safety razor blades and carving knives.

Moreover, H. 3rd is unblushingly parasitic. We fail to remember that he has ever offered to make any return for

the regular income of milk and oatmeal, and sometimes carrots, which is issued to him regularly by his parents. To be sure, he once gave me a chicken bone and on another occasion a spool of cotton, but both times he promptly took them away again. I am even inclined to question whether, in any strictly legal sense, the chicken bone or the spool were his. Granting that they had been carelessly discarded by other members of his family, and that, by his own efforts, H. 3rd rescued the spool from the scrapbasket and the chicken bone from behind the trash box, the fact remains that it was I who bought the chicken and Miss X who purchased the spool. We were entitled at least to a royalty during the life of the two utilities, but H. 3rd merely absorbed them without explanation or promise.

I doubt whether Dell or Eastman or even Karl Marx himself could avail to check the rampant individualism of the child. He has always displayed an impatience and an irritation at abstract arguments. The best that can be done is to avoid introducing contentious subjects. For the present Miss X and I are able to carry on destructive and seditious conversations even in his presence by spelling out "p-r-o-l-e-t-a-r-i-a-t" and "b-o-u-r-g-e-o-i-s-i-e" and other words which might make him mad. We have even been able to keep Trotzky's picture above the mantelpiece in the red room, but in this case Miss X adopted a subterfuge which seems to me rather questionable. She told H. 3rd that it was a portrait of Nicholas Murray Butler.

When H. 3rd is twenty-one he will come into undisputed possession of the two Liberty bonds and the card of thrift stamps for which Miss X and I starved and scraped. I rather hope he will thank us, but beyond that I expect nothing except good advice. I can see him now squaring his shoulders, as becomes a man of property and independent income, and then laying a kindly hand on my shoulder as he says, "Dad, can't you understand how wrong you are? Don't you see that if you disturb or even threaten the institution of private property you undermine the home, imperil the state and destroy initiative?"

JANUARY 21, 1920.—When the rest went out and left me alone in the house, they said that H. 3rd would surely sleep through the evening. Nobody remembered that he had ever waked up to cry. But he did this night. I didn't quite know what to do about it. I sang "Rockabye Baby" to him, but that didn't do any good, and then I said "I wouldn't cry if I were you." This, too, had no effect, and, in fact, no sooner had I uttered it than I recognized it as a piece of gratuitous impertinence. How could I possibly tell whether or not I would cry if the safety pins were in wrong or anything else of that sort was not quite right?

Nor was it even fair to assume that H. 3rd was crying for any such personal reasons. After all, he lives in a state which has recently suspended five duly elected assemblymen, and in which as fine a book as Jurgen has aroused the meddlesome attention of the Society for the Suppression of Vice, and his country has gone quite hysterical on the subject of "Reds" and "Red" propaganda and I haven't paid him back yet for that $50 Liberty Bond of his which I sold.

And after I had thought of these things it seemed to me that he was entirely justified in crying, and that I ought to be ashamed of myself because I didn't cry, too, since there were so many wrong things in the world to be righted. Humbly I left him to continue his dignified protest without any further unwarranted meddling on my part.

JANUARY 24, 1920.—"My attention has been called," writes John S. Sumner, secretary of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, "to a paragraph of your article in the *Tribune* of January 21, wherein you refrain from blaming H. 3rd for crying, because among other things, he 'lives in a state which has recently suspended five duly elected assemblymen, and in which as fine a book as *Jurgen* has aroused the meddlesome attention of the Society for the Suppression of Vice.'

"I assume that H. 3rd is too young to appreciate the contents of any publication, but some day he will be old enough, and no doubt his character will be molded and his conduct controlled, in a measure, by what he reads and the thoughts suggested by such reading. That is the usual thing.

"If, when H. 3rd or any other young person, reached the age of understanding a stranger came into the home and attempted to entertain the young mind with stories and suggestions such as are contained in the book in question, whoever had in charge the moral welfare of the young person would no doubt be very indignant and the stranger would be expelled forthwith. We cannot properly have a rule for the protection of our own and fail to extend that protection to others."

Mr. Sumner is incorrect in his assumption that any stranger who told H. 3rd such merry and gorgeous stories as those of *Jurgen* would be expelled forthwith by "whoever had in charge the welfare of the young person." To be sure, this description hardly fits us. We mean to have as little to do with the morals of H. 3rd as possible. It seems to us a sorry business for parents to hand down their own morals, with a tuck here and a patch there, and expect a growing child to wear them with any comfort. Let the child go out and find his own morals.

But if H. 3rd went out and found *Jurgen* and read it at the age of adolescence, or thereabouts, it might be excellent literature for him. After all, a boy has to learn the facts of sex some time or other, and Cabell has been felicitious enough in *Jurgen* to present them not only as beautiful, but merry as well. Those elements ought to be present in everybody's sex education. The new knowledge comes to almost all youngsters as a distinct shock, because, while the things their boy companions tell them may be merry enough, they are also sufficiently gross to be distinctly harmful in a number of cases; and, if their parents tell them it is either in some form so highly poetic that it means nothing, or as something decidedly grim and solemn as Sunday School. In either case this knowledge is apt to be regarded as something of which to be ashamed, and it seems to us that the world is just beginning to realize that shame is almost the most destructive of all the evil forces in the world. And so, unless our opinions change, we shall continue to pray each night, "Oh God, please keep all shame out of the heart and mind of H. 3rd."

MARCH 10, 1920.—Some little time ago we were asked what method we were going to use to instil moral ideas into the head of H. 3rd. We said then that we rather hoped that he would be able to get along, for a while at any rate, without any. We felt that it was the last thing in the world concerning which we wanted to be dogmatic. Unfortunately, the moral sense seems to arise early. Already H. 3rd is constantly inquiring "Good boy, dada?" Usually this comes after he has chipped the furniture or broken some of the china.

Of course, we ought not to answer him. We have no idea whether he is a good boy or not. The marks of his destruction are plain enough, but without knowing his motives we can't pass on his conduct. We were slightly annoyed when he broke the lamp, but perhaps it was no more than pardonable curiosity on his part. Perhaps it was wanton. How can we tell? And yet, it is impossible to preserve neutrality. After the fifteenth or sixteenth reiteration of the query we always say, "Yes, you are a good boy," and then he goes away satisfied. But we are not. He is beginning to make us feel like the Supreme Court or Moses. It's too much responsibility.

MARCH 12, 1920.—"Your troubles are just beginning," writes M. B. "H. 3rd knew he was a bad boy when he broke that lamp. He has simply been testing your moral sense, which for some months he has suspected of being inadequate. I foresee that you will be a great disappointment to him as time goes on. In twelve years or so he will find your political views unsound and your literary tastes decadent. I doubt whether he will approve of the way you spend Sunday.

"You may think you can retain his affection, if not his respect, by keeping clear of the arbitrary methods of a bygone generation. Alas! I don't think there is even that hope for the radical parent of a conservative child. By the time H. 3rd has grown to adolescence he will feel that dogmatism is a *sine qua non* of parenthood, and he will wish that he had had a real father. He may even resolve to have military discipline in his home.

"I am sorry. I wish I could see brighter things for you in the days to come. Please forgive the impertinence of this prophecy. It has been wrung from the experience of one who has been condemned out of the mouth of fourteen as a socialist, a pacifist and (if he had known the word) a pagan."

We have feared as much. Already we have found that we do not know the child. A week ago we were delighted when he picked up a pocketbook and, with a scornful exclamation of "Money!" threw it far across the room. "He will be an artist," we said, but last Saturday morning he came charging down upon the crap game loudly shouting, "I want a dollar!" He had to be forcibly restrained from gathering up the entire stake—it was two dollars and not one—which lay upon the floor. We were so disconcerted by the revelation of his spirit that we threw twelve twice and failed on an eight. Of course, that is not the thing which disturbs us. We fear that H. 3rd will grow up to be a business man. As such, of course, he may become the support of our old age, but we shall consider support more than earned if it entails our receiving with our allowance a monthly homily on the reason and cure for unrest.

APRIL 6, 1920.—Some time ago I wrote a bitter attack on H. 3rd, the reactionary, in which I stated that his political emotions made it necessary for his parents to avoid the use of "proletariat" and such words except when disguised by the expedient of spelling out "p-r-o-l-e-t-a-r-i-a-t." And it is only fair to say that the device takes a good deal of the zest out of sedition. I also stated at the time that we had been able to keep the picture of Trotzky over the mantelpiece in the red room by mendaciously telling H. 3rd that it was a portrait of Nicholas Murray Butler.

It now becomes necessary for me to make a public apology to H. 3rd. It is perhaps a tasteless proceeding for me to drag his private political views into print, but the retraction ought to have as much publicity as the original slander. H. 3rd is not a reactionary. He is a liberal. It would have been perfectly safe for us to have said "proletariat" right out and to have confessed the identity of Trotzky. H. 3rd might not have been altogether in support, but he would have been interested.

I discovered that he was a liberal early on Sunday morning while we were walking in Central Park. We happened to go near the merry-go-round and H. 3rd, drawn by the strains of "Dardanella," dragged me eagerly toward the pavilion. I supposed, of course, that he wanted to ride and had just time to strap him on top of a camel before the platform began to move. No sooner were we in motion round and round, slow at first and then faster and faster as the revolutions increased in violence, than H. 3rd began to cry. As soon as possible I lifted him back to the firm and stable ground and briskly started to walk away from the scene of his harrowing experience. I thought he wanted to get as far away from it as possible, but after a few steps I noticed that he was not following me. Instead he was hurrying back to the merry-go-round as fast as his legs would carry him. "Perhaps," I thought, "he intends to discipline his will and is going to ride that merry-go-round again just because he is so much afraid of it." I knew that people sometimes did things like that because I had read it in *The Research Magnificent*. H. 3rd is not among them. He howled louder than before when I tried to put him on the camel again. I even tested the fantastic possibility that it was the camel and not the carrousel to which he objected, but he yelled just as vigorously when offered a horse and later a unicorn.

Then, I ceased to interfere and resolved to watch. When the merry-go-round began to whirl H. 3rd edged up closer and closer with a look of the most intense interest which I have ever seen on his face. He was fascinated by the sight of men, women and children engaged in a wild and, perhaps, a debauching experiment. Hitherto he had observed that people went forward and back in reasonably straight lines, but this progress was flagrantly rotary. I could not get him away. He stood his ground firmly. He would not retreat a step, nor would he go any nearer. In fact, he was already so close to the carrousel that he could have leaped on board with no more than a hop. By leaning just a little he could have touched it. But he did neither. He preferred a combination of the closest possible proximity and

stability. And after a while I realized just what it was of which he reminded me. He was an editor of *The New Republic* watching the Russian Revolution. The mad whirling thing lay right at his feet, but his interest in it and even its imminence never disturbed his tranquillity. The lines of communication with the safe and sane rear remained unbroken. He could retreat the minute the carrousel attempted to become overly familiar.

And so we knew that H. 3rd was and is a liberal.

APRIL 18, 1920.—The nurse said that H. 3rd had a fight in the park with one of his little playmates and won it. She was proud and partisan.

"Woodie," she said, using the fearful nickname which has fastened itself upon the child, "wanted to play with Archie's fire engine, and Archie wouldn't let him. Woodie hit him in the mouth and made it bleed, and Archie cried."

I said "Tut, tut."

"I think it's right," said the nurse. "I think children ought to stand up for their rights."

"But, after all," I reminded her, "it was Archie's fire engine."

"Archie's older than Woodie," she said; "he's two and a half and he's bigger."

"That sort of justification," I objected, "if carried far enough, would lead straight to criminal anarchy. After all, the bituminous miners might say that Mr. Palmer was bigger than they are."

"We didn't think they'd fight," she said, cleverly dodging the larger implications of the discussion. "We were watching them, and all of a sudden Woodie swung his left hand and hit Archie in the mouth."

"Which hand?" I exclaimed.

"His left hand," she said.

"Are you sure?" I insisted.

"Why, yes, sir. Didn't you ever notice Woodie always picks up things with his left hand?"

Before, I had been the cool, impartial judge, but it was impossible to maintain that attitude. In a moment I had become again the parent, human and fallible to emotion. I motioned to the nurse to leave me. I wanted to be alone with my problem. I must face the fact with as much courage as I could muster. There seemed to be no shadow of doubt from which hope could spring. I was the father of a southpaw.

APRIL 20, 1920.—We decided not to let H. 3rd play with lead soldiers, for fear they might inculcate a spirit of militarism. Instead, he received an illuminated set of Freedom Blocks. We remember that among the titles were "Bill of Rights," "Free Speech," "Magna Charta" and "Habeas Corpus." The blocks have not been altogether a success. The set is badly depleted, for the child licked all the paint off "Free Speech" and threw "Habeas Corpus" out of the window.

APRIL 21, 1920.—Although we don't know the exact legal form, we think we have seen announcements of somewhat the same sort. At any rate, we want to advertise the fact that on and after this date we will not be responsible for persons who may be injured by falling objects while passing the apartment house on the west side of Seventh Avenue between Fifty-fifth and Fifty-sixth streets. Our first hint of the danger came when the hairbrush disappeared and could not be found. That was only circumstantial evidence, but on Monday we caught him in the act of tossing out a hand mirror.

It was our idea to dissuade him by trying to make him understand that breaking mirrors is bad luck, but R. says that it is best not to plant any superstitions in the undeveloped mind of a child. The best we could do was to take the mirror away and shadow him closely. But yesterday a bronze vase disappeared and two books. So far no casualties have been reported. Although we live on the fifth floor, I don't believe the books could have hurt anybody very much. They were light fiction, but the vase is different. We told M. not to leave the stove unguarded for a moment, and we are seeking to perfect a device to padlock the piano to the wall. As yet we have reached no plan to guard the books. Probably the best we can do is to allow any passerby who is hit and hurt to keep the book. Of course, the point naturally arises as to whether a passerby who has been hit with the second volume of Gibbon's *Rome* has a right to demand the whole set. We rather think there would be justice in that. At any rate, we are not disposed to be petty about the matter, because we realize that from the fifth floor even a single volume of Gibbon might be deadly.

A. W., who is frivolous, suggests that we lock up all but a certain number of suitable books which we shall allow H. 3rd to throw out the window without interference. His list includes *The Rise and Fall of the Dutch Republic, The Descent of Man, La Débâcle, The Fall and Rise of Susan Lennox*, and then he would add, rather optimistically, we fear, *It Never Can Happen Again*.

What is getting into children these days, anyway? Frankly, we view their conduct with alarm. That spirit of destruction and unrest seems to have gripped them all. Where do they get it? Why has the Lusk committee failed to act in the matter? To us it seems a clear case of Bolshevist propaganda.

APRIL 23, 1920.—H. 3rd handed me a pencil, and then stood around as if he expected me to do something with it. I didn't suppose he wanted me to commit myself in writing about any recent plays or books, and I guessed that he desired something more pictorial. I drew a face and showed it to him. It wasn't any face in particular and I didn't know whether to call it the Spirit of the Ages or a young Jugo-Slav artillery officer. H. 3rd looked at it with interest and promptly said "baybay."

I let it go at that and was pleased that he had caught the general intent of the work. Unfortunately, I tried to show my versatility, and the next head was stuck underneath a pompadour and on top of a rather elaborate gown. But again he called it "baybay." I added trousers, a walking stick, a high hat, a fierce scowl and put a long pipe in the mouth, but he could see no difference. It was still a "baybay."

I was put in the quandary of setting H. 3rd down as a little unintelligent or stigmatizing my art as ineffective, until I suddenly came upon the correct explanation. These pictures of mine were direct, naïve, unspoiled by any theory of life or composition. They were the natural expression of a creative impulse. In them was the spirit of spring, and freshets, and early birds, and saplings, and *What Every Young Man Ought to Know* and all that sort of thing. "Baybay," said H. 3rd, and he was quite right. I couldn't fool him by putting Peter Pan in long trousers.

MAY 5, 1920.—This is the story of the low-cut lady and the lisping tot. It is contained in *The Menace of Immorality*, by the Rev. John Roach Straton, in a chapter entitled "Slaves of Fashion":

"I once heard one of the most famous reform workers of this city explain why she gave up low-cut gowns," writes Dr. Straton. "She explained how she was ready to start for the theater one night in such a dress, when her little boy of five said to her, 'But, mother, you are not going that way? You are not dressed.' And then, with trembling voice, she told us how all the evening through, as she sat in the playhouse she kept hearing that sweet childish voice saying 'Not dressed! Not dressed! Not dressed!' until at last, with the blush of shame mantling to her cheeks, and with the realization that a Christian mother should dress differently from the idle and godless women of the world, she drew her cloak about her and went home, dressed—or rather undressed—for the last time in such a costume!"

Nothing we have read in a month has been quite so disturbing to us as this simple little tale. Before it our theories tremble and fall. Upon many an occasion we have set down the conviction that little children should never be spanked under any provocation whatsoever. And yet if we had been that low-cut lady we would certainly have given that interfering and priggish little youngster a walloping. Even in the case of H. 3rd we are minded to make an exception in our program. He may rampage and roar and destroy without laying himself open to corporal punishment, but he will do very well to refrain from any comment of any sort about our clothes or personal appearance. We do not purpose to come home in our cloak from any show with our evening entirely spoiled by the fact that a sweet childish voice has been saying in our ear, "Not shaved! Not shaved! Not shaved!"

JUNE 3, 1920.—Of late I am beginning to notice with perturbation a distinctly sentimental streak in H. 3rd. Nothing else will account for his tenderness toward Goliath. When we first began to talk about him he was treated by common consent rather scornfully. He was known to us as "Ole Goliath he talks too much." Even in those early days it cannot be said that Goliath was treated with special spite, for as the story grew in the telling he fared not much worse than David. Somehow or other I eventually came into the incident myself. Just now I can't remember whether it was at the special invitation of H. 3rd or my own egotistic urge.

At any rate, it seems that David, after knocking Goliath down, grew overbearing in his attitude to all the world. Goliath, it must be explained, was not killed, since death would involve explanations beyond the comprehension of H. 3rd. Goliath was merely hit in the chest and fell. The chest was stressed, since it is necessary every now and then to halt H. 3rd in his most playful moments with the admonition that hitting casual visitors in the face is not a friendly act. We pride ourselves on our old-fashioned Brooklyn hospitality.

However, as we had said, David followed up his victory with the boast, "I can beat any man in the world," at which point H. 3rd is supposed to chime in, "And lick 'em." In response to this challenge Heywood 2d appeared, and when David picked up another rock and threw it H. 2d cleverly put up his hands and caught the missile. He threw it back at David and knocked him down. Rollo offered the further amendment that he himself then appeared and knocked Heywood 2d down. "And," he told the child, "I didn't need a rock. I used a snappy retort."

He even went so far as to draw a picture of the occurrence, but it met with no favor from H. 3rd, who exclaimed, "Heywood second did not fell. He did not fell."

I was much touched by this display of loyalty until I found that his feelings were just as much engaged in the fate of Goliath. This love of his for the Philistine he indicated suddenly one evening when he asked me to tell him the story of "Sweet Goliath," and I found that nothing would satisfy him but the complete revision of the whole tale to the end that it should be Goliath who picked up the rock and vanquished David. I have tried to lure him away from this unauthorized version in vain. Only to-day I suggested hopefully "That ole Goliath he talks too much." H. 3rd looked at me severely, but then his face brightened, and with all the unction of a missionary to China he said, "Goliath loves you."

JUNE 11, 1920.—"Perhaps you can answer the challenge to American educational institutions contained in this

letter from H. G. Wells," writes Floyd Dell. "I can't (neither am I able to think of anything to reply to the question which he counters to my 'Were You Ever a Child?'—'Were You Ever a Parent?' But that won't embarrass you)."

I'm afraid that by dint of writing now and again about H. 3rd I have managed to pass myself off as a chronic parent. For all the assurance with which I have put forth certain theories on the care and education of the young, many of them mere reflections of Dell's book, I admit at the outset no qualification to answer the challenge of Wells even if I were sure that an answer were possible. For all I know H. 3rd will grow up to rob a bank and curse me that he was not spanked with due moralizing and ceremony three times a week. However, the letter from Wells is as follows:

"Dear Floyd Dell: Yours is a good, wise book—so far. But there is a devil—several devils—of indolence in a child. Have you ever been a parent? That too is useful.

"Do you know anything of modern English public schools? How many Americans do? You know of Beedale's and Abbotsholm, crank schools, but you know nothing of Audle. Have you ever heard of Audle? Audle has 500 boys (two of mine). No class teaching practically, boys working in research groups, big botanical gardens, library, concert hall, picture gallery, big engineering laboratories and a good biological one. Boys encouraged to read stuff like *The Liberator* and me. Sex via biology (see *Joan and Peter*). This isn't 1947. This is now. Wake up America!"

"I ought perhaps to add," writes Dell in a postscript, "that the handwriting of my fellow member of the advisory council of the Association for the Advancement of Progressive Education is a peculiar hieroglyphic which it is sometimes almost impossible to decipher. Thus, I am not quite sure whether he says my book 'is a good, wise book,' or something quite different. Some of my friends who have seen the letter think that he says it is 'a God-awful book.' The hieroglyphics transliterate equally well either way. But I do not think that particular descriptive phrase is used in England. Anyway, you can take your choice."

If Floyd Dell can't think up anything to say in defense of American educational methods I'm sure I can't. It seems to me that almost without exception our schools are devoted to that process called "large scale production."

"I can tell any graduate of your school at a glance," said a man in my hearing. "They all bear your stamp unmistakably."

And the schoolmaster grinned with delight.

Practically all our institutions of learning are finishing schools. We are told, for instance, that the modern public school aims to turn out 100 per cent Americans. It seems to me that 98 or even 97 per cent would be better. That would leave the child some margin for growth and development based on actual experience rather than precept. I'm afraid that the 100 per cent may represent nothing more than something poured in by the teacher, and I doubt if many of our educators are sure enough of eye and hand to stop exactly at the minute notch marked 100. There is always the danger that a little too much will be poured in and something will be spilled over, for when a man becomes 101 or 102 per cent American he must soon dispose of the surplus. He may take it to Mexico in the train of a holy war or bayonet a path for it into Japan, and recently we have heard not a few around New York who seem to think highly of the possibility of a war to Americanize England. And, of course, the various agencies to deport, expel and imprison often represent the activities of those who have more Americanism than they can carry like gentlemen.

Not only is patriotism poured in at the top in our schools, but literature and art and everything else is administered in like fashion. The pupil is allowed to discover nothing for himself. "Here," says the teacher, "is a great book. Read it." And yet we wonder that when the boys and girls grow old enough to vote they usually follow the same order of boss or demagogue, who says, "Hylan is the people's friend; vote for him." In fact, we train a public which masses around cheer leaders. It follows the man with the megaphone, who shouts, "Now, boys, all together and nine long rahs on the end!" The rahs are the most important part of it. That is the point where the volume of sound swells greater and greater.

It doesn't seem to me that there is much difference in the psychological processes of the followers of Ole Hansen and of Big Bill Haywood. They are merely on opposite sides of the field. The trouble with bringing up anybody on cheer leaders is that it is so easy for him to switch. The same man who tells you one day that this country must have law and order if it has to lynch every Socialist in the country to get it is just as likely to say the next month that this will never be a true democracy until it has a dictatorship of the proletariat. Not for a minute, mind you, would we suppress the cheering squads or their leaders. Personally, we have no desire to see a social revolution. Our holdings, which include two Liberty bonds, twenty shares of American Drug Syndicate and one share of preferred stock in *The Liberator*, incline us to conservatism. It seems to us that we property-holders who want the world to go on without convulsions should urge a policy which would permit those who want to holler to go on hollering and at the same time rope off some section under the grandstand for those who just want to talk.

Audle, the home of the Wells children, must be a good school. Very probably it is better than anything in America. And yet we are not willing to accept it as the last word. It terrifies us a little by its efficiency. If H. 3rd goes to Audle's we know he'll come home to ask us questions which we can't possibly answer and he'll build toy factories and bridges in the front hall for us to trip over. Out of Audle's will come men to make these toys real—men who will tunnel mountains and frighten rivers out of their courses. Others will harry germs and compose symphonies and perhaps some will write huge stacks of novels as high as those of Wells himself.

Nevertheless, we are a little distressed when Wells speaks so impatiently of the devil of indolence in a child. We wonder whether he may not mean the child's invariable desire to do something other than that suggested by parent or teacher. There have been times when H. 3rd has refused my most earnest pleas that he ride his kiddie car up and down the hall. Still, it would hardly be fair to call him indolent simply because he preferred to beat against the front window with a tablespoon. It takes ever so much energy to do that, particularly if you keep it up as long as H. 3rd does. We are not quite ready to believe that it is essential to exorcise the devil, even if he is one of sheer indolence. Naturally it is repugnant to a man like Wells, who realizes so keenly the necessity for us all to get together and do something for the world. There is no denying that it was a rush job. But, after all, God created man in His image.

Some of us have the spirit which animated Him during those terrific six days, but we wonder whether the world has no place, and never will have any place, for those others who emulate the God who rested and talked a little, perhaps, and sat around and remembered and dreamed and never lifted a finger to add as much to the world as one more fly or another blade of grass.

JUNE 15, 1920.—"Heywood Broun 3rd," writes a correspondent who signs no name, "is, fortunately for him, a very young son; Heywood Broun is a very young father—both will grow up. May the boy grow in grace free from *Jurgen's* influence and may the father find his materialism Dead Sea fruit in time to set such an example that H. B. 3rd will act upon the Fifth Commandment. It can't be done on smutty fiction or carnal knowledge."

It may be, as the writer suggests, that we shall grow in grace. However, that is beside the point, for, in the words of the beautiful christening service, a child takes his father "for better or worse." Even now we are of the opinion that all the Commandments should be observed in decent moderation. We think we are correct in assuming that the Fifth is, "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." We intend to serve notice on H. 3rd not to make this his favorite Commandment. If he must break one of them, by all means let it be the Fifth. Even though we become much better than we are now, it is going to make us distinctly uncomfortable if he goes about the house honoring us. It will seem too ridiculous, and we doubt very much if he can do it with a straight face. Whenever he feels that he simply must honor his parents we hope that he will do it in an underhand way behind our backs. Although we hope never to spank him, he will be running a great risk if he makes his honoring frank and flagrant.

And, anyway, why should he want to? Hasn't he got *Jack the Giant Killer*, and *Dick Whittington*, and *Aladdin* and *Captain Kidd*? Let him honor them. They are all too dead and too deserving to be annoyed by it.

Southpaws

Our text to-day is from the fifteenth verse of the third chapter of the Book of Judges, in which it is written: "And afterwards they cried out to the Lord, who raised them up a saviour called Aod, the son of Gera, the son of Jemini, who used the left hand as well as the right."

As a matter of fact, it seems probable that the old chronicler was simply trying to spare the feelings of Aod by describing him merely as an ambidextrous person, for there is later evidence, in the Book of Judges, that Aod actually favored his left hand and was—to be blunt and frank—just a southpaw.

Aod, as you may remember, was sent to Eglon, the king of Moab, ostensibly to bear gifts from the Children of Israel, but, in reality, to kill the oppressor. "Aod," continues the vivid scriptural narrative, "went in to him: now he was sitting in a summer parlor alone, and he said: I have a word from God to thee. And he forthwith rose up from his throne. And Aod put forth his left hand, and took the dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly with such force that the haft went in after the blade into the wound, and was closed up with the abundance of fat."

When some great scholar comes to write the long-neglected book entitled *A History of Lefthanders From the Earliest Times*, it may well be that Aod will be discovered to be the first of the great line to be definitely identified in ancient history. He is the only lefthander mentioned by name in the Bible, although this physical condition—or is it a state of mind—is referred to in another chapter (Judges 20) in which we hear of a town which seems to have been inhabited entirely by lefthanders. At any rate the Bible says: "The inhabitants of Gabaa, who were seven hundred most valiant men, fighting with the left hand as well as with the right and slinging stones so sure that they could hit even a hair, and not miss by the stone's going on either side."

It is interesting to note that these lefthanders are again described as ambidextrous, but it is safe to assume that they too were in reality southpaws. It may even be that Gabaa was a town specially set aside for lefthanded people, a place of refuge for a rather undesirable sort of citizen.

This surmise is made in all seriousness, for there was a time in the history of the world when lefthandedness was considered almost a crime. Primitive man was unquestionably ambidextrous, but, with the growth of civilization, came religious and military customs and these necessitated at certain points in drill or ceremonial a general agreement as to which hand should be used. Man, for some reason unknown, chose the right. That is why ninety per cent of the people in the world to-day are righthanded. Then with the development of business there soon came to be a conventionally correct hand for commerce. Early dealings of a business nature were carried on by men who held the shield in the left hand and bargained with the right. The shield proved convenient in case the deal fell through. Men who reversed the traditional use of the hands were regarded as queer folk or even a little worse than that. After all, lefthandedness was impious in religion, subversive to discipline in military affairs and unlisted in business. It is not to be wondered at then that there is testimony that centuries ago lefthanded children were severely beaten and the offending arm often tied down for years.

And yet the southpaw has persisted in spite of persecution. The two men most widely known in America to-day are both lefthanded. I assume that nobody will dispute the preëminence in fame of Charlie Chaplin and Babe Ruth, both of whom are completely and fervently lefthanded. And to top that off it may be added that the war was won by a lefthander, Marshal Ferdinand Foch, a southpaw, or, as the French have it, gaucher.

It is interesting to note that the prejudice against lefthandedness has manifested itself and endures in our language. We speak of forbidding things as "sinister," and of awkward things as "gauche," but we lefthanders can afford to smile contemptuously at these insults knowing, as we do, that Leonardo da Vinci was one of us. Gauche indeed!

On account of the extent and the duration of the ill will to lefthanders there has come to be definitely such a thing as a lefthanded temperament. This is no more than natural. The lefthander is a rebel. He is the descendant of staunch ancestors who refused to conform to the pressing demands of the church, the army and the business world. Even to-day lefthanders are traditionally poor business men and Babe Ruth has been obliged to bring suit against the company with which he made a moving picture contract. They are apt to be political radicals, and it has been freely rumored that Charlie Chaplin is a Socialist. They are illogical or rather they rise above logic, as did Foch in his famous message: "My left is broken, my right has been driven back, I shall attack at dawn." That is a typically lefthanded utterance. It has in it all of the fine rebellion of folk who have refused to conform even to such hard things as facts. If the sculptor had been a little more astute the lady who stands at the entrance of our harbor would have borne the torch aloft in her left hand. Liberty is a southpaw.

So strong is the effect of the left hand upon the temperament that it may even be observed in the case of converts. Such an instance is afforded by the case of Daniel Vierge, the great Spanish artist, and by the recent conduct of James M. Barrie, a righthander of years standing, who finally developed writer's cramp and switched to the use of the left hand. What happened? He wrote *Mary Rose*, a play which deals symbolically with death and, instead of giving his audiences the conventional Barrie message of hope and charm and sweetness, he straightway set forth the doctrine that the dead didn't come back and that if they did they and the folk they left behind couldn't get on at all. Time, said the new Barrie, destroys all things, even the most ardent of affections. This was a strange and startling doctrine from Barrie. It was a lefthanded message.

To-day, of course, lefthanders are pretty generally received socially; occasionally they are elected to office, and there is no longer any definite provision against intermarriage. But anybody who thinks that prejudice has died out completely has only to listen to a baseball player when he remarks: "Why him—he's a lefthander!" There is also the well authenticated story of a young lefthanded golfer in our Middle West who played a match with Harry Vardon, in which he made a brilliant showing. Indeed, the youngster was so much elated that at the end of the round he asked the great pro.: "Who's the best lefthanded golfer you ever saw?" "There never was one that was worth a damn," answered Vardon sourly.

The estimate is not quite fair, for Brice Evans is lefthanded and, though it seems hardly patriotic to dwell upon it, our own Chick Evans was put out of the English amateur championship several years ago by Bruce Pierce, a southpaw from Tasmania. Still, lefthanded golfers of any consequence are rare. Football has a few southpaw or rather southfoot heroes. Victor Kennard won a game against Yale for Harvard with a leftfooted field goal. He and Felton were two of Harvard's greatest punters, and both of them were leftfooted kickers. There must have been some others, but the only one I can think of at the moment was Lefty Flynn of Yale, who was hardly a great player.

Almost all boxers adopt the conventional righthanded form of standing with the left arm advanced, but Knockout Brown, for a few brief seasons, puzzled opponents by boxing lefthanded. He jabbed with his right and kept his left hand for heavy work. Of all the men nominated as possibilities for the international polo match only one is lefthanded, Watson Webb, the American, and one of the greatest and prettiest horsemen that America has turned out in many a year. In tennis we have done better, with Norman Brookes, Lindley Murray, Dwight Davis and Beals Wright.

But the complete triumph of the lefthander comes in baseball. Tris Speaker, greatest of outfielders and manager of the world's champion Cleveland Indians, is lefthanded. So is Babe Ruth, the home run king, and George Sisler, who led the American League in batting. Ty Cobb, like the Roman emperor before whom Paul appeared, is almost persuaded. He bats lefthanded. Almost half the players in both leagues adopt this practice since it gives them an advantage of about six feet in running to first base. And yet, in spite of this fact, thousands of meddling mothers all over the country are breaking prospective lefthanders into dull, plodding, conventional righthandedness. Babe Ruth was fortunate. He received his education in a protectory where the good brothers were much too busy to observe which hand he used. His spirit was not broken nor his natural proclivities bent. Accordingly he made fifty-four home runs last season and earned over one hundred thousand dollars. The world has sneered at us all too long. Even a lefthander will turn in time.

Michael

The man who gave us Michael said that he was a Shetland terrier. Frankly, I don't believe there is any such thing; unless Michael is it. But there is no denying a Scotch strain of some sort. There is a good deal of John Knox about Michael. He recognizes no middle ground. There was no difficulty, for instance, in convincing Michael of the wickedness of some manifestations of the grossness which is mortality, but it has been impossible to make him accept any working compromise such as those by which men and dogs live. He can see no reason why there should be any geographical limits or bounds to badness.

There is a certain fierce democracy in that. Michael thinks no less of a backyard or a sidewalk than he does of a parlor. Or perhaps it would be better to say he thinks no more of a parlor. Repentance comes to him more easily than reformation. And yet I have an enormous respect for Michael's point of view as I understand it. He doesn't want to

burn, of course, but he has no patience with dogs who blandly hope to attain salvation by leading lamp-post lives.

In some things I would have Michael more practical. That man who brought him here said that his father was an excellent mouser. I have come to wonder whether the legitimacy of Michael is beyond question. Doubt struck me the other day in the kitchen when I saw an over-venturesome mouse clinging precariously to a window curtain and swinging back and forth not more than a foot from the ground.

"Look, Michael," I said, "it's a mouse!"

I tried to say it with the same intensity as "Voila un sousmarin!" or "It's gold, pardner!" or something of the sort, but Michael looked at my finger instead of the mouse and wagged his tail. He backed away from me playfully and bounced around a little and barked. Indeed, he backed into the curtain and the tail of the mouse went swish, swish across his back, but Michael continued to wag. I have some little hope that this particular mouse will not come back for a time. He was visibly terrified, but of course it would be impossible to predict any permanent condition of shock. At any rate, by a supreme effort he mastered his panic. Wrenching himself loose from the curtain, he jumped and landed on Michael's back. Then he hopped to the floor and disappeared behind the potato barrel. Michael sat down slowly and scratched himself.

Last week I thought I detected a real fusion of Michael's undoubted idealism and direct practical action. Somebody brought *The New York American* into the house and left it on the floor. When I came in I found that Michael had torn it to shreds. He had been particularly severe with the editorial page. I patted him and gave him some warm milk. To-day I discovered he had mutilated a third edition of *The Tribune*. And upon inquiry I learned that he would chew almost anything except *The New Republic*. His teeth are not quite sharp enough for such heavy paper yet. It is just possible that there is some more subtle reason for the exception. Sometimes I think that Michael has a "New Republic" mind.

Buying a Farm

It began as "a farm," but even before the catalogues arrived it was "the farm." Now we call it "our farm," although the land is still in Spain abutting on the castle. Chiefly, the place is for Michael. The backyard is much too small for him, and too formal. He regards the house with affection, no doubt, but with none of that respect which he has for the backyard. He is, as you might say, thoroughly yard-broken. When he puts his paws against the front door and barks for freedom he would be a harsh person indeed who would refuse to plan a plantation, a large one, for him. Of course, there was H. 3rd to consider, also, but he seemed less restive. Things beyond the borders of a pram are so foreign.

By eliminating Maine, Ohio and all farms priced at more than twenty thousand dollars, we succeeded at length in narrowing the field of selection to three. One, which has the attractive name of Farm No. 97, is in Connecticut. It has "good American neighbors on all sides." It is only half a mile to some village, not specified. Four of the ten acres are tillable and the rest in timber. Since there are at least 250 cords of wood bringing five to six dollars per cord, the author of the catalogue is entirely justified in the use of the phrase "ridiculously low" regarding the price of $1,500. The author of the catalogue goes on to say that "the owner is an aged widow," and we have gathered the impression that the author means to intimate that she is not quite competent. This would explain the ridiculously low price.

However, we wish to defend our motives in favoring Farm No. 97. It was not the opportunity to swindle a widow out of her homestead which tempted us, nor even the cordwood, but a single sentence almost at the bottom of the description. It read, "Aged owner, for quick sale, will include good mare that has paced a mile in 2:20." This would bring the village half a mile away within one minute and ten seconds, while the good American neighbors would be only seconds away.

E—— was the devil's advocate. "The description doesn't tell enough," she complained. "The 2:20 doesn't mean anything unless it says 'track fast, start good, won driving,' or something like that. And I'd like to know who held the watch. I think we ought to know what year it was that she made that mile in 2:20. Doesn't it say that the woman is an aged widow? Doesn't it stand to reason that she must have bought that fast mare some time in her forties, at least? Anyway, 2:20 isn't so very fast for a pacer. Dan Patch did it in less than two minutes."

In default of more definite information about the pacing mare, we turned to a farm called "Coin Money on a Bargain." This is an oyster farm, as it borders two thousand feet on the Patuxent River. The tillage, as the author says, "is loamy and fine for trucking." It is well fruited to apples and grapes. I drew, as I thought, a rather attractive picture of a scene before the big open fireplace in the modern four-room bungalow of "Coin Money on a Bargain." I pictured the group telling stories and roasting apples and stewing grapes and frying oysters over the embers. R—— interrupted to say that, without doubt, just as soon as H. 3rd began to crawl, he would fall into the river with the oysters.

"Yes," said E——, "and Michael would try and eat shells, and they'd disagree with him, like that coal he got hold of last night."

I mentioned the fact that oysters cost from thirty to fifty cents for a half dozen portion, and spoke of the manner in which the shellfish could be crowded along a 2,000-foot front.

"Yes," said E——, aggressively, "but how are you going to get them to market?"

There I had her. "You have forgotten the description," I remarked. "It says the farm is fine for trucking."

But eventually it was a place called Only Nine Hundred Dollars Down to which we turned our attention. It lay up north along the Hudson and a man named George F. Sweetser promised to show it off to purchasers.

In the newspaper advertisement it merely said "George F. Sweetser, Real Estate Agent." Only after his letter came did we realize the sort of man with whom we had to deal. The letter was much more communicative than the advertisement.

The left-hand half of the envelope read: "George F. Sweetser, Storm King on the Hudson, New York. Legalized expert judge of horses, cattle, poultry, fruits, etc.—pomologist and botanist—private scoring and mating poultry—starting judge of races—originator of Buff Brahmas—breeder of prize winning, standard bred poultry, cattle, etc.—superintendent of farm produce and grain at New York State Fair."

I was careful, therefore, to explain my business at the beginning. "I want to see a farm," I said.

"I'm certainly glad to see you coming out this way," said the pomologist. "We want new blood. We want active, hard-working young fellows around here. We got too many amateurs and old fogies. Would you believe it, a lot of fellows around here won't use green fertilizer, even when I tell them about it."

"No?" I said.

"They just want to stick in the old rut and do things the way their grandfathers did before there was a war, Do you know what it is makes things grow?"

"Rain," I suggested, after a long pause.

"Yes, rain, of course," said the originator of Buff Brahmas, "but nitrogen, too. And where do we get nitrogen?"

"It comes from Chile, or Honduras, or some place down that way, doesn't it?" I hazarded.

"No, sir," said the starting judge of races. "Up here in Putnam County we get it right out of the air. That's what green fertilizer does—just brings it right out of the air."

And he reached up and clutched something, as if he was going to bring some down himself and show it to me. Instead, he let the gas drift away and pointed to a farm just across the road from the post-office.

"Do you see that farm over there?"

I nodded.

"Well, that man took my advice and he got 440 bushels of potatoes on two acres."

I tried to think just how far 440 bushels of potatoes might stretch if French fried and placed end to end. It was beyond me.

"That's a lot of potatoes," I murmured.

"I'll say it is," answered Mr. Sweetser. "You know what potatoes were selling for last year?" he said aggressively.

"Not last year," I answered.

"Well, they were selling for $1.50 a bushel. I told that man over there to hold off a bit, but he didn't take my advice, and later on they sold for $2. It wasn't such bad business, either, at $1.50. Do you know how much 440 bushels at $1.50 are?"

I could do that one, and after awhile I said "$660."

"Yes, sir," said Mr. Sweetser. "And this farm I got for sale is eighty-five acres. Now, suppose you put all that in potatoes. How much could you get?"

"It would be a lot of money," I said, after a vain attempt to work it out in my head.

"Not that I'd advise you to put it all in potatoes. There's cows and corn and berries and pigs. This is lovely country for pigs. You certainly owe it to yourself to have pigs. If I was a young man I'd just do nothing but pigs. And there's alfalfa. You can cut that three times a year, and you get about five tons to the acre. There was a man on a place right next to mine that put four and a half acres into corn and he got $349.70 for it."

"How's the house?" I interrupted.

"Oh, don't you bother about the house," said Mr. Sweetser. "It's comfortable. That's what I'd call it—comfortable. And I allus say you're not buying houses; they don't count for nothing in the long run; you're buying land. Even if that was an elegant house, you'd want to fix it up some way to suit yourself, wouldn't you? I'd like to show you the place this afternoon. There's good corn, and I know you'd enjoy seeing the rye and the pigs. But, you see, I'm kinder pressed for time. I'm superintendent of a big place around here, and I got to look at that, and later on this afternoon I have to register the alien enemies—the women, you know—and to-night there's a meeting of the draft board. I guess I've told you enough, though, about what kind of land it is around here. Just look at this piece right here."

He led the way across the road.

"You wouldn't find finer soil than that if you was to drive all afternoon. Just look at it." And he kicked some of the rocks away so that I could get a closer view.

"Why, the crops alone and the timber ought to pay for this place in a couple of months. Why, I'd just love to buy it myself if I was a young fellow and wasn't so busy. If you come up this way again let me know when to expect you,

because I've got to go up and superintend a fair next Thursday, and on Friday I'm judging chickens, and Saturday the school board meets."

It was at this point that fate took a hand in the affairs of the busy Mr. Sweetser for no sooner had we got into the car and started for home than a tire blew out.

I sat down under a tree to advise the real estate agent and watch him fix it. An old man from down the road also came over to watch. He was chewing a straw, and he wore a pair of suspenders called Sampson. I asked about the weather first, and he said, without much interest, that it had been too cool and too rainy. Then he took up the questioning.

"What part of the country are you from?" he inquired.

I said New York, and added New York City.

"Yes; I know," said the farmer. "I've been there. I saw the Hudson-Fulton celebration. I've seen about everything," he said, "I went to the San Francisco Exposition."

I nodded, and he went on: "Chicago was the first stop, and then we went through Kansas. Out of the window you could see wheat and corn all the way along. It was beautiful. And then by and by we came to the Rocky Mountains. They're mighty big mountains, and it took three engines to pull the train up. Sometimes on the curves you could almost touch the engine. Every now and then we'd go through a tunnel. Then we went down south into the big desert. There was nothing there but sagebrush. And they took us up to the Grand Canyon. Did you ever see it?" he asked.

I lied and said yes, but he went on: "The Grand Canyon's 123 miles long and twenty-five miles wide and one mile deep. I grabbed hold of a tree and looked over the edge, and down there at the bottom were all kinds of rocks, red and green and yellow, and there were horses' heads and horses' hoofs and barns and castles and haystacks and everything better than an artist could have done."

"I don't suppose you've seen any of these submarines around here," I interrupted, as a possible diversion.

"Oh, yes; I've seen them," he said; "not here, but out at the San Francisco Exposition. They had submarines and floating mines. They're big. They look like an old-fashioned white turnip, and they float under the water, and when a ship strikes one it blows up. An' they had a big buildin' out at the fair as big as that barn, and in the middle of it was a butter-making machine, and it could turn out more butter in an afternoon than I get off this place in a year. An' there was a Tower of Jewels 425 feet high, and it had 15,635 jewels on it from Persia. And they all shone in the sun. And they had flying machines, too. At night they put lights on 'em, and they went up in the air and turned somersaults over and over again. I wouldn't go up in one of 'em if you was to give me all that meadow land over there.

"After we left the fair we went up north through the spruce forests, and they tell me now that the government's sent 8,000 men up there to cut that spruce and put it into the flying machines, an' I suppose some of those trees I saw are up in the air now turning somersaults.

"We didn't stop agin till we got to Detroit. That's where they make the Fords, Tin Lizzies, they call 'em around here. But I always say, What difference does it make what they call 'em if they can do the work? I always say one of 'em's as good as a horse—as good as two horses. An' then we came back here and I've stuck around for a spell 'cause I think I've seen most everything there is."

By that time the real estate agent had fixed the tire, and we drove away. The man with the Sampson suspenders was looking rather contemptuously at his flock of sheep. They would never get to San Francisco.

I can't remember now just why we didn't buy Only Nine Hundred Dollars Down but somehow or other the decision of the council went against it. Our attention at present is fastened on a place over in New Jersey called One Man Farm Equipped. This, like so many of the attractive bargains in the advertisements, belongs to a widow. As the paragraph in the newspapers has it "Widow left alone will sell farm for $1,000 spot cash." E. thinks that delay in the matter may be fatal because of the cheapness of the price. "How can we tell," is the burden of her plaint, "that they will leave her alone?"

Romance and Reticence

Whenever a man remarks "I've had a mighty adventurous life, I have," we usually set him down as a former king of the Coney Island carnival or a recently returned delegate from an Elks' convention in Kansas City. It has been our somewhat bitter experience that the man who pictures himself as a great adventurer is almost invariably spurious. As a matter of fact, the rule holds good for great wits, great lovers and great drinkers. But it applies with particular pertinence to romantic folk.

A wise professor at Harvard once remarked that he didn't believe that the ancients realized that they were ancients. We have somewhat the same feeling about quaint people and romantic people and adventurous people.

Of course we must admit the existence in life and in literature of authentic but sophisticated romantic figures. Cyrano was one and, to a lesser extent, d'Artagnan. Porthos is on our side. But the best example we can remember is

Huckleberry Finn. Tom Sawyer pictured himself as a romantic figure. Huck didn't. When Huck went a-wandering he thought it was because the store clothes the widow had given him were uncomfortable. It was actually another itch, but he did not know its name. This to our mind is the essence of true adventure. When a man comes to recognize romance he is in a position to bargain and parley. He is not the true adventurer. Things no longer just happen to him. He has to go out and seek them. He has lost his amateur standing.

Huck, who didn't know what it was all about, had much more exciting adventures than Tom and he was a more fascinating figure in the happening. Jim would also come into our category of true adventurers, and, to skip back a bit, Tom Jones is almost type perfect. Just so Sancho Panza seems to us more fundamentally romantic than Don Quixote, and we have always been more interested in what happened to Doctor Watson than in the adventures of Sherlock Holmes. Sherlock foresaw things—and that is fatal to romance.

The Prodigal Son belongs in our list, and Andrew Jackson, and Lot's wife, and Eddie Rickenbacker, and Lord Jim, and Ajax, and Little Red Riding Hood, and Thomas Edison, and the father of the Katzenjammer Kids, and most of Bluebeard's wives and all the people who refused to go into the ark.

While we are willing to admit that there are other types who are successfully romantic, in spite of self-consciousness, they are the exceptions. We are hardly willing to accept them in a group. This brings us to Mrs. Fiske's new play, *Mis' Nelly, of N'Orleans*, at which we have been aiming throughout the article.

There are nine characters in the play, and the author pictures each of them as being distinctly aware that he is an adventurous character, in a quaint garden, in a romantic city, in a mad story. It is true that these people do some romantic and adventurous things, but never without first predicting that they are going to be romantic, and then explaining after it is all over that they have been romantic. From our point of view there is too much challenge in this. Whenever a man or woman in a play or in life promises that he is about to do something quaint we have an irresistible desire to lay him 6 to 5 that it won't be any such thing. Then if the decision is left to us we always decide against him.

The method of the preliminary puff and the subsequent official confirmation is decidedly a mistake in the case of the character portrayed by Mrs. Fiske in *Mis' Nelly, of N'Orleans*. Mrs. Fiske showed herself quite capable of carrying the rôle of a spirited, romantic and adventurous belle, and it was unnecessary to have her triumph so carefully prepared in advance by the predictions of her servants as to what she would do when she "got her Jim Crow up."

We might have been content to accept some of the other characters as sure enough romantic figures if they had not been so confoundedly confident that they were. They fairly challenged us into disbelief. The author, to our mind, was wrong from the beginning in describing his comedy on the program as a comedy of "moonshine, madness and make-believe." Moonshine and madness are both elusive stage qualities. An author is fortunate indeed if he can achieve them. He is foolish to take the risk of predicting them. If he succeeds in presenting authentic moonshine and madness he will not need to inform the audience of the fact by means of the program and still less through his characters. *Mis' Nelly, of N'Orleans* left us much more convinced of the make-believe.

A play which affected us in somewhat similar fashion was *The Gipsy Trail*, produced here a season or so ago. In this play the author presented a character who seemed to be a truly romantic figure for at least half the play. Then he was suddenly trapped into a confession that he was romantic. Somebody asked him about it, and, most unfortunately, he set out to prove that he was an adventurer in a long speech beginning "I have fried eggs on top of the Andes" or in some such manner, and from that moment we grew away from him. We knew him as no true adventurer, but as a man who would eventually write a book or at best a series of articles for a Sunday magazine.

The real tragedy of romance is that any man who appreciates his own loses it. In this workaday world we can live only by taking in the other fellow's adventures.

A Robe for the King

Hans Christian Andersen once wrote a story about the tailors who made a suit for a King out of a magic cloth. The quality of the cloth was such, so the tailors said, that it could be seen by nobody who was not worthy of the position he held. And so all the people at court declared that they could see the cloth and admired it greatly, but when the King went out to walk a little boy cried: "Why, he hasn't got anything on." Then everybody took up the cry, and the King rushed back to his palace, and the two tailors were banished in disgrace. Information has recently been discovered which casts new light on the story. According to this information there was only one tailor, and his adventure with the King was about as follows:

AN IMPERIAL FOOTMAN—There's a man at the gate who says he's a tailor and that he wants to see your majesty.

THE KING—Explain our constitution to him. Tell him that all bills for revenue originate in the lower House, and point out that on account of a vicious bipartisan alliance of all the traitors in the kingdom I'm kept so short of money that I can't possibly afford any new clothes.

THE IMPERIAL FOOTMAN—He didn't say anything about money, your majesty.

THE KING—Well, I won't give him a bealo down and a bealo a week either. Tell him to wait until I've got a clear title to the pianola.

THE IMPERIAL FOOTMAN—What he said was that he had a valuable gift for the most enlightened ruler in the world.

THE KING—Well, why didn't you say so in the first place? What was the use of keeping me waiting? Send him up right away. (*Exit the Footman.*)

THE KING (*speaking in the general direction of the Leading Republican*)—Fortunately, my fame rises above petty slanders. The common people, they know me and they love me.

THE LEADING REPUBLICAN—They love your simplicity, your majesty, your lack of ostentation, your tractability. (*Enter the Tailor.*)

THE TAILOR—I have come a far journey to see your majesty.

THE KING—I am honored.

THE TAILOR—For a long time I have been journeying to find an enlightened sovereign, a sovereign who was fitted in all respects for his high office. I stopped in Ruritania; he was not there. He was not in Pannonia or in Gamar. You are my hope, majesty.

THE KING—I trust this may indeed be the end of your journey. I think I may say that Marma is a model kingdom. As you doubtless know, the capital city is Grenoble, with a population of 145,000, according to the last census. We have modern waterworks, a library with more than 10,000 volumes, an art museum, a tannery, three cathedrals, two opera houses and numerous moving picture theaters. The principal industries, as you may recall, are salt fish, woolen blankets, pottery, dried raisins and shrapnel.

THE TAILOR—Your majesty will pardon me if I say that I don't give a fig for your raisins or your dried fish or the cathedrals, or even the library with the 10,000 volumes. What I am seeking is a man with eyes to see.

THE KING—No one has better eyes than myself, I'm sure. I have shot as many as a hundred pheasants in an afternoon, and, if you will pardon the allegorical allusion, I can see loyalty and virtue though they reside in the breast of the most distant and humble subject in my kingdom.

THE TAILOR—Perhaps, then, you can see my cloth. It is a marvelous cloth. It was one of the gifts the wise men brought to the Child. It lay across his feet in the manger. But in order that its richness should not attract the attention of Herod, the wise men decreed that the cloth should be invisible to every one who was not worthy of his station in the world. See, your majesty, and judge for yourself. (*He puts his hand into the bag and brings it forth, apparently empty, although he seems to be holding up something for the King and the courtiers to admire.*) Is it not a brave and gallant robe, gentlemen?

(*All look intently at the hand of the tailor. There is a long silence, in which many sly glances are cast from one to another to ascertain if it is possible that somebody else sees this thing which is invisible to him. The King looks slowly to the right and slowly to the left to scan the faces of his subjects, and then he gazes straight at the Tailor in high perplexity. Of a sudden the Leading Republican pulls himself together and speaks in an assured and certain tone.*)

THE LEADING REPUBLICAN—It is a magnificent robe. It is a robe for a King. It is so fine a robe that no king should wear it but our beloved monarch, Timothy the Third.

THE LEADING DEMOCRAT (*very hastily*)—Oh, I say, that is nice. So shiny and bright, and good serviceable stuff, too. That would make a mighty good raincoat. (*Briskly*) Say, now, Mr. Tailor, how would you like to form the Wonder Cloth Limited Company? You'd be president, of course, and hold thirty-three and one-third per cent of the stock, the same amount for the King, and the rest to be divided equally among my friends of the opposition here and myself.

THE TAILOR—There will never be any more of the cloth. Only a little is left. Much has been lost. It lies in lonely places, in forests, at the bottom of the sea, in city streets. I have searched the world for this cloth, and I have found no more than I could carry in this bag, a robe for the King (*he holds his hand up*), this square piece you see, and this long twisted piece that might be a rope. Yes, it might be a rope, for it is stronger than hemp.

THE LEADING DEMOCRAT—That robe there, as near as I can judge, should be pretty much of a fit for his majesty. He might wear it for his regular afternoon walk through the city to-day.

THE KING—Oh, I don't think I'll take my exercise to-day. There's rather a nasty bite to the air.

THE LEADING DEMOCRAT—Don't forget, you're a constitutional monarch.

THE TAILOR—If the King will wear my robe to-day I can go on with my journey to find the cloth the world has lost. Already I have found a King who can see, and it only remains to discover whether there is vision in his people, too.

THE KING (*musing*)—Hum! If the people can see it, hey? That's a bit of a risk now, isn't it? When I wear that robe of your magic cloth it might be a good idea to have something warm and substantial underneath. It wouldn't do to have any mistakes, you know. After all, I don't want a lot of stupid louts thinking I'm parading around in my B. V. D.'s.

THE LEADING DEMOCRAT—Does your majesty mean to suggest that the common people of Marma, from whom he derives all his just powers, are not to be trusted?

THE KING—You know I didn't mean that. Of course I trust the people. I realize perfectly well that they'd die for me and all that, but, after all, you can't be sure of everybody in a big crowd. There'll be fishwives, you know, and Socialists and highwaymen and plumbers and reporters and everything.

THE LEADING DEMOCRAT—It all gets down to this, your majesty: do you trust the people, or don't you?

THE KING—I trust them as much as you do, but I don't go to excess. I don't see any good reason why I shouldn't wear an ordinary business suit under this magic royal robe. A King can't take chances, you know. He must play it

safe.

THE TAILOR—Don't say that, your majesty. You're a King, your majesty. Think of that. You mustn't tap in front of you, like a blind man with a stick. You mustn't fear to bump your head. If you hold it high, you know, there'd be nothing to fear but the stars.

THE KING—You are eloquent, O stranger from a far country, and what do you mean?

THE TAILOR—Only this: if you wear my robe you must cast off compromise and expediency.

THE KING—Oh, that's all right. I was only thinking about trousers.

THE TAILOR—They were a compromise of Adam's, your majesty.

THE KING—Quite true, but I hope you wouldn't go so far as to object to essentials. It's mesh stuff, you know, and very thin. Practically nothing at all. Just one piece. Somehow or other I don't believe I'd feel easy without it. Sort of a habit with me.

THE TAILOR—If you wear my robe you must put aside every other garment.

THE KING—But this is December.

THE TAILOR—Your majesty, the man who wears this cloth will never fear cold.

THE LEADING DEMOCRAT—It seems to me that the only question is, Does his majesty trust the people fully and completely?

THE KING—Of course I trust the people.

THE LEADING DEMOCRAT—Then why are you afraid to show yourself before them in this magnificent new robe? Is there any reason to believe that they who are the real rulers of Marma cannot see this cloth which the Tailor sees, which I see and admire so much and (*pointedly*) which your majesty, Timothy the Third, cannot conceivably fail to see? It would be unfortunate if it became a matter of news that your majesty did not believe in the capabilities and worthiness of the people.

THE KING—- Oh, I believe all right.

THE LEADING DEMOCRAT—Then why are you afraid?

THE KING—Give me the robe. I am not afraid. (*The Tailor stoops and seems to take something out of a bag. He extends the invisible object to the King, who clumsily pretends to hang it over his arm.*)

THE TAILOR—Oh, not that way, your majesty. It will wrinkle. (*Painstakingly he smooths out a little air and returns it to the astonished monarch.*)

THE KING (*to the Leading Republican, the Leading Democrat and the two Courtiers*)—You will meet me at the great gate of the palace in three minutes and accompany me on my promenade through the city. (*Exit the King. The Leading Republican draws close to the first Courtier.*)

LEADING REPUBLICAN—Wonderful fabric that, was it not?

FIRST COURTIER—Much the finest I have ever seen.

LEADING REPUBLICAN—Now, what shade should you say it was? It's hard to tell shades in this light, isn't it?

FIRST COURTIER—I had no trouble, sir. The robe is a bright scarlet.

LEADING REPUBLICAN—Scarlet, eh? (*He moves over close to the second Courtier.*)

LEADING REPUBLICAN—Wonderful fabric that we saw just now, wasn't it?

SECOND COURTIER—It was like a lake under the moonlight.

LEADING REPUBLICAN—Moonlight?

SECOND COURTIER—Yes, it was easy to see that it was a miraculous fabric. Man could never have achieved that silver green.

LEADING REPUBLICAN—Yes, it was a mighty fine color. (*Raising his voice.*) I think we had better join his majesty now, gentlemen, and I believe we shall have an interesting promenade. Good-by until later, Mr. Tailor.

ALL—Good-by, Mr. Tailor!

(*The Tailor moves to a great window at the back of the stage and opens it. He leans out. He bows low to some one who is passing by underneath. The rattle of wagons may be heard distinctly, and the rumble of cars, with occasionally the honk of an automobile horn. Suddenly there is a noise much louder and shriller than any of these. It is the voice of a child, and it cries: "He hasn't got anything on!" Voice after voice takes up the shout. Seemingly thousands of people are shouting, "He hasn't got anything on!" Finally the shouting loses all coherence; it is just a great, ugly, angry noise. A shot breaks the glass of the window just above the Tailor's head. Quickly he protects himself from further attack in that direction by swinging two iron shutters together and fastening them. Then he locks the great door through which the King and the Courtiers have just passed.*)

THE TAILOR (*in sorrow and anger*)—More blind men. (*He moves to his bag and, dipping his hands in, raises them again to fondle an invisible something. As he is so engaged a little door at the right opens and a meanly dressed girl of about eighteen enters.*)

THE TAILOR—Keep your distance. I won't be taken alive. Not until I can find some one to care for my cloth.

THE GIRL FROM THE KITCHEN—Oh, please, don't hurt me, mister. I just ran up here because there were soldiers down in the garden, and shooting and things.

THE TAILOR—Who are you?

THE GIRL FROM THE KITCHEN—I'm the sixth assistant helper of the cook.

THE TAILOR—The sixth?

THE GIRL FROM THE KITCHEN—Yes, I clean the butter plates.

THE TAILOR—And that's all you do? Just clean butter plates? How terrible!

THE GIRL FROM THE KITCHEN—But it isn't. The cook says I'm the best butter dish cleaner in the world. I like butter. I like to touch it. There's no color in the world so beautiful. It's like that bit of cloth you have in your hands.

THE TAILOR—You see the cloth?

THE GIRL FROM THE KITCHEN—Of course I see it. Why, it's right there in your hands. And it's yellow like the butter.

THE TAILOR—Or gold. (*He reaches into the bag again.*) And what's this? (*He holds his right hand high above his head.*)

THE GIRL FROM THE KITCHEN—Why, it's a yellow rope.

THE TAILOR—Yes, that's it, a rope. I'm going to give you the other piece of cloth now, and later the rope, too. You must guard it as carefully, as carefully as you would watch one of your butter dishes. Do you understand?

THE GIRL—I wouldn't lose it. It's pretty.

THE TAILOR—Yes, it's pretty and the world mustn't lose it. You will find that most people can't see. I know only two, you and I, but there must be others. That's your task now, finding people who can see the cloth and cleaning butter plates, of course. (*There is a loud pounding on the great door and a shout of "Open, in the King's name!" The knocking increases in violence and the command is repeated. Then men begin to swing against the door with heavy bars and hatchets.*)

THE TAILOR—Here (*he makes a gesture toward the girl*), take the cloth. Go quickly to the kitchen. Then come back in a moment and save the rope, too.

THE GIRL FROM THE KITCHEN—But what do they want?

THE TAILOR—They want to kill me.

THE GIRL FROM THE KITCHEN—They mustn't.

THE TAILOR—They won't if you get out and leave me alone. Here, hurry. (*He half pushes her out the little door. Then he returns to the bag and seems to pull out something. He looks to the ceiling and finds a hook fairly in the middle of it. He moves his hand upward as if tossing something, and goes through the motions of tying a knot around his neck. Then the Tailor takes a chair and moves it to the center of the room. He stands upon it. The violent assault upon the door begins with renewed vigor. Some of the axes bite through the wood. The Tailor steps off the chair and dangles in the air. He floats in space, like a man in a magic trick, but one or two in the audience, dramatic critics, perhaps, or scullery maids, may see that round his neck and fastened to the hook in the ceiling is a yellow rope.*)

(*Curtain.*)

Turning Thirty

"Margaret Fuller's father was thirty-two when she was born," writes Katharine Anthony in her biography of the great feminist. "A self-made man, he had been obliged to postpone marriage and family life to a comparatively advanced age."

The paragraph came to us like a blow in the face. For years and years we had been going along buoyed up by the comments of readers who wrote in from time to time to say: "Of course, you are still a young man. You will learn better as you grow older." And now we find that we have grown older. We have reached a comparatively advanced age, and the problem of whether or not we have learned better is present and persistent. It can no longer be put off as something which will work out all right in time.

"Some day," says the young man to himself, "I'm going to sit down and write a novel, or the great American drama, or an epic poem." Then some day comes and the young man finds that his joints are stiff and he can't sit down.

However, we are not quite prepared to admit that thirty-two is the deadline. It seemed old age to us for a long time. When we were reporting baseball the players used to call Roy Hartzell, over on third base, "the old man," because he was all of twenty-nine, and veterans of thirty were constantly dropping out because of advancing age and the pressure of recruits of nineteen and twenty. Yes, thirty-two was a comparatively advanced age at that time. But

then we got on to plays and books, and Bernard Shaw was doing all the timely hitting in the pinches, and, to mix the metaphor, breaking loose and running the length of the field, putting a straight arm into the faces of all who would tackle him. De Morgan started to blaze at the age of fifty, and James Huneker was the keenest of all the critics to hail anything in any art which was new and hitherto unclassified. And he, too, wrote his first novel, *Painted Veils*, long after fifty. It was a novel which we did not like very much, but all its faults were those of youth. Some of it actually sophomoric. It was more like the work of F. Scott Fitzgerald than any living author. We felt that it was a first novel by a "promising" man, and thirty and twenty-nine and all those ages seemed to us mere verdant days in the hatchery.

We remember a sweet girl reporter going to Major General Sibert, commander of the First Division in its early days in France, and asking: "General, don't you think this is a young man's war?" Sibert grinned behind his gray mustache, and said: "When I was in West Point I used to bear in mind that Napoleon won some of his greatest victories while he was in his thirties, but now I find my attention turning more and more to the fact that Hindenburg is seventy-two and Joffre is seventy."

Time, we know, is fleeting, but there is always a little more left for the man who can look senility and destruction and all that sort of business straight in the eye and remark calmly, "I'm too busy this afternoon; drop around to-morrow." Thirty-two isn't a comparatively advanced age. Some day we are going to write that epic poem, and the novel, and the great American drama.

Turning to *The Art of Lawn Tennis*, by William Tilden, 2nd, we find the comforting information that "William A. Larned won the singles at past forty. Men of sixty are seen daily on the clubs' courts of England and America enjoying their game as keenly as any boy. It is to this game, in great measure, that they owe the physical fitness which enables them to play at their advanced age."

Yet after all this is not quite so comforting. We know one or two of these iron athletes who have outlived their generation and they are among the bores of the world. After one of them has captured the third set by dashing to the net and volleying your shot off at a sharp angle he invariably rubs it in by asking you to guess how old you think he is. We always answer, "Ninety-six," but there is no discouraging him or stopping him before he has gone on to tell you about breaking the ice in the tub for his morning plunge.

There is an unearthly air about these men whom God has forgotten. They are like those Prussian soldiers of Frederick who continued to stand after swords and bullets had gone through them and required the services of some one to go about the field and push them over so that they might be decently buried. There were men like that in one of the lands which Gulliver visited. They never died and probably they played a sharp game of tennis and later in the clubhouse they were accustomed to sit around and say how much better the actors used to be fifty years ago. Everybody hated them and stayed away from their company in droves.

No, we set no store of hope on being a sixty-year-old prodigy at lawn tennis. We dodder about the court already. We had just as soon be gray and bald and all the rest of it if only we can ever grow young enough to write a bold and slashing novel and be suppressed by Mr. Sumner.

Margaret Fuller

Katharine Anthony's *Margaret Fuller* is biography in new and fascinating form. "A psychological biography," Miss Anthony calls it, and she takes advantage of the theories of Freud and Jung to reveal new facts about the life of a woman long dead, by the process of submitting well known material to the psychoanalytic test. This is an engrossing game. There is something about it quite suggestive of the contrast between Sherlock Holmes and the more dull-witted detectives of Scotland Yard. Holmes, you remember, could come into a room after all the members of the force had pawed the evidence and interpret something new from the cigar ash on the table which had been to them just cigar ash, but was to Holmes convincing evidence that the crime had been committed by a red-haired man, six feet in height, born in Kentucky and an enrolled member of the Democratic Party. Other biographers were content to record the fact that Margaret Fuller was a nervous child who received all her early education at home from her father. There they paused, and it is just here that Miss Anthony leaps in to explain the exact emotional relation between father and daughter which simmered about in Margaret's subconsciousness and contributed to the convulsions of her early schooldays.

It is fascinating to watch the skilled biographer reveal all sorts of facts about Margaret Fuller of which she herself had not the ghost of a notion. We can't say that the theory of the biographer is always convincing, although we must admit that her case is full and logical at every turn. To us it is just a little too logical. There is so much proof that we are rather inclined to believe that the theory is not altogether so. It is only fair to admit that Margaret seems to have been a Freudian herself long before there was a Freud. Again and again her own observations, quick, intuitive leaps, coincide almost exactly with theories worked out later by much more difficult and rational processes. Nathaniel Hawthorne, also, seems to have had some conception of the unconscious quite consistent with the most modern theorists, for he records a conversation between himself and Margaret Fuller in which they talked about "the experiences of early childhood, whose influence remains upon the character after the recollection of them has passed away."

Margaret Fuller, laboratory specimen, is an interesting study; Margaret Fuller, feminist, an inspiring figure in American history; but most of all our interest is captured by that portion of the book which deals with Margaret Fuller, literary critic of *The New York Tribune*. She wrote three critical articles a week, which appeared on the first page of the paper, and since her day newspaper reviewing has gone back in other respects than the mere process of

burying itself more deeply within the paper. Opinions about books seem to have been more exciting and provocative in the days of Margaret Fuller and Horace Greeley. At any rate, one or the other wrote an article in *The Tribune* which inspired a libel suit by James Fenimore Cooper in which he won a verdict of $200. Nothing like that happens to-day. Once we managed to incite an actor into a lawsuit, but the only sign of recognition which we ever obtain from belaboring an author is a telephone message or a letter saying that our adverse notice has amused him very much and greatly contributed to the sale of his little book and would we come around and have lunch.

Miss Fuller managed to cut deeper. James Russell Lowell never recovered from the shock of her poor opinion of him, and was forever lampooning her in public life and private. She seems to have been singularly free from awe for the great literary figures of her day. In an age when not liking Longfellow was almost as much a mark of national treason as urging a reduction in the German indemnity would be to-day Miss Fuller wrote of Longfellow in exactly the spirit in which he is regarded by the later critics who looked at him dispassionately.

"When we see a person of moderate powers," she wrote, "receive honors which should be reserved for the highest, we feel somewhat like assailing him and taking from him the crown which should be reserved for grander brows. And yet this is, perhaps, ungenerous.... He (Longfellow) has no style of his own, growing out of his experiences and observations of nature. Nature with him, whether human or external, is always seen through the windows of literature.... This want of the free breath of nature, this perpetual borrowing of imagery, this excessive, because superficial, culture which he has derived from an acquaintance with the elegant literature of many nations and men, out of proportion to the experience of life within himself, prevent Mr. Longfellow's verses from ever being a true refreshment to ourselves."

Ralph Waldo Emerson was her close friend, and yet she could see him clearly enough from a critical point of view to write: "We doubt this friend raised himself too early to the perpendicular, and did not lie along the ground long enough to hear the whispers of our parent life. We would wish he might be thrown by conflicts on the lap of Mother Earth, to see if he would not rise again with added powers."

The feminism of Margaret Fuller is passionate and far reaching. It does not stop merely with the plea for the vote, but includes a newer and freer ideal of marriage. There is inspiration in this, and yet something a little disturbing in the article which she wrote about the London Reform Club, in which she said: "I was not sorry, however, to see men predominant in the cooking department, as I hope to see that and washing transferred to their care in the progress of things, since they are 'the stronger sex.'"

Holding a Baby

When Adam delved and Eve span, the fiction that man is incapable of housework was first established. It would be interesting to figure out just how many foot-pounds of energy men have saved themselves, since the creation of the world, by keeping up the pretense that a special knack is required for washing dishes and for dusting, and that the knack is wholly feminine. The pretense of incapacity is impudent in its audacity, and yet it works.

Men build bridges and throw railroads across deserts, and yet they contend successfully that the job of sewing on a button is beyond them. Accordingly, they don't have to sew buttons.

It might be said, of course, that the safety of suspension bridges is so much more important than that of suspenders that the division of labor is only fair, but there are many of us who have never thrown a railroad in our lives, and yet swagger in all the glory of masculine achievement without undertaking any of the drudgery of odd jobs.

Probably men alone could never have maintained the fallacy of masculine incapacity without the aid of women. As soon as that rather limited sphere, once known as woman's place, was established, women began to glorify and exaggerate its importance, by the pretense that it was all so special and difficult that no other sex could possibly begin to accomplish the tasks entailed. To this declaration men gave immediate and eager assent and they have kept it up. The most casual examination will reveal the fact that all the jokes about the horrible results of masculine cooking and sewing are written by men. It is all part of a great scheme of sex propaganda.

Naturally there are other factors. Biology has been unscrupulous enough to discriminate markedly against women, and men have seized upon this advantage to press the belief that, since the bearing of children is exclusively the province of women, it must be that all the caring for them belongs properly to the same sex. Yet how ridiculous this is.

Most things which have to be done for children are of the simplest sort. They should tax the intelligence of no one. Men profess a total lack of ability to wash baby's face simply because they believe there's no great fun in the business, at either end of the sponge. Protectively, man must go the whole distance and pretend that there is not one single thing which he can do for baby. He must even maintain that he doesn't know how to hold one. From this pretense has grown the shockingly transparent fallacy that holding a baby correctly is one of the fine arts; or, perhaps even more fearsome than that, a wonderful intuition, which has come down after centuries of effort to women only.

"The thing that surprised Richard most," says a recent woman novelist, "was the ease and the efficiency with which Eleanor handled Annabel.... She seemed to know by instinct, things that Richard could not understand and

that he could not understand how she came by. If she reached out her hands to take Annabel, her fingers seemed, of themselves, to curve into the places where they would fit the spineless bundle and give it support."

At this point, interruption is inevitable. Places indeed! There are one hundred and fifty-two distinctly different ways of holding a baby—and all are right! At least all will do. There is no need of seeking out special places for the hands. A baby is so soft that anybody with a firm grip can make places for an effective hold wherever he chooses. But to return to our quotation: "If Richard tried to take up the bundle, his fingers fell away like the legs of the brittle crab and the bundle collapsed, incalculable and helpless. 'How do you do it?' he would say. And he would right Annabel and try to still her protests. And Eleanor would only smile gently and send him on some masculine errand, while she soothed Annabel's feelings in the proper way."

You may depend upon it that Richard also smiled as soon as he was safely out of the house and embarked upon some masculine errand, such as playing eighteen holes of golf. Probably, by the time he reached the tenth green, he was too intent upon his game to remember how guile had won him freedom. Otherwise, he would have laughed again, when he holed a twenty-foot putt over a rolling green and recollected that he had escaped an afternoon of carrying Annabel because he was too awkward. I once knew the wife of the greatest billiard player in the world, and she informed me with much pride that her husband was incapable of carrying the baby. "He doesn't seem to have the proper touch," she explained.

As a matter of fact, even if men in general were as awkward as they pretend to be at home, there would still be small reason for their shirking the task of carrying a baby. Except that right side up is best, there is not much to learn. As I ventured to suggest before, almost any firm grip will do. Of course the child may cry, but that is simply because he has become over-particular through too much coddling. Nature herself is cavalier. Young rabbits don't even whimper when picked up by the ears, and kittens are quite contented to be lifted by the scruff of the neck.

This same Nature has been used as the principal argument for woman's exclusive ability to take care of the young. It is pretty generally held that all a woman needs to do to know all about children is to have some. This wisdom is attributed to instinct. Again and again we have been told by rapturous grandmothers that: "It isn't something which can be read in a book or taught in a school. Nature is the great teacher." This simply isn't true. There are many mothers in America who have learned far more from the manuals of Dr. Holt than instinct ever taught them—and Dr. Holt is a man. I have seen mothers give beer and spaghetti and Neapolitan ice-cream to children in arms, and, if they got that from instinct, the only conclusion possible is that instinct did not know what it was talking about. Instinct is not what it used to be.

I have no feeling of being a traitor to my sex, when I say that I believe in at least a rough equality of parenthood. In shirking all the business of caring for children we have escaped much hard labor. It has been convenient. Perhaps it has been too convenient. If we have avoided arduous tasks, we have also missed much fun of a very special kind. Like children in a toy shop, we have chosen to live with the most amusing of talking-and-walking dolls, without ever attempting to tear down the sign which says, "Do not touch." In fact we have helped to set it in place. That is a pity.

Children mean nothing at long range. For our own sake we ought to throw off the pretense of incapacity and ask that we be given a half share in them. I hope that this can be done without its being necessary for us to share the responsibility of dishes also. I don't think there are any concealed joys in washing dishes. Washing children is quite a different matter. After you have washed somebody else's face you feel that you know him better. This may be the reason why so many trained nurses marry their patients—but that is another story. A dish is an unresponsive thing. It gives back nothing. A child's face offers competitive possibilities. It is interesting to see just how high a polish can be achieved without making it cry.

There is also a distinct sense of elation in doing trifling practical things for children. They are so small and so helpless that they contribute vastly to a comforting glow in the ego of the grown-up. When you have completed the rather difficult task of preparing a child for bed and actually getting him there, you have a sense of importance almost divine in its extent. This is to feel at one with Fate, to be the master of another's destiny, of his waking and his sleeping and his going out into the world. It is a brand-new world for the child. He is a veritable Adam and you loom up in his life as more than mortal. Golf is well enough for a Sunday sport, but it is a trifling thing beside the privilege of taking a small son to the zoo and letting him see his first lion, his first tiger and, best of all, his first elephant. Probably he will think that they are part of your own handiwork turned out for his pleasure.

To a child, at least, even the meanest of us may seem glamourous with magic and wisdom. It seems a pity not to take the fullest advantage of this chance before the opportunity is lost. There must come a day when even the most nimble-witted father has to reply, "I don't know." On that day the child comes out of Eden and you are only a man again. Cortes on his lonely peak in Darien was a pigmy discoverer beside the child eating his first spoonful of ice-cream. There is the immediate frightened and angry rebellion against the coldness of it, and then the amazing sensation as the strange substance melts into magic of pleasant sweetness. The child will go on to high adventure, but I doubt whether the world holds for any one more soul-stirring surprise than the first adventure with ice-cream. No, there is nothing dull in feeding a child.

There is less to be said for dressing a child, from the point of view of recreation. This seems to us laborious and rather tiresome, both for father and child. Still I knew one man who managed to make an adventure of it. He boasted that he had broken all the records of the world for changing all or any part of a child's clothing. He was a skilled automobile mechanic, much in demand in races, where tires are whisked on and off. He brought his technic into the home. I saw several of his demonstrations. He was a silent man who habitually carried a mouthful of safety pins. Once the required youngster had been pointed out, he wasted no time in preliminary wheedlings but tossed her on the floor without more ado. Even before her head had bumped, he would be hard at work. With him the thrill lay in the inspiration of the competitive spirit. He endeavored always to have his task completed before the child could begin to cry. He never lost. Often the child cried afterward, but by that time my friend felt that his part of the job was completed—and would turn the youngster over to her mother.

Red Magic

Everybody said it was a great opportunity for Hans. The pay was small, to be sure, but the hours were short and the chance for advancement prodigious. Already the boy could take a pair of rabbits out of a high hat, or change a bunch of carrots into a bowl of goldfish. Unfortunately, the Dutchmen of Rothdam were vegetarians, and Hans was not yet learned enough in magic to turn goldfish back to carrots. Many times he had asked his master, Kahnale, for instruction in the big tricks. He longed to go in for advanced magic, such as typhoons, volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. He even aspired to juggle planets and keep three stars in the air at once.

Kahnale only smiled and spoke of the importance of rudiments. He pointed out that as long as inexperience made mistakes possible it would be better to mar a carrot or two than the solar system.

Not all the boy's projects were vast. It seemed as if there was as much enthusiasm in his voice when he asked about love philters as when he spoke of earthquakes. His casual inquiry as to the formula for making a rival disappear into thin air betrayed an eagerness not present in his planetary researches.

But to every question Kahnale replied, "Wait." The magician intimated that a bachelor of black arts might play pranks with the winds, the mountains and the stars forbidden to a freshman. True love, he declared, would be the merest trifle for one who knew all the lore. Hans found surprisingly small comfort in these promises. He had seen the sixteen foot shelf of magic in the back room where the skeletons swung in white arcs through the violet haze. Millions of words stood between him and Gretchen, and she was already seventeen and he had turned twenty. It irked him that he should be forced to learn Arabic, Chaldean and a little Phœnician to win a Dutch girl. Sometimes he imagined she cared for him in spite of a seeming disdain and he hoped that he might win her without recourse to magic, but then she grew coy again. Anyway, Kahnale had told him that only post-graduate students should seek to read the heart of a woman.

And so Hans polished the high hats, fed the rabbits, read the prescribed pieces in Volume One and learned a little day by day. He yearned more. It seemed as if there must be a short cut to the knowledge which he wanted, and this belief was strengthened one day when he discovered a thin and ever so aged volume hidden behind the books of the sixteen foot shelf. Before he had a chance to open the little book Kahnale rushed into the room and cried out to him in a great and terrible voice to drop the volume. Carefully, the magician returned the book to its hiding place and he warned Hans never to touch it again upon the pain of the most extensive and prodigious penalties. He not only intimated that disobedience would be dangerous to Hans, but to his family, to the town of Rothdam, to Holland and to the world.

Six months passed and Hans had striven to remember so many things since the day of the warning that he had all but forgotten the words of Kahnale. Lying atop the dyke, Hans gave the magician never a thought. The boy drew pictures in the loose sand with the toe of his sabot and brushed them away one after the other. At last he completed a design which struck his fancy and he ceased work to admire it. He had drawn a large heart and exactly in the center he had written "Gretchen."

It may have been a charm or a coincidence, but he looked up from the sand design just in time to see her passing along the road which ran parallel to the dyke. He shouted after her, but it was a capricious day with Gretchen, and she went along about her business without once looking back, under the pretense that she had not heard the greeting.

Hans raged and made as if to demolish the heart, and Gretchen, and indeed the whole dyke, but then he thought of something better. He got up and entering the house of Kahnale, went into the back room without even stopping to rattle the skeletons. The room was empty and Hans rummaged behind the long row of magic books until he found the old volume which he felt sure would give him some of the needful secrets which had been withheld from him. Opening the book, he blew away a thick top soil of ancient dust and was chagrined to find that whatever knowledge lay before him was concealed in some language so ancient that he could not understand a single word.

"Perhaps," he thought to himself, "this is a charm I can set to ticking even if I can't understand it." Fearing that Kahnale might come upon him, he hid the book under his coat and carried it out to his retreat on top of the dyke. In a low voice he began to read the strange and fearsome sentences in the book. Although they meant nothing to him, they possessed a fine rolling cadence which captured his fancy, and more boldly and more loudly Hans went on with his reading.

While Hans meddled with the book of magic, Kahnale was in consultation with the Mayor of Rothdam, who sought some charm or potion which would insure him reëlection. He had been a thoroughly inefficient Mayor, but the magician dealt with clients as impartially as a lawyer or doctor, and he agreed to weave the necessary spells. He stipulated only that the Mayor should accompany him to the house on the dyke, where there was a more propitious atmosphere for black art than in the town hall. After some little fuss and fume about the price and the long walk and his dignity, the Mayor consented, and the two men descended the great stairway of the town hall. No sooner had they reached the street than Kahnale looked at the sky in amazement. The day had been the most stolid and fair of days when he entered the Mayor's office, but now the western sky was filled with tier upon tier of angry black clouds, and as he looked there was a fearsome flash of fire broad as a canal and a roll of thunder which shook the ground beneath their feet.

"Quick!" cried Kahnale, and seizing the Mayor by the arm he rushed him down the road which led to the sea. As they ran a rising wind with a salt tang smote their faces. The clouds were growing blacker and heavier. It almost seemed as if they might topple. There was another flash bright as the light which blinded Saul. The Mayor crossed himself and prayed. Kahnale cursed. They were within a hundred feet of the sea when a second flare of fire outlined a figure on the dyke. It swayed to and fro and moaned above the growing roar of the wind.

In a sudden hush between the gusts the figure turned and they could hear the voice distinctly enough, though it seemed to be the voice of some one a long way off. "Eb dewollah," said the voice, and Kahnale clapped his hands to

his head in horror.

"It is the end," cried the wizard. "There is no hope. This is the final charm. The Lord's Prayer is last of all."

"I do not hear the Lord's Prayer. What is it?" pleaded the Mayor.

"You would not understand," explained Kahnale. "The prayer is said backward, as in all charms. He has reached 'Eb Dewollah,' and that is 'Hallowed Be!' The prayer is the last of the charm."

"Charm? What charm?" said the Mayor querulously, clinging dose to Kahnale.

"The master charm," said the magician. "This is the spell which when said aloud summons all the forces of the devil and brings the destruction of the world."

"The world!" interrupted the Mayor in amazement. "Then Rothdam will be destroyed," and he began to weep.

Kahnale paid no heed. "It can't be stopped," he muttered. "It must go on. He has the book and there is no power strong enough to stop the spell."

"If I only had my policemen and my priest," moaned the Mayor.

"Is that all?" said Kahnale. "I have enough magic for that."

The magician spoke three words and made two passes in the air before he turned and pointed to Rothdam. Instantly the bell in the town hall which called all villagers to the dyke tolled wildly. The wind was rising and shrilling louder and louder, and the sky was now of midnight blackness. The Mayor looked up in wretched terror at the figure on the dyke and started to rush at him as if to pitch him into the sea. Kahnale held him back. "Wait," he said. "If you touched the devil servant you would die."

Above the shriek of the wind rose the voice from the dyke. "Nevaeh ni," said the voice. "In heaven," muttered Kahnale. "It is almost done."

Down the road in the teeth of the gale came the villagers of Rothdam. In the van were the Mayor's police in red coats. They carried clubs and blunderbusses, and one, more hurriedly summoned than his companions, held a poker.

"There," cried the Mayor, "shoot that man on the dyke!" And with the first flash of light the foremost guard ran halfway up the steep embankment and leveled his blunderbuss. He fired. The roar of the gun was answered by a crash of thunder. A fang of fire darted from the center of the clouds and the guard rolled down the dyke and lay still at the bottom.

"Tra ohw," came the voice from the dyke. The priest, not daunted by the fate of the guard, hurried close to the side of the swaying figure and sprinkled him with holy water, but no sooner had the water left his hands than each drop changed to a tiny tongue of fire, leaping and dancing on the shoulder of the devil servant. The priest drew back in horror and the Mayor, with a cry of fear, threw himself at the foot of the dyke and buried his face in the long grasses. High above the booming of the gale and the crash of the waves against the barrier came the voice from the dyke, "Rehtaf."

"Father," said Kahnale, "I come, master devil!" he cried with one hand raised.

The sea which had almost reached the top of the dyke suddenly receded. Back and back it went and bared a deep and slimy floor. On that floor were many unswept things of horror. The earth trembled. The black clouds were banks of floating flame. The villagers turned to run from the dyke, for now the sea was returning. It rushed toward the dyke in a wave a hundred feet high.

Out of the crowd one ran forward and not back. It was a girl with flaxen hair and red ribbons. She ran straight to the figure on the dyke.

"It's Gretchen," she called. "Save me, Hans, save me." She threw her arms around the boy's neck and kissed him. The wall of water hung on the edge of the dyke like a violin string drawn tight. Then it surged forward and swallowed up both boy and girl.

Some folk in Rothdam say that Hans dropped the book of black magic and kissed Gretchen before the water swept over them, but the villagers are not sure about this trifle, since at that moment they were watching the rebirth of a lost world.

The wave of water a hundred feet high dwindled until it was no wave, but only a few tall grasses swaying gently in the dying land breeze. The clouds of fire faded to mist, pink tinted by the setting sun. Somewhere about were roses.

The villagers rushed to the top of the dyke. A policeman who had muddied his uniform as if by a fall rose to his feet and followed them, rubbing his head. Far below the dyke lay a calm sea. On the horizon were ships.

"Rothdam and its brave citizens are saved," said the Mayor. "To-night I will burn two hundred candles in honor of our patron saint, who has this day delivered us and enabled us to continue a happy existence under the best municipal government Rothdam has ever known." There were cheers.

That night Kahnale walked on the dyke alone. Everybody else was in the cathedral. That is, everybody but one policeman, who pleaded a severe headache. The magician listened to the bells of the cathedral and then he shook his head. "It was not the saint who saved us," he muttered. "There are no miracles. Somewhere there is a rational magical explanation for all this." But he had to shake his head again. "It is not in the books," he muttered.

Just then the moon came from behind a cloud and silvered some marks in the path of Kahnale. The magician stooped and looked. There on the top of the wave swept dyke, drawn in the loose sand, was a large heart, and in the center of it was written "Gretchen."

The Last Trump

"Ours is an easy-going and optimistic age," writes John Roach Straton in one of his "messages and wrath and judgment," which are combined in a volume called *The Menace of Immorality*. "We do not like to be disturbed with unpleasant thoughts," continues the genial doctor, "and yet, if we are wise men and women, we will give due consideration to these things, in the light of the tremendous times in which we live. There never has been such a day as this before in the world's history. This is a time already of judgment upon a wicked world. The whole world is now standing in the shadow of anarchy and starvation. Unless we repent and turn to God, we will have to pay the price of our folly and sins. And New York, let us understand, is no exception to these great truths of God. Though she exalt herself to the very heavens, she shall be laid low, unless she repents and turns from her wicked ways. We have become so vain to-day over scientific achievements and education and all that, that we have tended to condescend even to God. We tend to look down upon Him from our lordly human heights. But what folly it is! He who sitteth in the heavens shall laugh! May He not laugh at us! And let us well know that God's arm is not shortened and that He has the means, even of temporal judgment, in His almighty hands. Have you ever thought of what a good, husky tidal wave would do to 'Little Old New York,' as we call her? Have you ever imagined the Woolworth skyscraper butting headlong into the Equitable Building, through such an earthquake as that which laid San Francisco's proud beauty in the dust? Have you ever imagined the Metropolitan Tower crashing over on Madison Square Garden sometime, when there were tens of thousands of people in there at some worldly, godless celebration of the Lord's Day? Ah, yes, don't worry about God's not having the means for judgment, even in this world!"

As a matter of fact, that is a subject concerning which we never have worried. There isn't a doubt in our mind that the earthquake, or the tidal wave or any of the other dooms so gleefully mentioned by Dr. Straton are well within the power of the Creator. Yet it seems to us that it would hardly be to the Creator's credit if he should turn a tidal wave upon New York because Dr. Straton has revealed the fact, that in some dance halls in New York, young men and women dance cheek to cheek. It is, of course, a terrible thing that there are still restaurants in New York where one may procure Scotch highballs, but we do not think the condition justifies an earthquake. It may be, as Dr. Straton says, that God will do one of these things and then laugh at us, but if such is the case we must say that we will not have much respect for the cosmic sense of humor. We want a God who is a good deal more like God and somewhat less like Dr. John Roach Straton.

When a child grows cross and tired he will trample every card house you build for him and toss his toys about and knock over his blocks, but at such times H. 3rd has never seemed divine to us. We have rather laid such tantrums to the original Adam who is in us all. As a matter of fact, we don't believe that Dr. Straton himself would have as good a time at any of his predicted catastrophes as he imagines. To be sure, it is pleasant to imagine oneself sitting on top of a tidal wave and thumbing a nose at the struggling sinners who are being engulfed. But has Dr. Straton ever stopped to consider what a dreary and dull life he would lead if there were nothing for him to thunder against? He must know by now what a delightful inspiration there is in the daily shock. Though he may not believe it, he will do well to mark our words that he will miss the dancing and the immoral gowns and the furtive highballs when all these things are gone. He will find that there is a great deal more fun in preaching about hell than about heaven.

We are not even sure that, in a thoroughgoing civic catastrophe, Dr. Straton would escape. When Sodom and Gomorrah fell Lot was allowed to escape. And so it may be with Dr. Straton. That is not the danger. We have a very definite foreboding that when he is well out of the doomed city and the destruction has begun, Dr. Straton will not be able to resist the temptation to look back even though he turn to salt. If we understand the man, he will not be able to depart without ascertaining whether his name has been mentioned in the special five-star annihilation extras as having foretold the disaster.

Spanking Manners

We have received *The Literary Digest Parents' League Series*, in which the training of children is discussed in seven volumes by William Byron Forbush. Much of it seems sound and shrewd, but it also seeks, by implication at any rate to encourage parents to maintain with their children the old nonsense of parental infallibility. Thus, in one volume, which suggests the manner in which a father may impart certain information to his son, he is quoted as saying, "I tell you this, Frank, because I know all about it." And in another volume mothers are urged to hold before their children the ideals of the Light Brigade, "Theirs not to reason why, theirs but to do and die."

Now there is no denying that this is a comfortable doctrine for parents, if they can put it over, but they must make up their minds that sooner or later they will be found out.

Also, we are in entire disagreement with the author when he says that spankings should be administered in a cool and deliberate manner, that "punishment must partake of the nature of a ceremony." The only excuse for a parent who spanks his child is that he has lost his temper and his patience and his ability to think up any better remedy. If he is asked why he does it he would do well to explain all that very frankly to the child and to add that it is the rather harsh rule of the world that stronger people usually adopt force against weaker people to get what they want. The child may regard him as a bully, but he will not be in danger of being thought a hypocrite as well.

This system seems far preferable to the one suggested by the author in a quotation from Charles Werner: "My boy, listen: I love you and I do not like to hurt you. But every boy must be made to obey his father and mother, and this seems to be the only way to make you do it. So remember! Every time you disobey me you shall be punished. When I tell you to do a thing, you must do it instantly without a moment's delay. If you hesitate, if you wait to be told the

second time, you will be punished. When I speak you must act. Just as sure as you are standing here before me this punishment will follow every time you do not do as you are told."

This would be, at least, a commendably frank statement of the tyranny under which most children are held if it were not for the unjustified intrusion of the love motive. This occurs, however, in a still more objectionable form in a reply to a mother, in which the author writes, "Should it ever be necessary to spank him I should not refuse to kiss him, even while you are doing so. He can learn that no punishment is inflicted in anger and that punishment does not turn aside your affection."

Such conduct is adding insult to indignity. It goes beyond the tyranny which few parents can resist in a state in which interests are necessarily so conflicting as one which is inhabited by growing persons and grown-ups. It is probably not to be expected, or even desirable, that parents should always allow the interests of the child to displace their own, but when they cannot resist the temptation to sweep over the borders of childhood with all their armed forces it is a little too much to ask that the conquered people should be not only docile but grateful. In other words, the father or mother who says as a prelude to punishment, "I am doing this for your own good," is a liar at least nine times out of ten. What he means is, "I am doing this for my own convenience," and he ought to be frank enough to say so.

The trouble is, as Mr. Floyd Dell has pointed out, that the parent wants complete submission and complete affection too. He can't have both without making a hypocrite of his child. It is perfectly healthy that the child should have fierce outbursts of resentment against his parents when they get in his way, and he should be allowed, and even encouraged, to express his protest. It is the most arrant nonsense to suppose that a relationship of continual love is a desirable thing to keep up. It is much too wearing.

The other day I tried to take a small fragment of newspaper out of H. 3rd's mouth, and he tried to swing his right to the jaw. I still have the reach, and I was able to protect myself by a frequent use of a lightning left jab. Finally I rescued the paper. It was only a small section of an editorial in an evening newspaper about the trial of the five Socialist Assemblymen. Probably I might just as well have permitted H. 3rd to swallow it. Without doubt, the paper would have taken it back the next day, anyway.

In speaking of his endeavor "to make the small duties of life pleasant to the child" one parent writes: "These items should never enter the arena of argument; they may, if taken up early, by a gentle, loving firmness, be treated always as though they were as certain as sunrise, for there is a curious conventionality, a liking for having things done in a dependable fashion, with little folks, and there is nothing to which human nature in young or old more cheerfully submits than the inevitable."

Yes, and there is a curious conventionality in the man who has been hopping about the office all day in obeying the orders of the junior partner or the city editor, which inspires him when he comes home to his children to pretend that he is Kaiser, Fate, or God Himself.

"No time of day is more heavenly in a home than the hour when little children, like white angels, go up the stairs to bed."

We wonder if our continued failure to get any such impression rests only on the fact that we have no stairs.

"One wise mother tells her children to divide all people into two classes—friends and strangers. Friends we love too well to gossip about; strangers we know too little.

"Another suggests to her children to meet a proposal toward gossip with the quiet remark, 'I like all my friends.' Nothing more can be said."

But it can; the child rebuked by the quiet remark has only to say, "Well, then, let's talk about Gaby Deslys or King Edward VII."

Park Row and Fleet Street

It is difficult for us to tell how accurately Philip Gibbs has pictured Fleet Street in his novel *The Street of Adventure*; for, externally at least, there is little resemblance to Park Row. We cite, for instance, a description of the city room of *The Star* as Francis Luttrell found it on his first day:

"It was a large room, with a number of desks divided by glass partitions and with a large table in the center. At the far end of the room was a fire burning brightly in the grate, and in front of it were two men and a girl, the men in swing chairs with their legs stretched out, the girl on the floor in the billows of a black silk skirt, arranging chestnuts on the first bar of the grate."

There isn't any grate in our city room and we have no roasting parties. There have been days in mid-July when it might have been possible to fry eggs on the skylight of our city room, but we don't remember that anybody ever tried it. Nor is our memory stirred to any local reminiscences by the description of *The Star* office just before press time, when "silence reigned in the room except for the scratching of pens." Probably there are not more than half a dozen pens in all Park Row and four of them are on *The Evening Post*.

We find the difference in spirit not so great. There is a great deal about the terrific strain of newspaper work and how a brutal city editor will drive a finely tempered reporter until he has had the best of his brains and then toss him aside like a withered violet.

"Fleet Street," says Gibbs, who tells the story partly in the first person, "would kill you in a year—it is very cruel, very callous to the sufferings of men's souls and bodies."

Again, the heroine, who is a press woman, complains: "We women wear out sooner. Five years in Fleet Street withers any girl. Then she gets crow's feet round her eyes and becomes snappy and fretful, or a fierce creature struggling in an unequal combat with men. I am just reaching that stage."

An even more terrifying picture is painted of the book reviewer. He was, according to Gibbs, "A young, anemic-looking man with fair, wavy hair, going a little gray, and a pale, haggard, clean-shaven face, seated, with his elbows on the desk, a novel opened before him and six other novels in a pile at his elbow. He was smoking a cigarette, and the third finger of his left hand was deeply stained with nicotine. As Luttrell entered he groaned slightly and pushed back a lock of his fair hair from his forehead."

We would like to find something personal in that portrait or at least to hope that we might be like that after a few years more of this terrific strain. But we doubt it. Despite eleven years of unremitting toil we have been unable to wear ourselves gray or conspicuously haggard or clean shaven. It is not easy. To be sure, we have heard many newspaper men picturing themselves as butterflies broken on the wheel, but always with a melancholy gusto. Moreover, that was in the days when Jack's and Joel's were open all night.

We can't speak with authority about Fleet Street, nor even pretend to be infallible about Park Row, but it is our impression that newspaper work is easier than any of the other professions except the ministry. And the easiest sort of newspaper work is dramatic criticism or book reviewing. If you are not sure of your facts you can just leave them out, and even if they get in wrong it doesn't matter much. There is a certain amount of work to be done in the first two or three years, but by that time the critic should have a particular pigeonhole in his brain for practically every book or play which comes along. Upon seeing "I'll Say It Is" in 1922 all he has to do is to remember what he said about "Have Another" in 1920. Once or twice a year a book or play comes along which doesn't fit into any pigeonhole, but that can be dismissed in one paragraph as "queer" and allowed to go at that.

Merrick's Women

The novels of Leonard Merrick go a long way in reconciling us to the constitutional establishment of the single standard of morals proposed by William Jennings Bryan. Merrick's world is a hard one for women. His men starve romantically in a pretty poverty. Their dingy haunts are of the gayest. Bad luck only adds to their merriment. So it is, too, with the Kikis and Mignons, but Merrick's good women are of much more fragile stuff. Although invariably English, they grow pale and woebegone just as easily in London as in Paris. The author never gives them any fun at all. A harsh word makes them tremble, but they fear kindness even more. When they are not starving they are fluttering confoundedly because somebody has spoken to them.

With half of *When Love Flies Out o' the Window* behind us, we are entirely out of patience with Meenie Weston. There is no denying, of course, that Meenie had a hard time. Well-paid singing teachers told her that she possessed a great voice, but when her father died she found that the best she could do was an engagement in the chorus, and not always that.

After months without work she signed a contract to sing in what she supposed was a Parisian concert hall, but it turned out to be a dingy cabaret. Worse than that, Miss Weston found that between songs she was supposed to sit at a table and let chance patrons buy her food and drink. It was not much of a job and Miss Weston refused to mingle with the audience. Then one night the villainous proprietor locked her out of her dressing room and she was forced to venture down among the customers.

Up to this point our sympathies were generally with the heroine, except at the point, back in London, where the author recorded, "Miss Joyce proposed that they should 'drink luck' to the undertaking and have 'a glass of port wine.' The girl (our heroine) had been in the chorus too long to be startled by the suggestion—"

It seemed to us that there was nothing particularly horrifying in the suggestion, even if it had been made to a young lady who had never been on the stage. Despite this clue to Miss Weston's character, we were disappointed and surprised at her conduct in the Paris cabaret. She sat first with her one friend in the establishment, who was a kindly but hardened cabaret singer. She did her best for Meenie, but she did not understand her. "That any girl could tremble at the idea of talking to strangers across a table and imbibing beer at their expense was beyond her comprehension."

Our sympathy lay with the cabaret veteran rather than with Meenie. Of course, we did not expect Miss Weston to enjoy her predicament, but when a man asked her, "Are you going to sing 'As Once in May' to-night?" we could not quite see why Mr. Merrick found it necessary to report the fact that:

"She started, and the man told himself that he had really stumbled on a singular study.

"'Yes,' she faltered."

To us it seemed a simple question simply put. After all, it was fortunate that the young man did not begin with

"Will you have a drink?" Brutal and insulting language of that sort would certainly have sent Meenie straight into hysterics. Even when the young man dropped in the next night there seemed to be nothing in his conversation to alarm our heroine excessively, but Merrick is wedded to the notion that virtue in a woman is a sort of panic. A good name, he seems to believe, is something which a woman carries tightly clasped in both arms like a bowl of goldfish. To stumble would be almost as fatal as to fall.

"I came to talk to you again, if you'll let me," said the young man.

"You know very well that I can't help it," our heroine answered. This was not polite, but at least it had a more engaging quality of boldness than anything she had said before. But soon she was fluttering again. "Oh, you have only to say I'm a nuisance! I assure you that if you'd rather I left you alone I won't speak another word," continued the young man. This seemed reassuring enough, but it has a devastating effect upon our heroine, for we find that "Her mouth twitched, and she looked at the ground."

Eventually she and the young man were married. He had spoken to her without an introduction, and he was enough of a gentleman to realize that he must right the wrong and make an honest woman of her.

Although we have not yet finished the book, we rather suspect that they will not be very happy. Merrick's good women never are. They all suffer terrifically just because they lack the ability to bulwark their virtue behind a couple of snappy comebacks, such as, "Where do you get that stuff?" or, "How do you get that way?"

Just Around the Corner

We sometimes wonder just how and what Joseph Conrad would have written if he had never gone to sea. It may be that he would never have written at all if he had not been urged on by the emotion which he felt about ships and seas and great winds. And yet we regret sometimes that he is so definitely sea-struck. After all, Conrad is a man so keen in his understanding of the human heart that he can reach deep places. It is sometimes a pity, therefore, that he is so much concerned with researches which take him down into nothing more than water, which, even at its mightiest, is no such infinite element as the mind of man.

Typhoons and hurricanes make a brave show of noise and fury, but there is nothing in them but wind. No storm which Conrad ever pictured could be half so extraordinary as the tumult which went on in the soul of Lord Jim. We notice at this point that we have used heart and mind and soul without defining what we meant by any of them. We mean the same thing in each case, but for the life of us we don't know just what it is. *Lord Jim*, of course, is a great book, but to our mind the real battle is a bit obscured by the strangeness and the vividness of the external adventures through which the hero passes. There is danger that the attention of the reader may be distracted by silent seas and savage tribes and jungles from the fact that Jim's fight was really fought just behind his forehead; that it was a fight which might have taken place in Trafalgar Square or Harlem or Emporia.

Naturally, we have no right to imply that nothing of consequence can happen in wild and strange places. There is just as much romance on Chinese junks as on Jersey Central ferryboats. But no more. Here is the crux of our complaint. Conrad and Kipling and the rest have written so magnificently about the far places that we have come to think of them as the true home of romance. Indeed, we have almost been induced to believe that there is nothing adventurous west of Suez. Hereabouts, it seems as if one qualified as a true romancer simply from the fact of living in Shanghai or Singapore, or just off the island of Carimata. And yet we suppose there are people in Shanghai who cobble shoes all day long and sleep at nights, and that there are dishes to be washed in Singapore.

For our own part, we remember that we once spent ten days in Peking, and our liveliest recollection is that one night we held a ten high straight flush in hearts against two full houses. One of them was aces and kings. That was adventure, to be sure, and yet we have held a jack high straight flush in clubs against four sixes in no more distant realm than West Forty-fourth Street.

Adventure is like that. It always seizes upon a person when he least expects it. There is no good chasing to the ends of the earth after romance. Not if you want the true romance. It moves faster than tramp steamers or pirate schooners. We hold that there is no validity in the belief that a little salt will assist the capture; no, not even when it is mixed with spume, or green waves, or purple seas. Only this year we saw a play about a youngster who pined away to death because he neglected to accept an opportunity to sail around the world. He wanted adventure. He starved for romance. He felt sure that it was in Penang and not in the fields of his father's farm. It was not reasonable for him thus to break his heart. If Romance had marked him for her own the hills of Vermont would have been no more a barrier to her coming than the tops of the Andes.

Reform Through Reading

Virtue, good health, efficiency and all the other subjects which are served up in the numberless thick volumes with

a purpose seldom seem desirable when the propagandist has finished his say about them. For instance, we began the day with a firm determination never to smoke again—that is, not for some time—and then we ran across *Efficiency Through Concentration*, by B. Johnston. Since then we light the new cigarette from the dying embers of the old. The passage which enraged us most occurs in a chapter called "Personal Habits," in which the author writes:

"If you are a gentleman always ask a lady's permission before smoking, and if you find that her statement that it is disagreeable to her is a disappointment to you, and that your observance of her wishes causes you real discomfort, then you may know that the time has come to give up the habit entirely."

To be sure, Mr. Johnston does not specify whether "the habit" refers to smoking or to the lady, but later it is made clear that he seriously suggests that a smoker should change his whole mode of life to suit the whim of "a lady" who is not otherwise identified in the book. What this particular "lady" is to the "gentleman" we don't know, but it sounds very much like blackmail.

Nor later were we much moved to strength of will against nicotine by the author's advice, "If self-conquest seems difficult, brace yourself up with the reminder that as heir of the ages you sum up in yourself all the powers of self-restraint bequeathed by your innumerable ancestors."

To us that makes but slight appeal. After all, the ancestors most celebrated for self-restraint were those that didn't have any descendants.

Later we came across "Concentrate your thought on the blessings that accompany moderation in all things." This, however, seemed to us an excellent suggestion if followed in moderation.

Next we turned to a health book by Thomas R. Gaines which promised "a sound and certain way to health, a cure for fatigue, a preventive for disease and one of the most potent allies in the battle of life against premature old age." The book is called *Vitalic Breathing* and the introductory notice went on to say that the system suggested was easy to practise and cost nothing. Only when we came to facts did the new guide to health fail us, for then we read, "Vitalic breathing means inhaling in sniffs and forcibly exhaling." No dramatic critic could afford to follow such a system. He would be hurled out of every theater in town on the suspicion that he was hissing the show.

Vance Thompson's advice in *Live and Be Young* is no easier. "The best is none too good for you," he writes graciously, and continues: "Whether it is the country or the village or the city, the men and women you want to know are the best—those who are getting the best out of life—those who have beautiful homes and social influence—those who play games and make an art of pleasant things—in a word, those who are smart."

We read on and learned that, "Rich people are, nine times out of ten, pleasanter, kindlier, better bred and less selfish than poor folk—they can afford to be; and they are more enjoyable playmates and steadier friends."

No, after mature deliberation we think we would rather try the sniffing and forcibly exhaling method. We would even prefer to concentrate and give up tobacco. Addition never was one of our strong points, and Mr. Thompson's advice is not for us. We would have a terrible time in finding out whether they really were rich enough to be of any use to our arteries. Clues are simple enough. It is easy to ask nonchalantly, "How much income tax did you pay this year?" But after obtaining that you have to find out whether your potentially rich man is living with his wife and whether he has any children or bad debts or Liberty bonds of that issue which is tax exempt. Then you must calculate the first few thousands on the basis of four per cent and on up. It couldn't be done in your head, and we doubt whether it would be polite to ask your host for paper and pencil. The system is all well enough after you have your rich, smart people identified, but the possibility of contracting premature old age while still in the research period seems to us too dangerous to meddle with.

After setting down all this we find that we have not been fair to Mr. Thompson. Early in the book, on a page which we had inadvertently skipped, an easy method is suggested for ascertaining whether your friends are actually rich and smart. Speaking of such words as "climbers" and "snobs" Mr. Thompson writes: "These epithets are always ready to the hand of the slack-living, uncouth man, who is more comfortable in bad society than he is in good society—and he loves to throw them about. You know that man? He stands out in the commonness and indecency of the street, as you go up to knock at the door of a smart house, and shouts, 'Snob!'"

Of course, we would like it fine, but truthfulness compels us to admit that we never met him. Whether we like it or not we will have to continue to seek health in good works and deep breathing.

Still, our own house is pretty smart. It carries three mortgages and has never dropped one yet.

Shush!

Gordon Craig's new book is called *The Theatre Advancing*, but we rather hope that when it reaches his goal line we will be elsewhere. To our mind the theater is the place where Art should beam upon the multitude and cry loudly, "Find out what everybody will have and don't forget the boys in the back room." Mr. Craig's theater is much too special for our taste. It will do away with everything that is boisterous and vulgar and broadly human. Consider, for instance, Mr. Craig's short chapter entitled "A Note on Applause" set down in the form of a dialogue between the Reader and the Writer:

"In the Moscow Art Theatre applause plays a very minor role. In general no play can live without it. In Moscow no actor takes a call before the curtain; hence, there is no applause."

"Reader: Isn't that very dull?"

"Writer: You think so; Moscow doesn't. It is all a matter of the point of view. When the acting is poor, an enthusiastic, roaring and thundering audience is necessary to keep up the spirits: but when the acting is absorbing applause is not needed, and if the actor won't come and bow, or the curtain rise after it has once fallen—well, then, applause becomes futile."

"Reader: Whoever heard of such an idea?"

"Writer: My dear Reader, it is not an idea, it is an established fact. Remove the reason for applause and you prevent the applause itself, and in doing so, prevent a vulgarity."

"Reader: But it is the natural desire to want to applaud when you see something good."

"Writer: Rather it is an unnatural habit. You do not applaud a thing, only a man or a woman. Applause is the flattery of the strong by the weak.

"If the conductor and musicians of an orchestra were not seen we should never applaud music. We do not applaud architecture, painting, sculpture, or literature. We should not applaud hidden musicians."

Concerning the last statement we have reason to doubt the accuracy of Mr. Craig's surmise in so far as it refers to American audiences. Every movie fan has heard audiences at some time or another break into wild applause for the shadows on the screen, and we were even more forcibly reminded of the strength of the personal illusion, no matter how inanimate the symbol, during the world's series. The players on the Scoreboard which we watched were no more than wooden disks with "Collins," "Jackson," "Cicotte" and the other names written upon them. When the Dutch Ruether disk was suddenly moved from the plate around to third base to indicate a triple, there were wild cheers from the crowd and they began to howl for a change in pitchers. "Take him out!" they cried, appealing to a manager who did not even have so much as a disk to represent him. There was some more mad scurrying around the bases by the red disks, and then suddenly a large hand, symbolizing Fate or God or Kid Gleason, we don't know which, was thrust through a hole in the scoreboard and fastened upon the little round Cicotte to bear him away from his fling of reality back into his accustomed wooden private life.

We don't know how it went with the Cicotte who left the diamond in Cincinnati. Not very well, we suppose. But for the wooden disk in Times Square it was a moment of triumph. For a fleeting second he was a man and the direct object of popular scorn and hatred. The rooter behind me shook his fist at him. "You got what was coming to you, you big stiff!" he shouted.

Everybody looked around, and the man seemed a little shamefaced at his exhibition of hostility to a wooden disk. He felt that he owed the crowd an explanation and he came through handsomely. "He was shining up the ball with emery," he said.

"We do not applaud the Atlantic Ocean," continues Craig, "or the poems of the ocean, but, catching sight of the man who can swim furthest in that ocean, we utter birdlike and beastlike cries."

And yet we rather think that there have been times when men cheered for the sea. After that first silent moment on the peak in Darien, Cortez and his men must have been a pretty dull lot if they did not give at least one "Rah, rah, rah—P-A-C-I-F-I-C—Pa-cific!"

Mr. Craig can't convince us that we applaud too much, for it is our impression that we don't get up to shout half often enough. We shout for Ty Cobb, to be sure, or for Eddie Casey if he gets loose, but as a rule we do no more than clap hands once or twice if Bernard Shaw bowls over all the interference and runs the whole length of the field without a tackler so much as throwing him off his stride. We shout when Jack Dempsey knocks Jess Willard down seven times in one round, but we don't do nearly as well for the writing man who gets after some big, hulking idea that has outlived its usefulness and is still poking around as the hope of the white race.

Somebody ought to issue a call for volunteer groups of serious shouters to go out and whoop it up for a skyscraper, or a sunset or a sonnet. None of us cuts much of a figure complaining about all the things in the world he doesn't like if he hasn't made a practice of yelling his head off for such few things as meet with his approval in the theater or out of it. More than that, Mr. Craig ought to remember that if there were no applause in the American theater there would be no curtain speeches by David Belasco.

A Test for Critics

Just when everything seems to be moving more or less smoothly somebody comes along and raises the entrance requirements for dramatic critics. Clayton Hamilton is the latest to suggest a new standard. His test for reviewers consists of three point-blank questions, as follows:

One—Have you ever stood bareheaded in the nave of Amiens?

Two—Have you ever climbed to the Acropolis by moonlight?

Three—Have you ever walked with whispers into the hushed presence of the Frari Madonna of Bellini?

Our grade on the test is thirty-three and one-third per cent, which is not generally regarded as a pass mark.

We have stood bareheaded in the nave of Amiens. We felt more bareheaded than usual because a German aeroplane was dropping bombs somewhere about the town. And yet even in this part of the examination we can hardly claim a perfect average. Come to think of it, we didn't exactly stand there in the nave at Amiens. We had heard of the increased difficulty of hitting a moving target, and whenever a bomb went off we found ourselves shifting rapidly from one foot to another. We were not minded that any German in the sky should look through the roof and mistake us for an ammunition dump.

As for the rest, our failure is complete. We know that the Acropolis is a building in Athens or thereabouts. We have never seen it in moonlight or sunlight. We are not even sure that we would climb up. Our resolve would be largely influenced by the number of steps. Clayton Hamilton does not mention that. His is essentially the critical rather than the reportorial mind. We, for instance, are less interested in the fact that Clayton Hamilton climbed up by moonlight than in the time as caught by an accurate stop watch and the resulting respiration. We think that the Frari Madonna of Bellini is a picture, and Venice is our guess as to its home. Venice or Florence is always the best guess for Madonnas.

The only solution we can think of is to ask the managers to shift our seats for the present from the fourth row of the orchestra to the second balcony. Of course, our fighting blood is up. We are determined to qualify as soon as possible. Some day we will climb that Acropolis roped together with Louis De Foe, Charles Darnton and Burns Mantle. There will be a little trepidation in the ascent, to be sure. One false step, one blunder, would be fatal, and we have known the other members of the party to make these blunders. But we will reach the top at last and stand wonderingly in the moonlight, slowly recovering our breath. Mr. Darnton will undoubtedly be the first to speak. He will look at the ghostly architecture silvered in the moonlight, and then he will murmur "Big hit!"

Later we will see the Frari Madonna, but it seems a little dangerous to predict that all the members of the party will walk with whispers. Perhaps that is not vital. At any rate, when the journey is completed we purpose to go straight from the dock to the office of A. H. Woods. If he consents to see us we are going to address him in this fashion:

"Mr. Woods, we wish to make an apology to you. Some months ago we reviewed several of your shows, in spite of the fact that we had never climbed to the Acropolis in moonlight or walked with hushed whispers into the presence of the Frari Madonna of Bellini. Now that has been remedied. We have come back with a new vision. We are prepared to review the performances of your productions all over again. Do you think you could fix us up for to-morrow night with a couple of good aisle seats for *Up in Mabel's Room*?"

Gray Gods and Green Goddesses

A railroad train is bearing down upon the hero, or maybe it is a sawmill, or a band of savage Indians. Death seems certain. And if there is a heroine, something worse than death awaits her—that is, from the Indians. Sawmills draw no sex distinctions. At any rate, things look very black for hero and heroine, but curiously enough, even at the darkest moment, I have never been able to get a bet down on the outcome. Somehow or other the relief party always arrives just in time, on foot, or horseback, or even through the air. The worst of it is that everybody, except the hero and the heroine and the villain, knows that the unexpected is certain to happen. It is not a betting proposition and yet it remains one of the most thrilling of all theatrical plots. William Archer proves in *The Green Goddess* that he is what Broadway calls a showman, as well as being the most famous technician of his day. He has taken the oldest plot in the world and developed it into the most exciting melodrama of the season.

Curiously enough, Mr. Archer has said that when he first thought of the idea for *The Green Goddess* he wanted to induce Shaw to collaborate with him on the play. It would have been an interesting combination. Shaw might have fooled everybody by following the probabilities and killing the heroine and hero coldly and completely.

Mr. Archer, however, as the author of *Play Making*, knows that it is wrong to fool an audience, and so he kills only one of the beleaguered party, which is hardly a misfortune, since it enables the heroine, after a decent period of mourning, to marry the man she loves. As the Scriptures have it, joy cometh in the mourning.

Archer probably did not set out to show just how much better he could do with a thriller than Theodore Kroner or Owen Davis. His scheme was broader than that. Satire was in his mind as well as melodrama. He began his play with much deft foolery at the expense of the imperially minded English, by making his villainous rajah far more wise in life and literature than his English captives. When the rajah asks the brave English captain which play of Shaw he prefers, the gallant officer replies acidly: "I never read a line of the fellow." At this point in the play Mr. Archer and Mr. Arliss between them have succeeded in making the rajah such an altogether attractive person that a majority of the people in the audience are eager to have him obtain his revenge and quite reconciled to the heroine's accepting his marked attentions and becoming the chief wife in the royal harem of Rukh.

But melodrama is stronger stuff than satire. In the beginning, the playwright was melodramatic with an amused sort of tolerance, but then the sheer excitement and rush of action seized him by the coattails and dragged him along helter-skelter. Satire was forgotten and the hero and heroine, confronted by death, began to speak with the round and eloquent mouth, as folk in danger always do in plays. The rajah became more villainous scene by scene and the little group of English captives braver and braver. They even developed a trace of intelligence.

None of this is cited as cause for grave complaint against William Archer. Greater men than he have tried to play with melodrama and have been bitten by it. Shakespeare began *Hamlet* as a searching and serious study of the soul

of man, but before he was done the characters were fighting duels all over the place and going mad and participating in all the varied experiences which come to men in melodrama. After all, George Arliss succeeds in holding the rajah up as an admirable and interesting person, despite all the circumstances of the plot, which are leagued against him, and the author has been kind enough to permit him a cynical and cutting line at the end, even though he is deprived of the privilege of slaying his captives.

But for the fact that the hero and heroine are rescued by aeroplanes rather than a troop of cavalry or a camel corps, it can hardly be said that there is any new twist or turn in *The Green Goddess*. The surprising and undoubted success of the play reveals the fact that the so-called popular dramatists and the theorists are not so many miles apart as one might believe at first thought. When Mr. Archer brings in the relief party of aviators just at the crucial moment, as hero and heroine are about to be slain, he has peripety in mind. But Theodore Kremer, who very possibly never heard of peripety, would do exactly the same thing. In other words, the technician is the man who invents or preserves labels to be pasted on the intuitive practices of his art.

The Green Goddess is sound and shipshape in structure, for all the fact that it is hardly a searching study of any form of life save that found within the theater. It is doubly welcome, not only as a rousing melodrama but, also, as an apt and pertinent reply to the question so frequently voiced by actors and playwrights: "Why doesn't one of these critics that's always talking about how plays should be written sit down and do one himself?"

If Archer is a little overcautious in taking human life in *The Green Goddess*, the law of averages still prevails, for Eugene O'Neill has made up the deficit in *Diff'rent* by rounding off his little play with a double hanging. This tragedy, described on the hoardings as "a daring study of a sex-starved woman," has much of O'Neill's characteristic skill in stage idiom, but it is much less convincing than the same author's *The Emperor Jones*. Indeed *Diff'rent* is essentially a reflection of the other play, in which O'Neill states again in other terms his theory that man is invariably overthrown by the very factor in life which he seeks to escape. Emma of *Diff'rent*, like the Emperor Jones, completes a great circle in her frantic efforts to escape and, after refusing a young man, because of a single fall from grace, comes thirty years after to be an eager and unhappy spinster who throws herself at the head of a young rascal. With the growth of realism in the drama, criticism has become increasingly difficult, since the playwright's apt answer to disbelief on the part of the critics is to give dates, names, addresses and telephone numbers. "Let the captious be sure they know their Emmas as well as I do before they tell me how she would act," says O'Neill menacingly to all who would question the profound truth of his "daring study of a sex-starved woman." Of course, the question is just how well does O'Neill know his Emmas, but this is to take dramatic criticism into a realm too personal for comfort.

Seemingly, O'Neill and the other daring students of sex-starvation are well informed. Into the mind of the woman of forty-five they enter as easily as if it were guarded by nothing more than swinging doors. Or perhaps it would be better to describe it as a lodge room, for not all may enter, but only those who know the ritual. This is annoying to the uninitiated, but we can only bide our time and our protest until some one of the young men takes the next step and gives us a complete and inside story of the psychology of maternity.

It might be possible to make a stand against the assurance of some of the younger realists by saying that truth does not lie merely in the fact of being. Every day the most palpable falsehoods are seeking the dignity of truth by the simple expedient of occurring. Nature can be among the most fearsome of liars. Still the fundamental flaw of the younger realists does not lie here so much as in the fact that, as far as art goes, truth depends entirely on interpretation rather than existence. No man can set down a story fact for fact with the utmost fidelity and then step back and say: "This is a work of art because it is true." Art lies in the expression of his reaction to the facts. O'Neill's method in *Diff'rent* is quite the reverse of the artistic. He is, for the moment, merely a scientist. Pity, compassion and all kindred emotions are rigorously excluded. Rather, he says: "What is all this to me?" There is no spark of fire in neutrality. The artist must care. Though a creator, he is one of the smaller Gods to whom there is no sanction for a lofty gesture of finality with the last pat upon the clay. He cannot say, "Let there be light," and then take a Sabbath. His place is at the switchboard. In his world he is creator, property man and prompter, too. The show can go on only most imperfectly without him.

The Cosmic "Kid"

Every little while some critic or other begins to dance about with all the excitement of a lonely watcher on a peak in Darien and to shout, as he dances, that Charlie Chaplin is a great actor. The grass on that peak is now crushed under foot. Harvey O'Higgins has danced there and Mrs. Fiske and many another, but still the critics rush in. Of course, a critic is almost invariably gifted with the ability not to see or hear what any other commentator but himself writes about anything, but there is more than this to account for the fact that so many persons undertake to discover Chaplin. As in the case of all great artists, he is able to convey the impression, always, of doing a thing not only for the first time but of giving a special and private performance for each sensitive soul in the audience. It is possible to sit in the middle of a large and tumultuous crowd and still feel that Charlie is doing special little things for your own benefit which nobody else in the house can understand or enjoy.

Personally we never see him in a new picture without suddenly being struck with the thought, "How long has this been going on?" Each time we leave the theater we expect to see people dancing in the streets because of Chaplin and to meet delegations with olive wreaths hurrying toward Los Angeles. We don't. Unfortunately Americans have a perfect passion for flying into a great state of calm about things and, for all the organized cheering from the top of the peak in Darien, we take Chaplin much too calmly at all moments except when we are watching him. Phrases which are his by every right have been wasted on lesser people. Walter Pater, for instance, lived before his time and

was obliged to spend that fine observation, "Here is the head upon which all the ends of the earth have come and the eyelids are a little weary" upon the Mona Lisa.

The same ends of the same earth have come upon the head of Charlie Chaplin. Still Mr. Pater, if he had lived, would have been obliged to amend his observation a little. The eyelids are not weary. Unlike the Mona Lisa, Chaplin is able to shake his head every now and then and break free from his burden. In these great moments he seems to stand clear of all things and to be alone in space with nothing but sky about him. To be sure the earth crashes down on him again, but he bears it without blinking. It is only his shoulders which sag a little.

Charlie seems to us to fulfil the demand made of the creative artist that he shall be both an individual and a symbol at the same time. He presents a definite personality and yet he is also Man who grins and whistles as he clings to his spinning earth because he is afraid to go home in the dark. To be much more explicit, there is one particular scene in *The Kid* in which Chaplin having recently picked up a stray baby finds the greatest difficulty in getting rid of it. Balked at every turn, he sits down wearily upon a curbstone and suddenly notices that just in front of him there is an open manhole. First he peers down; then he looks at the child. He hesitates and turns a project over in his mind and reluctantly decides that it won't do. Every father in the world has sat at some time or other by that manhole. Moreover, in the half suggested shake of his head Chaplin touches the paternal feeling more closely than any play ever written around a third act in a nursery on Christmas Eve. We can all watch him and choke down half a sob at the thought that after all the Life Force is supreme and you can't throw 'em down the manholes.

Many a good performance on the stage is purely accidental. Actors are praised for some trick of gesture or a particular note in the voice of which they are quite unconscious. We raved once over the remarkable fidelity of accent in an actress cast to play the rôle of a shop girl in a certain melodrama and it was not until we saw her the next season, when she was cast as a duchess, that we realized that there was no art about it. Chaplin does not play by ear. His method is definite, and it could not seem so easy if it were not carefully calculated. He does more with a gesture than almost anybody else can do by falling downstairs. He can turn from one mood to another with all the agility of a polo pony. And in addition to being one of the greatest artists of our day he is more fun than all the rest put together.

There must be a specially warm corner in Hell reserved for those parents who won't let their children see Charlie Chaplin on the ground that he is too vulgar. Of course, he is vulgar. Everybody who amounts to anything has to touch earth now and again to be revitalized. Chaplin has the right attitude toward vulgarity. He can take it or let it alone. Children who don't see Charlie Chaplin have, of course, been robbed of much of their childhood. However, they can make it up in later years when the old Chaplin films will be on view in the museums and carefully studied under the direction of learned professors in university extension courses.

A Jung Man's Fancy

Pollyanna died and, of course, she was glad and went to Heaven. It is just as well. The strain had become a little wearing. We had Liberty Loan orators, too, and Four-Minute men and living in America came to be something like being a permanent member of a cheering section. All that is gone now. Pointing with pride has become rude. The interpretation of life has been taken over by those who view with alarm. Pick up any new novel at random and the chances are that it will begin about as follows:

"Hugh McVey was born in a little hole of a town stuck on a mud bank on the western shore of the Mississippi River in the State of Missouri. It was a miserable place in which to be born. With the exception of a narrow strip of black mud along the river, the land for ten miles back of the town—called in derision by rivermen 'Mudcat Landing'—was almost entirely worthless and unproductive. The soil, yellow, shallow and stony, was tilled, in Hugh's time, by a race of long, gaunt men, who seemed as exhausted and no-account as the land on which they lived."

On page four the reader will find that young Hugh has been apprenticed to work on the sewers and after that, as the writer warms to his task, things begin to grow less cheerful. This particular exhibit happens to be taken from Sherwood Anderson's *Poor White*, but if we go north to Gopher Prairie, celebrated by Sinclair Lewis in *Main Street*, we shall find: "A fly-buzzing saloon with a brilliant gold and enamel whisky sign across the front. Other saloons down the block. From them a stink of stale beer, and thick voices bellowing pidgin German or trolling out dirty songs—vice gone feeble and unenterprising and dull—the delicacy of a mining camp minus its vigor. In front of the saloons, farm wives sitting on the seats of wagons, waiting for their husbands to become drunk and ready to start home."

Wander as you will through the novels of the year, I assure you that things will be found to be about the same. Of course, it is possible now and again to get away from the stale beer, but once a story enters prohibition time the study of starved souls and complexes begins. There are also books in which there isn't any mud, but these pay particular attention to the stifling dust.

It must be that all this sort of life has been going on for some time, but naturally during the war when the Hun was at the gate it would hardly have been patriotic to talk about it. Now that it's all among friends we can talk about our morals and habits and they seem to range from none to appalling. I can't testify completely to the state of affairs reported upon by the novelists, because I have spent a good deal of time recently in the theater and it is only fair to say that there, at any rate, peach jam and country air still combine to reform city dwellers, and people get married and live happily ever after, and some of them dance and sing and make jokes, and, of course, sunlight and moonlight and pink dresses and green ones and gold and silver ones, too, abound. My aunt says that this is just as it should be. "There's so much unhappiness in the world," she says, "that why should we pay money to see shows and read books

that help to remind us about it. The man worth while," she says, "is the man who can smile when everything goes dead wrong."

Practically all the shows in town seem to have been written to please my aunt, but I don't agree with her at all. As a matter of fact, she lives in Pelham and has never heard of Freud or Jung. I tried to convince her once that practically all of what we call the civilized world is inhibited, and she interrupted to say that the last Saturday night lecturer told them the same thing about Mars. Perhaps it will be just as well to leave my aunt out of the story at this point and go on to explain why the modern novel is more stimulating and encouraging to the ego than the modern play.

First of all, it is necessary to understand that a novel or a play or any form of art is what we call an escape. To be sure, a good many plays of the year are not calculated to give anybody much of a start on the bloodhounds, but you understand what I mean. Take, for instance, the most humdrum person of your acquaintance and you will probably find that he is an inveterate patron of the moving pictures. Lacking romance in real life he gets it from watching Mary Pickford in the moonlight and seeing Douglas Fairbanks jump over gates. He himself will never be in the moonlight to any serious extent and he will jump no gates. The moving pictures will have amply satisfied his romantic cravings.

The man in the theater or the man who reads a book identifies himself with one of the characters, hero or villain as the case may be, and while the spell is on he lives the life of the fictional character. Next morning he can punch the time clock with no regrets. An interesting thesis might be written on the question of just what bearing the eyebrows of Wallace Reid have upon the falling marriage rate in the United States, but that would require a great many statistics and a knowledge of cube root.

Assuming then that art,—and for the purposes of this argument moving pictures and crook plays will be included under that heading,—takes the place of life for a great many people, what do we find about the pernicious effect of happy novels and plays upon the community in general? Simply that the man who is addicted to seeing plays and reading books in which everybody performs prodigies of virtue is not even going to the trouble of doing so much as one good deed a day on his own account.

The man who went with me to see *Daddies* a couple of seasons ago glowed with as complete a spirit of self-sacrifice as I have ever seen during all three acts of the play. He projected himself into the story and felt that he was actually patting little children on the head and adopting orphans and surprising them with Christmas gifts. On the way uptown he let me pay the fares and buy the newspapers as well. All his kindly impulses had been satisfied by seeing the play. He was very cross and gloomy for the rest of the week.

Being rather more regular in theatergoing than my friend, I failed to make any complete identification with anybody on the stage, but I was also somewhat depressed. The saintly old lady in the play had spoken of "the tinkling laughter of tiny tots" and it made me reflect on the imperfections of life. It did not seem to me at the time as if any of the children who live in the flat next door ever really tinkle. A week later I saw *Hamlet* and the effect was diametrically opposite. Everything in the play tended to make life seem more cheerful. He was too, too solid in flesh, also, and in many other respects he seemed ever so much worse off than I was. After watching the rotten state of affairs in Denmark, Ninety-fifth Street didn't seem half bad. And, goody, goody! next week an Ibsen season begins!

It is no accident that the Scandinavian drama is generally gloomy. Ibsen understood the psychology of his countrymen. He lived in a land of long cold winters and poor steam heat. If he had written joyfully and lightheartedly, thousands, well say hundreds, of Norwegians would have gone home to die or to wish to die. Instead he gave them folk like Oswald, and all the Norwegian playgoers could go skipping out into the moonlight with their teeth chattering from laughter as much as from cold. After seeing *Ghosts* there is no place like home. I wish some of the Broadway dramatists were as shrewd as Ibsen. Then we might have plays in which nobody could raise the mortgage and the rent crisis in our own lives would seem less acute.

If the heroine were turned out into a driving snowstorm and stayed there, I might appreciate our janitor. And if the wild young men and the women who pay and pay and pay would only quit reforming in the third act and climbing back to respectability out of the depths of degradation, I know I could derive no little satisfaction from the knowledge that the elevator in our building runs until twelve o'clock on Saturday nights.

Deburau

Theatergoers who have lived through two or more generations invariably complain that the stage isn't what it used to be. Mostly they mourn for a school of drama in which emotion flowered more luxuriantly than in the usual run of plays to-day about life in country stores and city flats. The one thought in which these playgoers of another day take comfort is that even if we had such drama now there would be no one who could act it. But *Deburau* is such a play, and Lionel Atwill must be some such one as those who figure in the speeches of our older friends when they say: "Ah, but then you never saw—". Sacha Guitry, who wrote *Deburau*, is alive; yes, indeed, even more than that, for he lives in Paris, and Lionel Atwill is a young actor whose greatest previous success in New York was achieved in the realistic drama of Ibsen. Now, it is possible for us to turn upon the elders and to say to them: "It is not for want of ability that this age of ours doesn't do your old-style plays. We could if we would. Go and see *Deburau* and Lionel Atwill."

Of course, even in this verse play of the tragic life of a French actor of the early nineteenth century there are modern touches. For all the fact that Atwill is able to rise now and again to a carefully contrived situation and to

develop it into a magnificent moment of ringing voice and sweeping gesture, he is also able to do the much greater and more exciting thing of making Deburau seem at times a man and not a great character in a play. He is able to make Deburau, actor, dead man, Frenchman, seem the common fellow of us all. And, still more wonderful, Lionel Atwill succeeds in doing this even in scenes during which the author is pitching rimed couplets around his neck as if he were no man at all, but nothing more than one of the posts in a game of quoits. I find it difficult to believe that anybody's heart is breaking when he expresses his emotion in carefully carpentered rhyme:

> ***"Trained in art from my cradle," did you say?***
> ***Well, I hadn't a cradle. But, anyway,***
> ***If you bid me recall those things, here goes—***
> ***Though I've tried hard enough to forget them, God knows.***

When people on the stage begin to speak in this fashion the persuasive air of reality is seldom present. It is with Atwill. He is careful not to accentuate the beat. Sometimes I am almost persuaded during his performance that it isn't poetry at all. When I watch him, verse is forgotten, but I have only to close my eyes to hear the deep and steady rumble of the beat which thumps beneath the play. Atwill is a man standing on top of a volcano. So great is his unconcern that you may accept it as extinct, but sooner or later you will know better, for by and by, with a terrifying roar, off goes the head of the mountain in an eruption of rhyme.

Atwill is not the only modern note in an old-fashioned play by a young man of to-day. Our forefathers may be speaking the truth when they tell us that in their day all the actors were nine or ten feet tall and spoke in voices slightly suggestive of Caruso at his best, but our forefathers never saw such a production as David Belasco has given to *Deburau*. No one knew in those days of the wonders which could be achieved with light. Nobody, then, could have shown us in the twinkling of an eye the front of Deburau's tiny theater, then the interior of the theater itself, and finally, with only a passing moment of darkness, carry the stage of the theater within a theater forward and set it down in front of the audience, greatly grown by its journey.

In Sacha Guitry's play about Jean-Baptiste-Gaspard Deburau we see this famous clown and pantomimist, who brought all Paris to his tiny theater some hundred years ago, in the midst of a performance. We hear the applause of his audience and then after a bit we see the man himself rid of his Pierrot garb and his white grease paint. He is introduced to us as an exceedingly modest young genius who deplores the fact that he has become hated by his fellow players because of the applause heaped upon him by the critics. Nor is he any better pleased when fair ladies wait to see him after a performance to press their attentions upon him. For them he has invented a formula of repulse. After a moment or so he produces a miniature from his pocket and remarks: "Pretty, isn't it?" When the fair lady agrees he adds: "It's a picture of my wife. I should so like to have you meet her."

But one night Deburau meets a lady much fairer than any of the others, and this time he forgets to show her the miniature. In the second act we find that he is madly in love with her, while she, although she is touched by his devotion, has outgrown her fancy for the actor. It is Deburau who christens her "the lady with the camellias," for she is Marie Duplessis, better known to us as Camille. Returning home for the first time in a week, Deburau finds his wife has left him and, gathering up his bird, his dog, and his little son, he goes to the house of Marie, hoping there to find welcome and consolation. Instead he finds another lover, Armand Duval, who is to make Marie one of the great heroines of emotional drama.

Seven years pass before the next act begins, and now we find Deburau old, broken, and disheartened. He has left the theater and he lives tended only by his son, who has grown to be a lively youngster of seventeen. Somewhat to his chagrin, he finds that the boy is eager to become an actor, and this emotion changes to anger when he learns that his son has studied all his rôles and hopes to make a début in Paris simply as Deburau. He is not to be brushed aside in such cavalier fashion. There is only one Deburau, he declares, and there will be only one until he dies.

To the garret, then, comes Marie Duplessis, truant through all the seven years, but the joy of Deburau is short-lived. He finds that she has not come back because she loves him, but because she is sorry for him. She has come with her doctor. Still, after Marie has gone and Deburau has been left alone with the physician, he finds unexpected consolation for his weary spirit. The physician finds no physical ailment. The trouble, he declares, is a nervous one. For that he can do little. Some magic other than medicine is needed. He suggests books, painting, nature, but to each Deburau shakes a weary head. They don't interest him. The theater, the doctor continues, is perhaps the best hospital of all. There are one or two actors, he tells Deburau, who are greater than any doctors in their power to bring merriment and new life to tired men.

"Who?" asks the sick man, and the doctor tells him of Deburau and his great art. Yes, by all means Deburau is the man he should see.

No sooner has the doctor left than Deburau calls for his hat and his stick. He will no longer sit idle while inferior men play his parts. He is going back to the theater. There we find him in the last act in the middle of a performance in one of his most famous rôles, but his old grace and agility are gone. When the audience should weep it laughs and there are tears instead of smiles for his decrepit attempts at comedy. Finally, he is hissed and booed and, after he has made a dumb speech of farewell, the curtain is rung down. The manager is in a panic. Somebody else must be put forward. It is quite evident that Deburau is done. In the crisis the old actor begs a favor. His son, he tells the manager, knows all his rôles. Why not let the audience have a new Deburau, a young Deburau? Then, as the company gathers about to listen, the old man makes up the boy for his part, and as he does so he tells him in a few simple words the secrets and the fundamentals of the art of acting. Presently the drum of the barker is heard outside the theater and the audience hears him announce that Deburau the great will give way to a greater Deburau, a Deburau more agile, more comic, more tragic. Then the terrified boy is pushed out upon the stage and the play begins.

By an ingenious device of David Belasco all our attention is focused upon the old man, who is listening and watching the performance of his successor, which we see only dimly through gauze curtains, but we hear the laughter and the shouts and the cheers. The new Deburau is a success, a triumph. The noise comes more faintly to

our ears and we see only the old Deburau standing listening as from the house which has just hissed him there comes a wild acclaiming shout for his successor of "Deburau! Deburau!"

The old man does not know whether he should laugh or cry, and so he cries.

A Reviewer's Notebook

There is an amazing simplicity about great events. Creation week was clear, calm and quiet. Hardly a ripple was on the Rubicon the afternoon that Cæsar crossed. Even Babylon fell softly and bounced only once. In the same spirit Pierre V. R. Key started *John McCormack: His Own Life Story*.

"It was a summer's day, with the sun shining," writes Mr. Key, "when we began. McCormack sat on the veranda of Rocklea, his Noroton, Connecticut, villa, gazing out upon the waters of Long Island Sound. He had sat that way for some minutes, in a suit of tennis flannels, his stalwart body relaxed in an armchair. I waited for his opening words. 'What a debt a man owes to his mother and father,' he said."

Mr. Key's admiration for McCormack we found later on rests on unassailable grounds. "He began to sing," Key writes, "he sings to-day—and will go on singing until he dies—for just one reason alone: God meant that he should sing."

We trust it will not be considered an impiety if we express a curiosity as to whether the nasal quality was included in God's intention.

We have forgotten what Aristotle or Clayton Hamilton or any of the others have set down as the first rule for playwrights, but it seems to us that it ought to be: Get O. P. Heggie. It makes no difference what the part may be, court dandy, early Christian or conjuror, Heggie is your man. The only disturbing factor is that into every rôle this actor brings a sort of spiritual animation. If you chance to call upon him to fall down stairs he will do it splendidly, missing not a single bump, and the audience will laugh its bellyful, but it will also have the feeling that in some curious way the thing has become exalted, that after all it may be the heart instead of the gizzard which is breaking under the emotion of the moment. Giving sawdust to this man is dangerous business, for the first thing you know he has changed it into blood.

Heggie was by all odds the outstanding figure in Ian Hay's pleasant farce-comedy, *Happy-Go-Lucky*. He was cast as Samuel Stillbottle, a bailiff's man, made up like Fields, the tramp juggler, and called upon to perform all the antics dear to low comedy. He did them with gusto, but there was something more. Heggie is almost the only actor we know who can trip over a door sill and keep his performance in two dimensions. The playwright may spread him into as broad a character as you please, but he cannot flatten him. Depth remains. When Heggie sets all the dishes to crashing or guzzles stage whisky till he chokes we laugh first and then pause to wonder whether or not the soul of man is immortal.

All this should be a part of the best clowning. The great clown is for us all the symbol of man's defiance to the great spaces and the wide darkness. Perhaps we die to-morrow, but to-day we are fellows of infinite jest. No matter what happens, we have laughed. To see O. P. Heggie is to be reminded of all the clowns that have ever been and are to come in the eternal succession of the brave and brazen.

Nothing in the world dies quite as completely as an actor and the greater the actor the more terrifying becomes the sudden transition from radiance to darkness. One day he is there with all his moods and complexities and curious glints of this and that, and the next day there is nothing left but a few wigs and costumes; perhaps a volume of memoirs, and a scrapbook of clippings in which we learn that the dead player was "majestic in presence" that "the poise of his head was stag-like" that he had "a great voice which boomed like a bell," that he was "regal, subtle, pathetic," and that "every one who was ever associated with him loved and respected him."

Ask some veteran theatergoer "What was Booth like as Hamlet?" and he will say "Oh, he was wonderful." Perhaps the face of the old theatergoer will grow animated and Booth may live again for a moment in his mind, but we who have never seen Booth will never know anything about him. Nobody can recreate and explain the art of a dead actor to the next generation. Even men who do tricks and true magic with words are not adept enough to set down any lasting portrait of an actor on the wing.

A good deal of whitewash has flowed past the fence, but Tom Sawyer's trick still holds good. Even to-day it is possible to get hard work done by making people think of it as a privilege. In looking over an autumn catalogue, we came across a series of books for young persons in which we were struck by the titles, *When Mother Lets Us Help* and *When Mother Lets Us Cook*. We trust that the series will be extended along these lines. If so, we intend to use as birthday gifts for H. 3rd, *When Father Lets Me Stoke the Furnace*, *When Father Lets Me Shine His Shoes*, and *When*

Father Lets Me Lend Him Money.

A great number of persons for whose opinions we have the highest respect have assured us that *Woman*, by Magdeleine Marx, is an absorbing and well-written novel. We have done our best but we can't go through. At the last attempt, under whip and spur, we reached page 46 and there we found, "A gentle pearl-gray breeze was stirring the curtains." We can go no further. There is nothing for us to do but lie down and wait for the St. Bernards.

We rushed in blithely the other day to talk to a woman's club up New York State on how to bring up children. Quoting from W. H. Hudson, we said firmly that they should never be spanked or even chided very much. "Let them run about and shift for themselves," we said airily. "The instinct of the child is often more sound than that of the grown-up. He is closer to old race instincts and memories than his parent." Then we finished up with our mule story and asked for questions.

We expected that somebody would ask whether Ethel Barrymore was a good actress, and did we like the novels of H.G. Wells, or one or two other easy questions like that, to which a lecturer need say nothing more than "yes" or "no" or "assuredly." Instead of that somebody said, "How many children have you brought up?"

We could only answer that there was one, and that he wasn't very far up yet, nor had we been trusted with complete charge of him. At that point objections and questions became general and exceedingly difficult. Probably we gave some ground. There was, as we remember it, the admission that there were times in which a spanking might seem a very tempting solution of a difficult problem, although we did qualify it by urging that no moral interpretation be introduced into the punishment. We once knew a mother who used to say, "Gladys, you have been a bad girl, and so to-morrow at half-past eleven I'm going to spank you." That pose of cool and calm deliberation, of even-handed justice, of godlike inflexibility, has always seemed to us unbecoming in a parent. If he spanks a child he ought to be frank enough to say that he does it because he is angry and can't think up anything better.

However, it is probable that we were too much flustered to develop our position at any great length. We felt uncomfortably as if we had agreed to talk to a G. A. R. Post on the Battle of Gettysburg. One mother told us that she had raised four children with frequent spankings and that one was now a college professor while the other three were exceedingly successful in the wholesale hardware business. She said she had never regretted it. All four had grown up God-fearing and dutiful.

A still more devastating revelation of experience in child raising was yet to plague our confidence and complacency. "I'm an old woman," said one hearer, as we started to retire in none too good order, "and I can talk to you frankly. I have a daughter now who is old enough to have children of her own. I brought her up on that go-as-you-please system you have been talking about, and do you know what has become of her?"

We blanched a little and wondered just how frank she was going to be before we said "No."

"She calls herself a Socialist," said the old lady, and our lines broke away into full retreat at all points.

Some of the political friends insist dolefully, a few gleefully, that if certain candidates, laws, economic schemes, or what not, fail of speedy adoption we shall have a revolution. We are even told that the scenes of the French Revolution will be enacted here. We don't believe it for a moment. At any rate, not if Dickens painted a true picture in *A Tale of Two Cities* because none of the radical ladies of our acquaintance could possibly perform the required knitting.

"For no man can be free," writes the author of *The Book of Marjorie*, "unless he despises pain and heat and cold and fatigue, unless those things mean no more to him than the patter of rain outside his room, unless he does succeed in keeping them so outside himself that they never enter at all into the calculations of the thinking part of him. If we can bring up our child like this he will have nothing to fear, because he will know that no real hurt can be done to him except by himself." And in another portion of the book we read, "I should hate for my son to be afraid, because there are so many things that hinder him and check him that he must take into consideration."

But we are not at all sure that fear is to be set aside as one of the destructive emotions of mankind. All our fearless ancestors were eaten by ichthyosauri and other ferocious and primitive monsters. Indeed, there would be more ichthyosauri than men in the world to-day if certain of our progenitors had not learned that it is an exceedingly healthful thing at times to run for dear life. Of course, we admit that some fears are ignoble. We shall make no attempt, for instance, to justify our abiding distrust of cows, but the fact remains that a little decent fear is part of the proper portion of man.

Man is a weak and pitiful dweller in a violent world and nothing has done so much to sharpen his wits as fear. Probably he found fire because he feared the dark. Surely he instituted law through distrust of his fellows. And fear must have been the first prompting toward religion. Then, too, it seems more than likely that there would never have been a literature but for fear. Primitive peoples liked to hear the stories of great heroes who did mighty deeds because such things served to cheer and inspirit them.

Fear of his own frailties made man seek wisdom. To wish a child to grow up without fear is almost to wish him to

be devoid of imagination. And more than that, if there was no such thing as fear courage would be without meaning and significance.

And yet we could wish that H. 3rd was not so frankly terrified at the sight of Ajax, who is not more than three months old or a foot long. Of course, Ajax attempts to bay, but it doesn't sound like much in a soprano. When the thin and piping voice of the dog sounds in agonized protest at being shut in the kitchen H. 3rd will throw both hands over his face and hide his head, as if he were Uncle Tom with a whole pack of bloodhounds on his trail. Moreover, he showed such abject fear when taken out to have his hair cut that we had to desist and let him keep his curls. Still a little such trepidation on the part of Samson might have been set down as a virtue.

Not the least interesting part of William Byron Forbush's seven volumes in *The Literary Digest Parents' League Series* is the section devoted to questions and answers.

"I have a child," writes Esther P., "who already seems to be cut out for a business man. He refuses to play with dolls, balls, or even soldiers. This seems to restrict the range of toys for him. What can I provide?"

And Mr. Forbush answers: "There is an inexpensive 'toytown bank.' Also an outfit of tickets and uniform with which to play ticket-agent. Encourage him to print paper money and checks and buy him some toy money...."

If he is to be a real business man he'll not have anything to do with tickets bought directly at the box office. It would be better we think to get him a bright vest and a derby hat and let him pretend to be a sidewalk speculator. He might be encouraged to demand one pin a day from each of his parents for admission to the nursery and two pins, of course, on Saturdays and holidays. Also, arrangements could be made with some reliable brokerage house to have him supplied with the ticker tape each day.

We like John Galsworthy a great deal better than we ever did before after reading his *Addresses in America*, 1919, for it seems to us that this man of lofty wisdom shows in this book a certain human tendency to fall into poppycock occasionally, like all the rest of us. In urging a closer comradeship between the English-speaking nations Mr. Galsworthy writes: "For unless we work together, and in no selfish or exclusive spirit—Good-by to Civilization! It will vanish like dew off the grass. The betterment not only of the British nations and America, but of all mankind, is and must be our object."

We suppose the dewdrops in each particular meadow get together occasionally and tell each other that when they are gone there will be no more dew. But then there comes another morning. We are not anxious to see Anglo-English civilization pass away, but after all there are other civilizations in the world, and there have been others, and others will come. Some, we suppose, may be worse, but there is at least a possibility that others may be better. Nor are we fond of hearing the English-speaking peoples talking about "the betterment of all mankind." It has at least a savor of a German heresy which put the world into a four years' war. Next to maltreating foreign nations, almost the worst thing that any powerful country can do is to set out to better them.

Germany, in all truth, has enough to answer for without also being made responsible for the charges implied in humorous anecdotes. Margaret Deland, in rounding off her case against the Hun in *Small Things*, writes, "And I recall here the revealing remark of a German, a member of a commission which, before the war, was traveling in America: 'Yes,' he said, 'we found your railroad cars very comfortable—except the sleeping cars. Our wives don't like to climb into the upper berths.'"

It may be remembered that one of the attacks made against England during the war by a famous German propagandist was contained in the story of the English woman who went to the hospital with a badly wounded face and upon being asked whether she had been bitten by a dog, replied, "No, another lady."

Then, of course, the honor of the United States is called into question by the yarn about the man from Chicago who took his wife to a big New York restaurant and ordered two broiled lobsters. The waiter returned to report that only one remained. "Only one lobster!" exclaimed the man from Chicago, "but what's my wife going to eat!"

Still again a number of persons in America cannot bring themselves to sympathize with the Sinn Fein movement because of the well-known meeting between two Irishmen at which one inquired, "Who was that lady I seen you walking down the street with?" to which the other replied, "That was no lady, you chump; that was my wife."

The Irishman's offense was not alone one of taste but of brutality as well, for we all know that as he said "You chump," he hit his friend violently over the head with a dull, blunt instrument. All this, in addition to the Ulster problem, makes the solution of the difficulties of Ireland seem insurmountable to many students of international affairs.

Moreover, the success of the proposed league of nations is questioned by many persons on account of the revelation contained in the story about the Jugo-Slav who said, "Yes, but ain't we going to give any to dear old mother?" We have forgotten the exact details of the story, but as we remember, it was equally damning to the national aspirations of the Slovenes.

The Russian writer Dmitry Mereshkovsky has called Roshpin's *The Pale Horse* "the most Russian book of the period," according to the introduction in the new edition. We are not disposed to dispute that statement after reading the first chapter, in which we found: "The hotel bores me to weariness. I know so well its hall porter in his

blue tunic, its gilt mirrors, its carpets. There is a shabby sofa in my room and dusty curtains. I have placed three kilograms of dynamite under the table. I have brought it from abroad. The dynamite smells of a chemist's shop. I have headaches at night."

He should have tried the dynamite. We understand that it is an excellent cure for headaches when used internally.

In his introduction to *Madeleine: An Autobiography*, Judge Ben B. Lindsey writes of the book, "It ought to be read and pondered over. It is true." For our part, we doubt whether the book will prove of any vital aid in solving what newspapers are fond of referring to as "white slavery"; for, although much of the book is convincing and seemingly veracious, it is hard to grasp its intent. Indeed, there is such a mass of informative detail in this life story of a woman of the underworld that it almost seemed to us as if it were intended to be a companion book to such works as *How To Be a Boy Scout* or *Golf in Fifty Lessons*. It is true that the author of the book takes great pains to dwell frequently on the way in which her whole physical and spiritual nature revolted against the life which she was leading, but at other times there is a very evident intimation of her satisfaction in having been at any rate a leading member of her profession. Certainly, she writes with a good deal of gusto of the manner in which she and her friend Olga succeeded in selling the same bottle of champagne seven times to a befuddled gentleman, and undeniable pride in her accounts of how well she succeeded professionally in an executive capacity.

And yet, though we are not very much concerned with seeking for morals in books, there is one telling sermon in the volume, and all the more telling because it does not seem to have been within the plan of the writer. "Madeleine" ought to do something to clear away the mist in minds which confuse prudery and virtue. Even in her most degraded and sinful moments, Madeleine remains a proper person. In telling of her conversation with an associate in the life of shame Madeleine writes, "I felt sure that human degradation could go no further; when she took a box of cigarettes from under her pillow and offered me one I was speechless with indignation." A year or so later, while Madeleine still has both feet set in the primrose path, she violently upbraids a girl who wants her to use rouge. "I would not have my face painted, and that settled it! Not only for that day but for all of the succeeding days in which I remained in the business. I had to draw a line somewhere." Again she rails at present-day fashions, and observes, "If a girl had come into Lizzie Allen's parlors wearing some of the present-day street styles she would have been told to go upstairs and put on her clothes."

But we were even more impressed by the chapter in which Madeleine goes to Butte to open a brothel and takes a dislike to the town because of its loose observance of the Sabbath. "Clothing stores, groceries, saloons, small drygoods shops, cigar stands, dance halls and variety shows elbowing one another and wide open for business, gave a shock to my sense of the fitness of things."

There are persons to whom a preposition is as inspiring as a trumpet call. Dangle an "on" before a dying essayist and he will get up and dash you off something entitled "On an Old Penwiper," or "On the Delights of Washing Before Breakfast." It is essential that an essayist be an enthusiast about more things than prepositions. They are merely his springboards. He ought to be a man who wears his Corona on his sleeve, for there is no moment of the day or night in which he is safe from the onrush of ideas. I once knew a man who was a complete essayist at heart but a city editor by profession. He came into the office one July afternoon and called me over. "As I was walking downtown," he began, "I saw a little piece of ice in the middle of Broadway. Write me a funny story about it."

The assignment floored me completely. I idled over it for an hour and then reported back that I couldn't see a story in the suggestion. "What suggestion?" said the city editor. The thing had gone from his mind. He was of the mold from which great men are made. Having said of anything "Let it be done" he at once felt not only that it was accomplished, but that he had done it himself. The matter never came to his mind again. At the moment I spoke to him he was already deeply engrossed in a scheme for a story computing the value of all the lobster salad sold in the City of New York, exclusive of Brooklyn, the Bronx and Staten Island, in a single evening.

I have noticed that most essayists are like that. Their enthusiasms are intense, but not of long duration. It is just as well. After all, there probably is no great field for expression in the subject of penwipers. The essayist does it once in a fine spirit of frenzy and then goes on to something else. If he were faithful to the one theme there's no telling when he might exhaust his market.

Sometimes I am inclined to distrust the enthusiasm of the essayist. Being a man much moved to write, he comes to be so sensitive that even a puff of wind will propel him into an essay. And then sometimes on dead calm days he will begin to write under the pretense that a breath from some far corner of the world has touched him. Perhaps it has. But then again it may be that he, too, is among the fakers.

"It is time, I think," writes Alpha of the *Plough, in Windfalls*, "that some one said a good word for the wasp. He is no saint, but he is being abused beyond his deserts."

But why is it time? Fabre has said some hundreds of thousands of good words about wasps, but even if he hadn't, whence comes the cry of "justice for the wasp"? The wasps themselves haven't complained. Nor is there much persuasion in what Alpha sets down.

"Now the point about the wasp," he writes, "is that he doesn't want to sting you." Of still less moment to the world than the wrongs of the wasp are his motives and intentions. Any wasp who stings me will be wasting his time if he lingers around after the deed to explain, "I didn't want to do it."

Still, the whole trick of the essayist is to pick side-alley subjects. Selecting at random from *Windfalls*, there are *On a Hansom Cab*, *Two Glasses of Milk*, *On Matches and Things*. Few of them, it seems to me; are better than pretty good. That is hardly good enough. The essay is a stunt. Either the writer can balance his theme on the end of his nose or he can't.

What with the various new jobs which are being created, some enterprising university should found a School of Censorship. It might, most fittingly, be a Sumner school, and the college yell without question will be "Carnal I yell! I yell carnal!"

At first we were inclined to look at prohibition with tolerance, because it meant a release from all the books which described what would happen to a guinea pig if he were inoculated with Bronx cocktails. The relief was temporary, for we find that it takes just as much time to read the heartrending accounts of the effect of one drop of nicotine placed on the tongue of a dog.

In *Habits That Handicap*, by Charles B. Towns, we find the following ailments attributed directly or indirectly to the use of tobacco: Bright's disease, apoplexy, chronic catarrh, headache, heart disease, lassitude, dizziness, low scholarship, small lung capacity, predisposition to alcoholic excesses, hardening of the arteries, paralysis of the optic nerve, blindness, acid dyspepsia, insomnia, epilepsy, muscular paralysis, cancer, lack of appetite, insanity and loss of moral tone. Mumps, measles and beri-beri are slighted in the present edition.

"There is nothing to be said in its favor," writes Mr. Towns, "save that it gives pleasure."

"It seems," he adds in another portion of the book, "to give one companionship when one has none—something to do when one is bored—keeps one from feeling hungry when one is hungry and blunts the edge of hardship and worry."

Suppose, then, that every ailment which Mr. Towns has traced to tobacco actually lies at its door—even then is the case for the prohibition of smoking persuasive? Of course, low scholarship is a fearful and humiliating thing, but we wonder whether it is more devastating than loneliness. It is better, we think, to have a little lassitude now and then, or even a touch of acid dyspepsia, than to be without the weed which gives "one companionship when one has none." And consider the tremendous testimonial in favor of tobacco which Mr. Towns has written when he says that it gives "something to do when one is bored." Although we haven't the statistics for last year yet, we venture the guess that about 63 per cent of all the people who die in any one year cease living because they are bored. Boredom is the cause of 85 per cent of all actions for divorce. It fills our jails. Nations make war because of it. Social unrest, bedroom farces, tardiness, rudeness, blasphemy, crime, lies and yawning in the presence of company all rise because of it.

And so we are disposed to sit defiantly shoulder to shoulder with other smokers and to cry out against the foe who creeps ever closer through the haze, "Bring on your 'lack of appetite.'"

It may be true, as Mr. Towns says, that smoking causes a loss of moral tone, but if the smoker will save his coupons religiously at the end of a few months he will be able to exchange them for a book on character building.

It seems to us that Booth Tarkington belongs at the top or thereabouts in American letters. We will be surprised and disappointed if Penrod does not persist for a century or so. And yet much of Tarkington's work is flawed by a curious failing. Almost invariably the novels are carefully thought out to a certain point, and then they weaken. This point occurs, as a rule, within a chapter or so of the end. The story "hangs," as the racetrack reporters express it, in the last few strides. In *Ramsey Milholland*, for instance, it seemed to us that Tarkington, after a minute development of a theme, cut it off abruptly. He was, according to our impression, a little tired and anxious to have it over with before he had actually reached the finishing mark. To-day we received a story which may provide an explanation. "Booth Tarkington," says a publisher's note, "probably uses more lead pencils than any other writer in America. Always he has disdained a typewriter.

"He works at an artist's drawing table, and," the story continues, "with a little stock of paper before him he then sets about the actual business of composition very slowly, very carefully. Every phrase—almost every word—is pondered, balanced, scrutinized before it is permitted to pass. As often as not a dozen phrases have been rejected before the final one, which seems to readers to come so trippingly, has been arrived at. Individual words are scored out again and again."

All this makes the slackening of vigor toward the end of a long novel comprehensible. Though a man begin with a dozen well sharpened pencils catastrophes are sure to occur in the course of fifty or sixty thousand words. Finally, the author finds himself with an aching wrist and only one pencil, which has grown a little dull. If he is to add another chapter he must pause to find a safety razor blade and sharpen up. And so instead he rounds off the tale while lead remains.

On the other hand, we feel certain that Harold Bell Wright composes on a typewriter, pausing only once every twenty-four hours to oil the machine with a little treacle.

Robert W. Chambers uses an adding machine and Theodore Dreiser favors an ax.

"Man is a machine," writes Dr. David Orr Edson in *Getting What We Want*, "with the directions for use written on his physiognomy—which society in general neglects to read. Through this omission much of the unrest in the world has developed, and psychologists have been forced to recognize and attempt to cope with the protests of the psychophysical against unendurable conditions of life."

To us these seem true words. It isn't only that society neglects to read, but also that it reads awry. Again and again our legible physiognomy has been taken to mean, "Shake well before using," when anybody with half an eye ought to know that it says, "Lay on its side in a cool, dry place."

We were discussing the education of H. 3rd the other day, and when we were asked where he was to go, of course we said, "The Rand School."

"No," said the friend who put the question, "I don't believe it. By the time H. is ready to go to school you'll be saying that the Rand School is a reactionary institution and full of snobs."

Perhaps, since he is to be a book reviewer, H. should go to a Montessori school. They teach the children to skip.

Gerald Cumberland's *Set Down in Malice* reveals the interesting fact that Mrs. Shaw calls him "George." Moreover, she is quoted as saying "Don't be absurd, George."

There are limits to the success of the most adroit literary advertiser the modern world has known, as we learned from a trip to the British front two years ago. Our conducting officer had been Shaw's guide a few months before, and we were anxious to learn how he had impressed the army.

"Oh, he was no end of nuisance," replied the young officer. "When I got him out to our mess I found out that he was a vegetarian, and I had to hop around and get him eggs and all sorts of truck."

If Gerald Cumberland is thirty-one or less, *Tales of a Cruel Country* is an exceedingly promising collection of short stories. If, on the other hand, he has gone beyond that age we see only a doddering literary future for him. There are twenty-two stories in *Tales of a Cruel Country* and three of them are excellent. One, in fact, seems to us a superb short story, but many of the other nineteen are rot. Now, they are the sort of rot which a young man may turn out by the bushel and still go on to great things. "Her eyes are pits of darkness," "a beautiful animal," "whiter than the paper on which this little history is written," "he pulled his body together sensually," "his teeth bit more deeply into his lower lip," "brutally I tore her arms away and flung her from me as a man would fling away a snake that had coiled around him in his sleep"—that is the sort of rot we mean.

It has its place in the work of every young writer. In fact, if he writes honestly there is no skipping this period, which must be passed before he is ready to do more important work. Fortunately, there are several easy tests by which one may determine whether a writer is still in his salad days, in which he does as the romaines, or whether he is ready to go on and deal with hardier grasses. Ask him what the word "mirror" suggests to him and note whether he replies "a man shaving" or "a slender woman disrobing." Try him with "model" and see whether he replies "artist's" or "tenement," and finally, if he can meet your "bed" immediately with "eight hours' sleep" you may put him down as among those who have finished their literary stint of "half insane gleam of desire," "her eyes swooped into his," and "vermouth on purple trays."

We are particularly interested in the publication of Clarence Buddington Kelland's *The Little Moment of Happiness*, because we made a dramatization of the novel last year which failed of production partly because of the deplorable lapse in morals which Mr. Kelland allows to his hero. The story concerns a Puritanical young American officer who is stationed in Paris during the war and falls in love with a beautiful French girl named Andrée. Now, Andrée is not like the girls whom Kendall, our hero, has been accustomed to meet in America. "A young man love a young girl," says Andrée, "and a young girl love a young man.... They marry, maybe. That is well. But maybe they do not marry. It is expensive to marry. Then they see each other very often, and he gives her money so she can live.... That is well, because they are fidèle."

Naturally, we were as much shocked by this doctrine as Kendall, the hero; but, since Mr. Kelland's story was largely concerned with the young man's eventual decision to make shift without benefit of clergy, we could see no way open for us to act about the reformation of Andrée's character. As a matter of fact, owing to the exigencies of dramatic action, we were compelled to make the affair much more precipitate than in the book. We gave the hero an order to return to the front. We had off-stage bands of soldiers wandering up and down singing "Madelon," in the most heartrending way, and, finally, we introduced an air raid to shut off the Metro so that the heroine should have

no available means of transportation to go home even if she desired to leave the apartment of the hero.

It was not enough. A manager read the play and at first seemed favorably inclined. Then he began to think it over and finally he summoned us to a conference.

"Suppose you had been an American officer in France during the war," he said.

We accepted the supposition.

"And then suppose after you came home you took your wife, or your mother, or your fiancée, to see this play."

We nodded again and he paused for dramatic effect.

"At the end of the third act when they found that this girl was going to stay all night in the apartment of this American officer, suppose they had turned to you and said, 'Heywood, did you live like that in Paris?' Or, even if they said nothing, but just looked at you accusingly, what would you say to them?"

We suggested, "Isn't it rather stuffy in here? Do you mind if I go out to smoke?" But that did not seem wholly satisfactory, and so our version of *The Little Moment of Happiness* never reached the stage.

The office force got started on a discussion of what character in fiction each of us would take out to dinner if he had his choice. Most of the men spoke for Becky Sharp, although there were scattering bids here and there for Thaïs. But the night editor, who had put in a long evening of it, said, "My choice would be little Eva."

"Why?" we asked tactfully.

"Because she'd probably have to go home early!" he answered.

Brian Kent, the hero of Harold Bell Wright's new novel, *The Re-Creation of Brian Kent*, is first introduced to us as a defaulting bank clerk. Later he is reformed by the influence of "dear old Auntie Sue" and becomes a novelist. His first book sells so well that in six months he is able to pay back all the money he stole and have something left over. This would seem to prove that Brian was an unusually successful novelist. Or, again, it may merely indicate that he had no real gift for embezzlement.

It rather seems to us that the distinct failure of political radicalism in America may be explained in part by its devotion to the concrete as opposed to the abstract. "We are going to make the world over anew at 12:25 o'clock p. m. next Thursday," says the concrete radical. And then Thursday comes and it rains and nothing is done about fixing up the world, and all the followers of the young radical are disappointed, and they go home firmly convinced that the world never will be fixed up. The man who realizes the value of the abstract ideal is shrewder. He says: "The world ought to be scrubbed up a lot, and if we can make a start next Thursday some time after breakfast we will. But if we can't do it then we've just got to keep on plugging away, because the job must be done."

In other words, the man with abstract ideals makes the job the important thing. The concrete man is impressed more by the date of the doing.

A little abstraction is an excellent thing for the reformer or the revolutionist. It provides, we should say, a sort of reinforced concrete purpose.

At the worst, an abstract ideal is pemmican to carry the voyager through the long nights until the ice begins to break.

Some writers are hardly fair to women, but not so Julian Street. In his new novel, *After Thirty*, he describes marriage as a canoe trip beginning in the Rapids of Romance, and later he observes: "Presently they come to the first cataract—the birth of their first child—a long, hard portage, with the larger portion of the burden on the wife."

Generous, we call it.

"Mr. Seton's new book of the outdoors," says the jacket of *Woodland Tales*, "is meant for children of six years and upward. But in the belief that mother or father will be active as leader, those chapters which are devoted to woodcraft are addressed to the parent, who throughout is called 'The Guide.'"

So far we have found the business of being a father hard enough without assuming the responsibilities of "The Guide" as well. The only piece of woodcraft within our knowledge which we can pass on to H. 3rd comes from Harvey O'Higgins, who says that he can always find his way about in London by remembering that the moss grows on the north side of an Englishman.

"This history of Wells," said our friend Rollo, "seems to me to confirm the story of creation as told in Genesis. The impression which I gather is that the Creator attempted various life forms again and again, and each time wasn't satisfied and swept them all away. Apparently he was experimenting continually through the ages until finally he got to me and said, 'That's it,' and stopped."

"But you don't know that he's stopped," objected A. W. "What seems to you a pause is only a fraction of a second in infinity. It seems to me more likely that the Creator is just shaking his head and saying, 'Well, I suppose I'd better go back to the Neanderthal man and start all over again.'"

A magazine editor is a man who says "Sit down," then knits his brows for five minutes, and suddenly brightens as he exclaims, "Why don't you do us a series like Mr. Dooley?"

In his book *Average Americans*, Theodore Roosevelt comments on the fact that all classes and conditions of men were to be found in the ranks of the American army—waiters, chauffeurs, lawyers. He adds:

"A lieutenant once spoke to me after an action, saying that when he was leading his platoon back from the battle one of his privates asked him a question. The question was so intelligent and so well thought out that the lieutenant said to him: 'What were you before the war?' The reply was 'City editor of *The Cleveland Plain Dealer*.'"

The story does not surprise us. Years before the war we maintained that if ever a catastrophe great enough to shake the world came along a certain appearance of intelligence might be jarred loose even in city editors.

Henry Ford, so the story goes, called upon the editor of his magazine *The Dearborn Independent* to ascertain how things were going.

"We're too statistical, I'm afraid," said the editor. "Of course we can try and get that sort of stuff over by putting it in the form of how many hours it takes to turn out enough end-to-end Fords to reach from here to Shanghai and back, but that sort of thing has been done before. It doesn't take the curse off. What we need is some good, live fiction."

"All right," replied Mr. Ford, "let's have fiction."

"It's not as easy as all that," objected the young editor. "There's very keen competition among all the magazines for the fiction writers, and I'd need a pretty big appropriation to get any of them."

"Why not get some of the bright young men on the magazine to write us some fiction?" suggested Ford.

"That's not feasible," said the editor. "Fiction's a highly specialized product. Nobody on our magazine has the complete equipment to turn out successful fiction."

"Ah, but that's where efficiency comes in," interrupted Ford triumphantly. "Get one of the young men to think up an idea. Then let another outline the general structure. A third can do the descriptions and another one the dialogue. And then you—you're the editor—you assemble it."

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