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1, 3, no. 3

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May 1923

The FRONTIER

A Literary Magazine



STATE UNIVERSITY of MONTANA

MAY, 1923

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Sixty Cents a Year

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The Water Edge Song

(On Dissecting the Throat of a Frog)

*So a muddy age passed; then a lungfish
Squirmed out of water to breathe air.
And a million years later amphibians
Breathed on new vocal chords murmuring
The water edge song of the first voice.*

*It is late spring here and the niggerhead swamps
Must be wet tonight in the far north
Where a myriad hidden frogs in the cool dusk
Are throating a song they knew in our childhood.
Are throbbing a message that pulses afar
Over the marshes up to the woods-edge
Where a cow-moose wades with her young calf—
And they splash—or pause—in the shadows.*

*A myriad unseen frogs in the twilight
Chanting from watery edges tonight,
“Unseen myriads, myriads, myriads,”
Echo, each other, forever, and ever,
Monotonous, rising, forever.*

—DON STEVENS.

THE FRONTIER

A Literary Magazine

(Copyright, May, 1923, By H. G. Merriam)

Published three times a year.

Subscription price, Sixty Cents

VOL. III. NO. 3.

MAY, 1923

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Wild Ducks

The wild ducks called through the dark just now,
Flying unseen to the northward—
Faintly at first, then near, then overhead,
Then faintly again,
And no more.

Oh, I would fly with them now,
Dark earth beneath, to the northward;
Would be there
When they strike the marsh in the morning—
Glide—
Tip-up and go under and glide again, heads back and necks curving—
Tip-up and go over and sail on the misting surface.

The wild ducks called from the dark but now,
And I would follow.

—GRACE BALDWIN.

The Shepherd

There's only him and Tige now. . . .
Idle will be the disk and plow
This spring. . . . Up on the butte,
Near the shepherd's monument, mute
He stands. Down below, a crazy-quilt of plots:
Brown stubble, black spring-plowing, verdant spots
Of new-sprung clover; fresh-turned prairie-sods,
Fall wheat, green with promise, bursting through the clods.
But nowah, well, it's all the same,
The cards were stacked—he lost the game.
The drouth was bad enough—that field of wheat,
Right in the milk, shriveled in the summer heat—
But then the flu—and she took sick,
No doctor . . . she and the day-old kid went quick. . .
How desolate the shack seemed then. . .
The clock ticked like a gong, and when
He lay in bed and tried to sleep he'd think
He heard her rattling dishes at the sink,
Or scraping kettles, humming a refrain
Of some light dance-tune. . . . Waking brought him pain. . . .
His notes were overdue—banks sent him word
To pay or quit. . . . His eyes were blurred. . . .
He saw and heard only as one in sleep. . . .
They closed him out, and turned in Snyder's sheep.

Now Tige knows well he never laughs or sings. . . .
When will they leave these silly white-wooled things,
This funny house on wheels—hitch up old Doll and Blue,
And go to see the neighbors as they used to do?

The sheep in waves down on the flat below
Crop short the stubble fox-tail as they go,
Just as a flock of sharp-toothed circumstances cropped
His fondest hopes and dreams Nor stopped
Till life was bare.

Today they came to nail
Board covers on the windows—in case of hail.

So, by the butte the herder stands, his face
Set like a plaster cast. . . . He gazes into space.

E. E. ERICSON

The Infallibility of the Infallible

I LIFT my hat to the college man. I marvel at his ability. I wonder at the powers which have made him what he is. His versatility in judgment is sufficient to fill me with awe. Four hundred topics may come up during the course of one day and on every one the college man will have a decided opinion, or, if he hasn't he can and will formulate one in a minute—two at the outside. No public opinion, no question of ethics or of sound sense is too much for him. He sails gladly and pompously into all disputes and as gladly and pompously out of them again, secure in the conviction of his infallibility.

I have tried to combat him and have found him uncombattable. I have strived to defeat him and have found him undefeatable. As one who has tried and failed I sit back and admire my conqueror. My sword of steel has turned to one of lead upon his determined shield.

"Bolshevism," I say, "may not be as bad as it is painted."

My college man gallops madly into battle. He disagrees with me. I try to show him that Russia has been the victim of propaganda, that we get only one version of Slavic conditions, that the very character of news prevents accounts of peaceful and normal conditions in Russia and magnifies the importance of outbreaks. I get my opponent to agree to this.

"Then," I ask, "is Bolshevism necessarily as bad as it is painted?"

I am sure I have him. Stupidly I fail to see how clever my man is.

"Horse collar," he shouts, and I fall like the Six Hundred. My scalp dangles at the belt of the doughty and I am naught. How can a man refute "Horse collar"?

Again I say, "It is a mistake, I think, to look at education in the light of its pecuniary advantages."

On looking up I find my college man with fists and thorax trembling in anticipation of combat.

"You're crazy," he roars, and before I have time to present proof of my sanity he rushes on. "The sensible man always looks ahead. To get along he must think in dollars and cents. The primary purpose of an education is to enable a man to make money."

"Isn't true happiness what we're all striving for?" I say, thinking that in the method of Socrates I may garner a victory. My opponent agrees.

"Hasn't education the purpose of teaching us how to attain this happiness?" He agrees.

"Does money mean happiness?" I ask, gleefully.

"It sure does. Money is at least ninety per cent of happiness." He gives me the finishing stroke with malice in his eye and a scornful smile on his lips. "The sleeping fox catches no poultry."

I am downed. I find myself face to face with Benjamin Franklin, and no one save George Bernard Shaw or Gilbert K. Chesterton would dare dispute the word of the sage. I am dumb.

I dare not dispute statements such as these: "Harding is a dub," "Harding is the lizard's collar button," "He's a Bolshevik," "The school is rotten," "Germany can pay but she doesn't want to," "Debs is looking out for himself first, last, and all the time."

I dare not even ask why. The college man has not time in the hurry and bustle of making eight o'clocks, attending dances, sending laundry,

panning professors, and conversing with his fellows on the steps of University Hall to go into the why of anything. He has time merely to decide between good and bad. His quickness at evaluation is marvelous. Never satisfied with anything but the strongest opinions he formulates his doctrine quickly and sticks to it. As a rule he has all the grounds for judging that the Indiana woman had who was so opposed to the sheep industry.

"Why," I asked her, "are you so opposed to sheep, sheep-herders, sheep-owners, and sheep-sheds?"

"Because," she snapped.

"But you can't blame the sheep-men. They have seen a chance to make money and are making it."

"There's money in bank robbery," she retorted.

Seriously crushed but not overwhelmed by this logic I answered,

"But sheep-raising is legal."

She turned angrily to me. I could see that from a vantage point of six weeks in Montana she had the "low-down" on the sheep and cattle controversy.

"The sheep-men drove out the cattle-men and the sheep ate up the range." I was inclined to ask her if the sheep had much difficulty in devouring the range but concluded on second thought that this was incidental and her reasoning flawless.

I yearn for this capacity of evaluation. I envy my college man. I admire his persistence in the face of odds. Some men find themselves roped and tied with conflicting ideas. When they argue on those poor subjects on which they think they have decided opinions they are losers although their argument be best. They see too plainly their opponent's case, while blind allegiance to standard prevents their opponents from seeing theirs. They fall before the onslaught. Loaded with "horse collars" and dead sayings of dead men they can not proceed.

For my college man there is no other side to a question. His is the only side and the heavens will fall and the earth be rent asunder before he switches viewpoint in the face of opposition. He will argue till one lifts his hands in despair and helplessly yells for mercy.

I ought to know. You see, I'm a college man.

—BERTRAM GUTHRIE.

Destination

I saw the city in the distance, an area of houses standing close together, their walls in broad relief against each other, grey and white; and in between them bare trees stood, taller than they, with protecting branches drooping. A smoky haze hung down over the houses, between and around them, seeking to hide their gauntness.

I looked again and saw tall tombstones, grey and white, standing close together, in relief against each other. And in between them leafless shrubbery stood, taller than they, with drooping branches, pityingly.

—HELEN FAICK.

Scoffin' Butte

SCOFFIN' Butte—said Judge Galloway—is merely a wart of Horsethief sandstone, rising above the numerous glacial deposits which are scattered thru the Scoffin' and Sheep Creek valleys. The U. S. Geological Survey has it so named. The butte received its present name when all the country around was open range—the pasturage for the herds of the Bar Double X and K. G. ranches. Just why it was so called, I don't know. Altho the day of the open range has passed and with it the Bar Double X and K. G., and the country is criss-crossed with wire fences and dotted here and there with homesteaders' cabins, Scoffin' Butte still retains its suggestiveness, and probably stands as it has stood since the Mesozoic snakes played hide-and-seek in the slime around its base.

Things rarely happen in the vicinity of Scoffin'. One may stand on its peak and gaze in any direction without seeing any sign of life, other than the small herds of cattle belonging to the neighboring homesteaders, the silly stare or panic-stricken scamper of a gopher, the occasional flight of a magpie or crow, and now and then, the circling of a buzzard over the carcass of some luckless cow or horse that has failed to "pass the winter."

I was fishin in Scoffin' on the morning when the experience about which I am about to tell you began. The creek itself plashes thru a more or less clearly defined channel among the glacial moraines which border the base of the butte, and then slows down to a snail's pace, spreading out into inviting pools or seeping thru marshes of rushes and saw grass—these latter lying in a beaver bottom, formed by the industry of many generations of those diligent little makers of valleys. Because of the marshes, much of the valley is unfit for pasture, and is fenced out—or probably it is in—from the regular range. Until these fences were built the marshes took their yearly toll from the herds of the Bar Double X and K. G. ranches, and not infrequent are the stories of riders themselves who narrowly escaped the grip of the quicksands.

To me, fishing quietly in Scoffin', the possibility of any of life's tragedies or comedies seeking the locality for a climax seemed very remote indeed. The fishing was excellent. After two hours of mingled sport and meditation, I started back to the cabin of my friend, Mac, with whom I was spending several days' vacation.

Glancing up the valley, I was surprised to notice a thin curl of smoke rising from a grove of cottonwoods bordering the creek which here skirted the base of Scoffin' Butte itself. There was no cabin there, I was sure. Following the creek up the meadows, ankle-deep in lush prairie grass, I came to the cluster of trees. Pitched on a level sort of alluvial fan, from a draw running up the side of the butte, was an Indian tepee.

Blackfoot Indians, out hunting huckleberries, I thought as I splashed across the creek.

As I approached the tepee I noticed an old Indian sitting by the door, in the sun. He was smoking in that stolid motionless, expressionless fashion peculiar to Indians. He paid not the slightest attention to me. His whole attitude seemed to say that I was none of his business; he was none of mine. Having had some little experience with reservation Indians, and knowing that all of them could talk English, many of them

very interestingly, when they chose, I approached and gave the sign-talk gesture and its verbal equivalent, "How?"

The sign usually does the business of introduction with them. A white man who knows the Indian sign-language is unusual. It tickles the Indian's vanity to have respect paid to his favorite characteristic—silence.

The old man made the sign and gave a grunt which might have indicated interest, but as he looked me over an expression of mild disgust crossed his features. He looked as tho he had been tricked; he had probably concluded that the sign-talk was either a bluff or an accident. This, I decided, was due to my somewhat cherished mustache and imperial. I hastened to remedy the false impression by making the sign, "trout fishing good," showing him my filled basket. The Indian hesitated a moment and then replied with the rather complicated motions which I took to mean, "Huckleberries grow around here?"

Fortunately, I understood enough to reply by indicating the side of Split Mountain, an over-thrust from the main range which lay to the south of us. That served to break the ice, figuratively speaking, and the old man grunted, "Humph! squaw pick um," and relapsed into silence. The old man did not deem it necessary to enlighten me as to her whereabouts. I concluded that she was probably "out pickin' um" now.

The Indian himself was an interesting character. His features were well-formed, typically Indian; his face was wrinkled in deep vertical lines, not in the many intricate crow's feet which indicate great age. Two large plaits, or rather rolls of snow-white hair fell over his shoulders. These rolls were carefully wrapped with buckskin and narrow ribbons. He might have been anywhere from sixty to a hundred years old. Unlike most Indians of his age, he lacked **embonpoint**; he appeared to be in good physical condition. As to dress, he wore a pair of blue denim trousers, supported at the waist with a large leather belt, a blue flannel shirt, surprisingly clean, for an Indian, and a pair of moccasins. The only signs of personal adornment other than the—ah—**coiffure**, were his moccasins, which were heavily and beautifully beaded, and a gold watch chain, from which hung a twenty-dollar gold piece.

After a few more words of casual talk and some more sign language, he informed me that his name was Two-Medicine Joe, that he lived on the Blackfoot reservation, near Glacier Park, and that he and his squaw were out to gather huckleberries, as I had surmised. I had been gazing with considerable longing at his moccasins when he suddenly asked, "You want um? Ten dollars."

I had ten dollars with me; the moccasins were well worth it, at least from my viewpoint. I held the money out. He arose and going into the tepee brought out a pair of plain buckskin moccasins, into which he changed, handing me the beaded ones.

"Squaw make um more," he vouched by way of explanation.

Before I left I gave the old man half my fish, and invited him over to the cabin, knowing that Mac would find him an interesting character. To both the gift and invitation he replied with merely a grunt, but I had reason to believe that both were well received.

II

As I footed it over the numerous swells and depressions toward the cabin my thoughts wandered presently from Old Two-Medicine to the

unusual geological history of the country, about which Lavelle, one of a party of geologists camped south of the butte, had given Mac and me some interesting data. The party had been sent out by the Standard Oil Company to examine a small anticline.

Lavelle had stopped at the cabin a few days before, and Mac had asked him to identify some fossils which we had picked up on our tramps up the creeks and over the mountains. Lavelle had told us that the fossils were marine in nature. The whole area, and the prairie beyond, he had informed us, was at one period in the dim past the bed of a prehistoric sea. Later had come some titanic upheaval which had changed all to dry land; and at a still later age, tho equally dim and distant, there had been a period of glaciation, proved by the occasional giant boulders left stranded on the moraine hillocks—and proved also by the moraines.

Behind me, and to the right, stood Scoffin' Butte. The weird name had fascinated me. Was there some justification in it—a real significance, after all? If the old theory of animism were true, and mountains and streams possessed a spirit, might not the spirit of Scoffin' Butte, which had witnessed all those gigantic turmoils and upheavals, which had had myriads of lives rise, flourish and pass on its sides and around its base, look down and scoff at puny man, with his petty affairs of such seeming importance, with his momentary flash of existence from the infinite days of the ages?

Suddenly I became aware that someone was singing out among the hillocks. I stopped and looked about me. No one was visible, but from up one of the innumerable draws between the moraines there drifted a song—"Oh, Promise Me!"—and in as pleasant a voice as I have ever been privileged to hear. It was a trained voice, mind you—the voice of a woman.

I am naturally more or less of a sentimental old codger, I reckon, but nothing has ever affected me in just the same way that song did, in the middle of the afternoon, out on the edge of the prairie, by Scoffin' Butte. I suppose I must have put it down as a sort of "sound mirage," for I stood and listened until it had hushed, and then hiked on across the moraines to the cabin. My excuse is that I was a married man, and past the stage when one goes hunting "singing mirages."

But it certainly had me guessing, and kept me in that frame of mind as I hiked back to the cabin. Mac's ranch lies between Scoffin' and Sheep Creeks, up next to the mountains. It is about half a mile west of Scoffin' Butte. That morning Mac had advised me to go fishing while he drove to Dupuyer, the nearest town, to replenish our larder, as our diet of sour doughs, "bacon and—" and canned goods was beginning to grow monotonous.

When he returned it was quite a procession which drew up in front of the cabin—Stub Conner, with his truck, to the rear of which, Lizzie, the Ford, was tethered. At her wheel sat Mac, looking considerably forlorn and disgruntled. Lizzie, he informed me, had taken a perverse streak and had "suddenly and surreptitiously ambled into a ditch propelling her driver in a due westerly course of graceful trajectory into the neighboring bank." In brief, he had sustained a scraped arm, a sprained ankle, a twisted neck, and sundry other injuries; while Lizzie appeared minus one headlight, with a distorted fender, and to quote Stub Conner, with her digestive apparatus considerably "bunged up."

Mac informed me triumphantly that the grub was under the back seat of Lizzie, and that all he intended to do for the next ten days was just to sit around and nurse his neck and ankle and "let Nature take her course."

After helping Mac into the cabin and preparing supper I told him about the old Indian and the "singing mirage".

"What you heard was probably Old Two-Medicine's Squaw, by the creek gathering driftwood, and mumbling to her papoose," he replied with a laugh. "That fertile imagination of yours, Judge, has been working overtime again—as it did the day you found the plesiosaurus trail up the cliffs. You always had too much gol darned imagination for a judge."

"Now, getting down to actual concrete facts," he continued, "if you will explain just why that blasted 'ding bat' of a Ford, as Stub calls it, just naturally stood on its hind legs, down there in the middle of the road and turned a flip-flop——"

Mac is Scotch, with a considerable touch of Irish; I am all Scotch. Our imaginations usually function along different lines. After he had talked himself to sleep about the inexplicable antics of the "ding bat," I sat for a long time out in front of the cabin, smoking my favorite cigar, listening to the soft swish of the night wind thru the branches of the pines and cottonwoods up the gulch, and ruminating over what I was pleased to name to myself "the singing mirage of Scoffin' Butte."

III

Mac's sprained ankle proved to be more serious than he had at first thought. By morning it had swollen considerably, and he complained that it had pained him the entire night. I spent the morning applying wet towels and other would-be remedies, but the ankle continued to bother him. Playing the role of nurse kept me from my contemplated fishing trip that afternoon, altho I had looked forward to the trip with not a little eagerness, as I had planned to pay another call on Two-Medicine Joe, in the hope of solving the mystery of the "singing mirage."

Presently Lavelle, the geologist, appeared in the doorway and announced that he had come over to try our skill as cooks and poker players.

Lavelle was a polite gentlemanly fellow, and a good talker. Evidently he knew quite a little about the geology of the region. As Mac seemed to have taken a liking to him, and was moreover interested in learning about the oil prospects, I began to feel a little ashamed of my inhospitable feeling—caused, no doubt, by my having to prepare an extra supper for the geologist—and after I had washed the dishes, joined the two in a rather mild game of poker.

During the game Lavelle told us quite a little about himself. It seems that he had graduated from Notre Dame three or four years before, that he had distinguished himself in amateur theatricals at that institution, and had contemplated going on the stage, had not the conventional much-maligned "unsympathetic father" interposed. I was all for the father; I have a youngster of my own going to an eastern university. Lavelle also proudly informed us that he was married—"to the sweetest little woman in the world, back in Kansas City"—and showed Mac and me her photograph which he carried in the back of his watch. She was a pretty enough little thing—one of the fluffy, clinging kind. She and Lavelle would have made an excellent vaudeville team, I thought, as I contrasted his sleek black pompadour, handsome, tho somewhat weak

face, and ease and grace of bearing with her fragile wistful effeminacy. The idea persisted. Maybe there might be another side to that "unsympathetic father" business, after all, I found myself admitting, as I tossed a bob-tailed flush into the discard.

IV

The next day I solved the mystery of the "singing mirage." As I approached the tepee, Old Two-Medicine was seated outside the door in the sun, as he had been when I first saw him. This time he greeted me with the sign, and a gruff "How?" My reply was purely mechanical, if I made one, for by his side, in the door of the tepee, stood the answer to my mystery—a girl. She returned my greeting—I must have made one—with a polite "How do you do?" and turning, brought from the tepee a camp stool, which she offered me with a smile.

"Won't you sit down?" she asked. "My grandfather has just been speaking of you, Judge Galloway. I am his granddaughter, Annie Plenty Moon."

I was actually embarrassed—I, who am a judge, and have represented my state at Washington, D. C.! She must have sensed my feeling, for she re-entered the tepee and left Two-Medicine and me to our old-man talk.

Undoubtedly, hers was the voice which had set me romancing like a high school girl; but the solution to the "singing mirage" mystery had only revealed a bigger one. Merely "beautiful," or "striking" are vague terms; they may apply to anything. Still, I do not hesitate to use them in connection with Annie Plenty Moon. However, I imagine the element of surprise was the biggest factor in the impression which she made on me. The girl was a breed. She wore the dress of a white woman—blouse and skirt, well-cut, everything, save for small beaded moccasins on silk-clad feet—and ankles too, by George, for she wore her skirts in the prevailing mode. Even her hair was fixed in some modern fashion—styles in women's hair have always been beyond me.

Old Two-Medicine appeared to be undergoing a sudden attack of garrulity, or else she was his favorite topic, for, unmindful of my stares of astonishment, he began telling me about the girl.

"Annie Plenty Moon go school—Browning Indian school," he told me, "then she go to big school—one—two—four year. Now she come back—teach Indian papoose in Indian school. Maybe she marry young buck, on reservation. Think not. Maybe she marry white man. No good for Indian squaw."

"Why shouldn't she marry a white man, if she wishes?" I asked. "Indians and whites often marry. Her father——"

The old man's face hardened. "Father no good," he grunted. "He white man—Canuck. Mother quarter-breed. She love white man. He no marry. I kill um."

It was the old story; I did not need the details. As to Old Two-Medicine's having "killed um", I doubted it; altho the white man had probably deserved killing. More probably, that "I kill um" was the old man's vain boast, to hide his shame.

Presently Annie came out and seated herself on the blanket beside her grandfather. In order to make conversation, I remarked about the interesting nature of the country. The girl smiled.

"Does it affect you, too?" she asked. "I found some fossils up on the

butte this morning—corals, I think they must be. That means that all the prairie must have been submerged at one time. Isn't it interesting," she went on, "just to let your fancy play over the story of it all?"

"It certainly furnishes food for thought," I replied. "Just what turn does your imagination take, in regard to it, if I may ask?"

I couldn't quite fathom the girl. Was the "one—two—four" years a mere veneer, or had she an actual appreciation of things?

"Oh," she laughed, "first I see the old tepee rings out there—you've noticed them, of course—with their people, my ancestors. That would appeal to me first—the buffalo hunts—the returning war parties—the dances and ceremonies, and all that——"

Her voice softened, and she looked out across the prairie dreamily. I believe that the girl was actually visualizing the things she spoke of; and if her face was any indication, the pictures must have been pretty radiant ones.

"But before the Indians came—?" I asked.

"Yes," she replied, "all that must have been comparatively recent, of course. Some one must have lived here before the Indian, and then some one before that some one—and on back—to the period of first life. Each period must have had its stories. For all we know, some early stone age man might have plied his raft or canoe over the waters of the receding sea, between the butte here—then an island—and the main land, that line of cliffs. Maybe it was a voyage of hatred and revenge. Perchance it was one of romance. More probably, it was one of curiosity. If one just stops to realize that they were real, living, breathing, thinking people, with motives, and loves and hates——"

Again she stopped with her peculiarly wistful smile.

"Go on," I urged. "I am interested in your voyageur."

"Oh, the possibilities are limitless, if you just let your fancy alone, and don't try to apply the laws of geology. Geological youths and maidens aren't very romantic, you know. If I get to thinking 'Pliocene' and 'Miocene,' I start to visualizing large glass cases, with their neat labels and very brief inscriptions. And all that brings up the 'Relentless March of Evolution.' I suppose it must sound perfectly silly to you," she ended with a laugh.

"By no means," I hastened to assure her. "You have expressed it—the way the country affects me—much better than I could have done myself. I should think that your grandfather would be able to tell you some very interesting things—about the Blackfeet history."

"He does tell me—war parties—adventures—the high points, you know. All that isn't nearly so interesting as the actual life, just the day-to-day thread of existence—the human side of it, I suppose one might say, for want of a better term."

I nodded appreciatively, waiting for her to continue. Old Two-Medicine sat dozing. Our conversation held little interest or meaning to him.

"Don't you sing, Miss—ah—that is, didn't I hear you singing out there on the prairie the other afternoon?" I asked.

"Smith is my last name," she smiled. "I have taken it legally. It is so much more convenient for a schoolteacher than Plenty Moon." Again her eyes twinkled. There was no hint of shame in her bearing, over her Indian ancestry.

"Yes, I sing," she continued. "I didn't know that I was having an audience, tho, or I would have been less—less strenuous, the other afternoon," she added with a laugh.

"It was entirely appropriate—and delightful," I hastened to assure her. 'Out there on the prairie—I don't know when I have had a more pleasant surprise. I should be more than pleased to hear you again."

"I'll sing for you," she said simply, "that is, if Grandfather doesn't object. Sometimes, he doesn't like my singing."

Dropping her voice into the slow, half-liquid, half-guttural Black-foot dialect, she spoke a few words to the old man, who replied with a disinterested "Humph." With a smiling "Pardon me," she re-entered the tepee and came back with a guitar. She sat by the old man and sang and played, while I listened, too fascinated for comment. She chose old familiar songs, singing low and with feeling, to a perfect guitar accompaniment. Her playing itself was admirable.

"Now I'll sing Grandfather a song," she smiled. "This one is called 'The Dance of the Young Chief.'"

She began singing in a low wail-like chant, in minor key, thumping the sounding-board of her guitar, tom-tom fashion, as she struck sharp minor chords. As she sang, the girl moved in the conventional Indian dance steps around the smouldering fire. Old Two-Medicine gave a grunt, sat up, and to my intense astonishment, joined the girl in the slow, shuffling, foot-lifting dance. Not a muscle of his features moved; he danced as tho he were going through a ritual. As I sat watching the old man and the young girl, doing their tribal dances, to me also it became a ritual.

Suddenly Two-Medicine sat down with a "Humph!" With a little laugh, the girl disappeared within the tepee. A man was crossing the meadow. It was Lavelle.

Altho I wasn't especially pleased to see him just then, I returned the geologist's greeting and made him known to the old man, who replied with a grunt. Lavelle made himself at home, and started a conversation which was little more than a monologue, for neither Old Two-Medicine nor I gave him much encouragement.

After a few minutes Annie came out. The geologist arose politely and removed his hat. I introduced him to the girl.

"We have been talking about the country around here, Mr. Lavelle," she told him. "Judge Galloway and I have been reconstructing it with our imaginations, back thru the ages."

Lavelle's features had lighted up with interest at the sight of the girl. He was never at a loss for words, and she had given him a lead on one of his favorite themes. In a few moments the two were exchanging fancies and speculations—and Two-Medicine and I were merely the audience. Youth turns to youth.

There was something almost pathetic to me in the girl's frank pleasure in finding someone of her own age who was appreciative—someone who understood—who sympathized. For her training and natural refinement must have made her intensely conscious of her racial heritage and its handicaps. Lavelle seemed to recognize this, and I believe that he played up to it.

After all, most women are fools, I reckon; and will fall for a smooth tongue, if its owner possesses the outward graces of what we call a "gentleman." His deliberate attempt to infatuate the girl made me furious.

It was only when I had picked up my fishing paraphernalia and started for the cabin that he called after me that he was going my way. I don't know just what he said to the girl, but it was something which had to do with a later continuation of their conversation. Annie watched him as he made his elaborate adieux, with a strange brooding look in her eyes. It was a look of awakening; it made me want to do murder.

Lavelle's first remark, when we were out of ear-shot, showed no such symptoms.

"Some girl, for a squaw," he said casually.

"She's not a squaw," I snapped. "She has as much refinement, intelligence and culture, to say nothing of beauty, as any white girl of my acquaintance."

"Oh, I meant no offense," he returned blandly, "but what good will it do her? She's nothing but a squaw, after all. No sane white man would marry her. With all her culture, can she ever hope to find compatibility in an Indian?"

"If she is sane," I returned, "she will stick to her woman's work, and leave both white men and Indians—the kind who have nothing but 'compatibility' to offer—alone. Life must hold something for her, if she is given her chance."

"What? She is a woman, don't forget that. She will only be following the praise-worthy example of her maternal ancestor, who succeeded so effectively in perpetuating her own race—and that of some white man. The girl will probably fall for the first white man who has the opportunity—and inclination—to whisper pretty nothings into her little ear, and then where is she? All that will be left for her will be the chance to juggle papooses for some mangy buck or half-breed on the reservation. She probably realizes it, and will take what fortune offers, while the taking is good. She's not to blame; no one is, but Old Man Destiny, who shapes our ends—and beginnings."

"If what you say proves true, and she listens to the whisperings," I replied, "maybe she won't be so much to blame. But the whisperer—the man who takes advantage of her—lynching would be too good for him."

"Oh, I don't know. A man takes advantage of what the gods offer. It's all in one lifetime, anyway. If one doesn't, the next one does. Of course, my remarks were only general; they may have no application to the present case. Little Annie may become a second Joan of Arc, and prove to be the savior of her dying race. Let us hope that she does."

For the rest of the way to the cabin he talked geology; but I determined then and there, if he should attempt to carry out his theories—Well, I am no Galahad, but he would have me to reckon with, just the same. Then, there was Old Two-Medicine. That old Indian's "I kill um" had meant something. If he had not actually killed the girl's father, the incident had, at least, put him in the proper frame of mind to deal with any man who should attempt to tamper with Annie Plenty Moon's happiness.

V

When Lavelle left the cabin, about nine-thirty, Mac turned in and was presently snoring with a strenuous and nerve-wrecking regularity. I did not feel like going to bed. What the beologist had said about the Indian girl had left me in no mood for sleep. Part of it was true—cold-bloodedly so, I realized. It was the destiny of the Red Man to succumb

before the White. But the application of such a theory to the girl was brutality. Despite her racial heritage, Annie Plenty Moon was fine. She was of the type who, given a chance, prove worth something to the world. Lavelle was not of that type. Cynic and egotist, which his statements had proved him to be, his value to any one except himself was questionable.

As I sat outside the door, in the moonlight, smoking and pondering, suddenly I saw a light flash up and glow for a moment over on Scoffin' Butte, and then disappear, as tho some one had struck a match to light a cigarette, and then thrown the match away. Could it be Lavelle? Did he already have a secret rendezvous with the girl? I remembered that Mac had an excellent pair of binoculars in the cabin. I got the glasses and focused them on the butte. Silhouetted against the sky, two figures were visible—Lavelle and the girl. I could see the glow of his cigarette. With the glasses in my pocket, I started across the prairie, keeping out of sight of the two on the butte by following the depressions between the moraines. When within a quarter of a mile of the butte I climbed one of the hillocks, with a glacial boulder on the side, and trained the glasses on the figures, now visible to the naked eye. They were seated on an outcropping. His arm was around the girl. They seemed to be talking seriously. Presently they arose and descended to the tepee. I saw him kiss the girl and hurry away in the direction of his camp.

On my way back to the cabin I realized that what few doubts I had entertained in regard to Lavelle were removed. The fellow had shown his hand; it was up to me to call him. I had told Mac nothing of my suspicions in regard to the geologist. He seemed to like Lavelle, and knowing that he was married, Mac probably would have laughed at my suspicions, anyway. Now I resolved to keep the thing to myself. Later I was thankful that I had done so.

On the morrow, I decided, I would see Old Two-Medicine, and advise him to take the girl away. When she learned that Lavelle was married—I was convinced that she did not know it yet—she would realize the wisdom of leaving. Possibly, I would have a talk with her myself.

Next morning, Mac, who was now able to hobble around a little on his sprained ankle, insisted on overhauling Lizzie, the Ford. It was up to me to do most of the work, of course, and I did not finish the job until supper time. It was sunset when I started for Two-Medicine's tepee. With the binoculars, I made out Lavelle and the girl up on the butte, watching the sunset. Her guitar lay on the ledge beside her. It was a beautiful evening—not a breath of air stirring, the sun tipping the western mountains in a haze of purple and gold. Truly an hour for a big clean romance, I thought, cursing to myself as I realized that Lavelle was using it as a setting for his own plans.

On the way over I saw Old Two-Medicine sitting up on the side of the butte which broke straight away up above the tepee and came down to the creek, here spreading out into a black stagnant marsh, the stream finding its way into the channel again a few yards above the Indian camp. A wire fence ran along the side of the butte, fencing off the marsh from the range. From the fence to the marsh itself was a drop of some twenty feet. The water shone black and oily near the base of the butte—quagmire and quicksand.

I had crossed the creek up at the cabin, keeping behind the cotton-

woods, out of sight of the two on the butte. Coming out on the side of the marsh opposite to the butte, I saw the old Indian, seated against a fence-post, smoking and gazing fixedly into the pool. Upon the crest of the butte I could see Lavelle and the girl. He was talking to her earnestly. Suddenly he leaned toward her and took her hand. The girl hesitated a moment and drew back. Some hundreds of yards below them, out of sight, her grandfather sat in a seeming coma of stolid indifference. Did he know? He was her logical protector; I would tell him.

Catching the old man's attention with a slight noise, I signaled to him in the sign-talk. He sat up and responded to my "How?" with seeming interest. Then, in order to find out what he knew, I asked the question:

"Young squaw in tepee? I make talk with her."

"Young squaw with white man," came the reply. After a pause, "They marry; no good for squaw."

"White man no good," I flashed back. "He already married. No good for squaw."

The old man stumbled to his feet, raised himself to his full height, and then started for the tepee, on a trot. Almost as soon as I had made the signs I regretted them. I called to the Indian, but he paid not the slightest attention. I hurried around the marsh, hoping to stop him, but before I reached the tepee he was running up the side of the butte, in that long swinging Indian stride, with a rifle in his hand. Hoping to find the two on the butte, I ran back around the marsh. Before I came in sight of them the crack of a rifle told me that I was again too late.

After a moment Lavelle came running down the face of the butte, straight for the marsh. The Indian appeared on the crest, and before the girl, who had been standing in a terror-stricken daze, her guitar still clutched in her hand, could spring to stop him, fired again. Lavelle was almost upon the fence, across the pool from me. At the old man's shot he sprang into the air, cleared the fence and fell into the pool with a splash. He sank to his neck, struggled for a moment and then disappeared beneath the oily surface of the water. I was too far away to help, had there been any help for him. He never appeared again.

For a moment I was stunned. I had witnessed a murder, I, a judge, the guardian of the law. As such, there could be but one course open to me. Then I realized that I had given the signs which had aroused the old man. Was I not equally guilty? **Had it been murder?** Would anybody ever be able to swear that the Indian had hit him? Even if he had, was it murder?

I gazed up at Scoffin' Butte, now gray and sinister in the twilight. Lavelle's hat lay floating on the surface of the pool. Scoffin' Butte! Man-made laws—and Justice! What I had just witnessed had been Justice—the Primitive Justice of the Ages, the justice of Scoffin' Butte! Who was I to say that the Indian was to blame? If there should be a trial, I now knew what testimony I would give. So far as I was concerned, there would be no trial.

I turned and went back to the cabin. Mac was asleep. I could hear his snores as I sat outside the doorway, watching the butte. Presently a buckboard, with two horses and two occupants, came from the cottonwoods lining the creek to the west of the butte and moved slowly across the prairie. I watched it disappear and re-appear over the moraines,

until finally it blended with the distant prairie shadows. Old Two-Medicine Joe and Annie Plenty Moon had passed.

I thought of Lavelle's body, slowly sinking into the quicksands, down by the butte. There he was safe—safe for a thousand years! Possibly he might reappear, a second Neanderthal Man, to puzzle the scientists of some generation thousands of years hence.

VI

Next day I watched them search vainly for the missing man, without finding any clue, save the hat drifting ominously on the surface of the pool. Neither Mac nor Lavelle's friends had heard the tell-tale shots. Neither of them thought to connect the Indians with his disappearance.

"He had been drinking pretty heavily," said one of the geologists. "Got a letter from his wife in K. C. yesterday. One of the fellows brought it up from Dupuyer. It made him pretty blue, and he started hitting the booze before he left."

"I guess there's nothing more to be done," he continued. "We'll borrow your Ford, if you don't mind. We'll have to let his folks know. His hat wouldn't have been in that pool unless he had carried it. We'll keep hunting for him, and if he doesn't turn up, there's nothing to do but wire his folks."

As they cranked the car, a gopher out in front of the cabin sat up for a moment and twittered, then, as the car roared and they drove away, scampered panic-stricken for its hole. Over the moraines, toward Scoffin' Butte, I could see a buzzard circling in the morning sunlight, over the carcass of a dead cow

—TATE W. PEEK.

River

The river has gone green with cold again;
Swirling dimples wind themselves about
The ice which noiseless creeps upon the rocks.
Last evening, it had seemed the river caught
The spirit of the passion in the flame
Of sunset . . . But when the color crept away
There still was warm live blue to flash and glide
And swirl . . .

Today the crisp cold turned it green.

—VIOLET E. CRAIN.

The Changeling

I learned that spring had come, today,
In a most strange, yet simple, way:

'Twas not the chatter of the birds that told,
Nor yet the gay and saucy flare of gold
Where dandelions grow; 'twas not the grass:

I saw a chimney-sweep with laughter pass,
All sooty black, with clinking chains aswing,
And knew I looked upon the changeling, Spring!

—TESLA V. ROWE.

In Southern California

The Mexican child, considered rather stupid by most American teachers, has an exceptionally adult sense of humor. It probably proceeds from a subconscious developed by generations of serfdom and fatalistic stoicism. True it is that these children have a passive and mature acceptance of the vicissitudes of life. They are also very sensitive, and I have seen the silent tears roll from their soft, brown eyes and drop in huge spatters on the desk like the saddest of autumn showers—but never a sound or movement to wipe the tears away. This silent crying will turn the adamant heart of a school-marm into jelly.

The little girls are not fond of their brown skin. They say:

"Tomorrow, I weel wear my hat, I am getting black, black, bla-ack!"

But as always a Mexican tomorrow never comes.

Yesterday I heard a perfectly amiable conversation that began thus:

"Felez, do you see that horse, he is black lak you."

"You, yourself, are a toad!"—with perfect good humor.

Delighted rejoinder: "Na-h, I am a neegar!"

"Na-h, you are like the water in the deetch, chocolate!" Then came a lapse into Spanish.

Today I was surprised to find Elve, aged eight, engaged in a spirited flirtation with two train-men, whose side car was parked near our school house. Her ear-rings were dancing like goldfish, and her eyes snapped with excitement. One of the men stupidly remarked,

"You're Spanish, ain't you?"

"Na-h," long drawn, with mock disgust, "I am Ge-erman!"

"Let me look at you," said the man in surprise.

"You are looking at me now," she remarked, with pleasure.

"That's a nice teacher you have," lumbered the lout.

"Meesa Door, the Senor likes you," answered Elve with a sweep of the hand that would have done credit to Nazimova.

Antonia, who in the meantime had been walking around with her stomach stuck out, a pair of scissors in one hand, and a tuft of grass sticking from each corner of her mouth, gravely cutting her "wheeskers," now relinquished that absorbing occupation, since it did not attract all the attention that was desired, and began trying to peel a green orange with her fingers. She was having a very hard time. I said,

"Why don't you start it with your teeth, Antonia?"

She looked at me fully three seconds with mild but solemn reproof.

"Because, Meesa Door, I have not any."

A moment later she opened her mouth to take in the orange and I saw that for once a "Cholo" did not lie.

One morning as I got off the train I met at least half of my school, talking and laughing and getting on the same train bound for Riverside. Know that my school is composed of three families and, when a certain family leaves, the school is half gone.

The next day I sarcastically inquired whether they had enjoyed themselves. As light as a summer breeze came the pleasant reply,

"Not very much, Meesa Door, we went to watch our grandmother to die."

"A soft answer turneth away wrath"—and sometimes maketh ashamed!

—MARY ELIZABETH DOERR.

A LONDON LETTER

London, Easter, 1923.

THE pale philosophers are having to wonder if an appetite for pleasure may be evidence of vigor rather than of degeneracy, for England is manifolding pleasures this spring. I was just well into wondering yesterday morning while I was seated at St. Paul's a half hour early for the Easter service, if Dean Inge, who wrote so much gloom into his Outspoken Essays, was right in saying that the poor people of England are not half so unhappy as social reformers would have them be, when I was interrupted by an Englishman at my side—a kindly, well-fed bank president in appearance—who wanted to tell me that the cross soon to be brought in at the head of the procession had been used at the coronation of King Edward at Westminster Abbey, and that Nelson and Wellington and Lord Roberts and Sir Henry Wilson were buried in the aisles under us. From the tombs and the talk in an English church one might think that Christiainty was instituted to round off the glory of the British Army.

Today again it is the eager cult of pleasure. All London has pulled its blinds and gone to the sea or into the delectable country. The four holidays since Good Friday have been spring full aglow. For two weeks the jonquil trumpets have been full of sunshine. I have stolen away this afternoon from a merry party in the Surrey hills and have found a flat oak stump where I can start jotting again. If I were a poet I would try to capture some of the summer blue of the sky, some of the almond incense from the gorse that burns all over the hill, and some of the sounding laughter from the cricket game just over the road.

If Englishmen could stay in the country, they would soon perfect the art of living. But now it is a little pathetic to see the citizens out here on the downs. Their knees and appetites don't look equal to it and the joy of it is so consciously brief that it seems a little feverish in its haste. I feel that a Montanan who has loafed many warm spring evenings by the chill tumbling waters of the Rattlesnake knows better than Londoners what is to be done with Surrey hilltops.

Most of the year I have done my eating and sleeping at a residential hotel where people drown their cares in too much drink, play bridge, and worry about the destiny of the British Empire because the Prince of Wales is not married. At breakfast I have eaten porridge and bacon and eggs as regularly as I have read the Times, that imperial, uninspired, Addisonian newspaper. Then around Russell Square, a little green and formal park where within the locked gates a squirrel or a little lady with a dog is usually in sight by ten o'clock—to the British Museum where, besides the Greek vases and the dug-up Egyptian kings, are the richest shelves of books and the most picturesque group of scholars, I imagine, in the English world.

I know these Museum people now—funny shuffles, queer glasses, oddest clothes—from an old dirty Englishman who with a mind not quite sound has been compiling lists of heirs-at-law to no purpose for twenty years, to the immaculate elegance of Henri Bergson, who looks what a clean thinker ought to look.

There is a high consistency about Englishmen. I don't see how anyone could say better of them today than Emerson said of them in 1835—"They are full of coarse strength, rude exercise, butcher's meat, and sound sleep, and suspect any poetic insinuation or any hint for the conduct of life which reflects on this animal existence, as if somebody were

fumbling at the umbilical cord and might stop their supplies." Always, I am sure, they have loved to buy the season's flowers from dirty buxom women on every street corner. Always, every doorstep has been scoured white to the street by a red-handed housewife on her knees, and every quart of milk has been poured in the foul air of the street.

The sermons I have heard in the cathedrals and with the lawyers in the chapels of the Inns of Court are the same sermons that Emerson must have heard when he wrote his **English Traits**. They are not calculated to disturb the beef-and-Brussels-sprouts dinner that follows. They are unworried and unworrying. Modern life is no part of them. One rector last autumn came in for a deal of notoriety because he preached against hanging a youth of twenty and a woman of twenty-eight. The one, incited by the other, had killed the woman's husband. There are a good many hangings done very quietly in these London prisons. There is so little publicity that I hardly see how the people get the preventive value of them. There is only a thin running stream of criticism of capital punishment. It is from seditious papers like the Nation, not from pulpits. The Anglican preachers possess their souls, it seems, in pure peace—no ecstasy, no discouragement, no agony; no life, one would say, if he did not see that life often flows so deep that it doesn't obtrude.

There seems fairly a tide of criticism now sweeping England against modern industrialism. Willingly or not, the most Tory folk are talking about the inefficiency and ugliness and inhumanity of England's present situation. From the strength of the criticism some optimists are talking about the coming renaissance. The prophecy, I fear, depends less on the likelihood of a rebirth than upon the dire need that is felt for it. The war, thru its slaying of breadwinners, its maladjustment of employment, and its stopping of housebuilding, has made the situation one for pause. Sixty per cent of the million inhabitants of Glasgow live in tenements of two rooms or less. The Board of Education there was feeding ten thousand "necessitous children" last fall, until the Scottish Educational Department ordered them to stop as the law allowed but for the feeding of "sick or neglected children." The wretched quarters and the filth of the streets in half of London are worse than I care to describe. The law allows no begging, so all kinds of men sell flowers and matches or sit drawing crayon pictures on the sidewalks. Women, sometimes blindfolded, walk the streets singing or playing every kind of musical instrument. In the evenings as we stand in line to get cheap pit seats at the theater we suffer an hour of pathetic entertainment from the blind and the acrobatic. The crowds are nearly callous. The agricultural workers of Norfolk went on strike last week against a decrease from their present wage of twenty-five shillings—about six dollars—a week. Most of them keep families on that income. Foodstuffs and rents here cost about the same as in America; clothing is a third cheaper. A half million dollars a day to the United States for interest on war loans necessitates that the English economize.

The fear and hardness that this all breeds were in the answers of three East-end youngsters a day or so ago when they were asked to write an account of how they would spend the day if they were King or Queen.

"I should give all the miners the sack for not working, and would hang the Kaiser." (The Kaiser is about forgotten in England.)

"I would sit on the throne, and shout at the servants if they were not doing their work, and would give them the sack."

But "give them the sack" tells the tale of the fear that is in the heart of England. There is no work for a million and a half able-bodied and willing men.

The hope that I see is in the Labor Party. They alone seem possessed of the difficult faith that man could manage civilization in man's interest if he would. The other parties seem to feel there is some virtue in just getting back to normalcy and then staying normal except as some unreasoned tide of affairs carries along to possible improvement.

I have listened to the new Parliament with its wild men from the North. It seems to be Scotland and the North country that always pull England toward democracy. Some of the Labor members are crude speakers and make scenes. A Glasgow woman who has come to London to get a hundred-dollars-a-month school position tells me she is ashamed of the Scotch members. They are oratorical, and disrespectful of forms, and injudicious with their facts. But I felt that the blood of the country was flowing thru them, and that is more than Lord Bryce would say of late English Parliaments.

H. N. Brailsford admitted before the Fabians that the Labor Party did not yet command a sufficient part of the brains of England to operate the Government; but he and almost everyone I have spoken with (my conversations with important people are few) believes that Labor will be the next Government and that within two or three years.

I have been surprised myself at the variety of temperament in the Party. There are laborers and lords, Communists and Individualists, Agnostics and Catholics, cynics and sentimentalists, philosophers and professors. The control of the party is now distinctly in the hands of the I. L. P., or the intellectual group. The party leaders, for instance, have asserted with emphasis that the continuation school curriculum (for students over 14 years who are working) should be the same liberal culture studies as are given to the children of the classes. The workers themselves surely wish for schools with a vocational bias. The strong opposition that will hold such diverse groups in one party is assured. It feels to me that there will soon be a coalition of all parties favoring capitalism, for the controlling group of the Labor Party is committed outright to a Socialistic program and the third of the English voters, who voted Labor last November, were fully aware, or ought to have been, that they were voting for Socialism. There is very little press support for the Labor Party, but the movement is respectable enough now that its sensible opponents have put aside the epithets like "Bolshevistic," and are hunting evidence to fit the issues.

Just now the papers are filled with outcry against the treason trial of the Russian churchmen. One would think these pious editors had never heard of the execution of Irish traitors. The general feeling towards Russia seems one of half pity, half surprise, rather than of hostility. Toward Ireland it is one of baffled good-will. Everyone is holding his breath in hope. But from those I have met who have intimate information, there is little assurance that the trouble there is as slight or as near an end as most of the news would suggest. France is regarded, I believe, much as she was before the war. In public places there are fine pronouncements of friendship, but among any class of people I can seldom find any disposition to understand the French people or their problems.

Germany is not hated. The Englishman's sporting spirit has made

him regard the war as a prize fight which ends by shaking hands. Even before the French invasion of the Ruhr, which seems generally disapproved of in England, German students had been invited as guests of Oxford students to a summer session of the University. Dr. Reismann of Berlin was roundly applauded by a representative mass meeting at Whitefields last Sunday, and Frau Schreiber, a member of the Reichstag, spoke in Lady Astor's drawing room to a hundred parliamentarians and women leaders. As nearly as I could tell there was thoro open-mindedness, with vigorous criticism, for her warm comment on the French invasion.

But about no foreign people do the English know much. They seem to have no genius and happily therefore no curiosity to see from the other people's point of view. I usually spend part of Sunday afternoon at the Indian Students' Union, "a hotbed of sedition," which is the center for some six hundred Indian students. The warmest welcome there is given to any American or European, but I have yet to see any young Englishman in conversation with an Indian.

It is much the same toward us. They are discovering America in England just now, but I have no confidence that they will ever know much about us. They unconsciously expect us to be a second England; what isn't English about us will only baffle them. Fortunately they can leave people alone most courteously.

The critics are reading *Babbitt* just now and exclaiming with surprise that they "would not want to visit America if it is like that." Englishmen who have been to America give us high praise for hospitality and enthusiasm for life and even for some ingenuity and individuality. But this reputation has not spread. So George F. Babbitt is pure American. If I may say it, I think those Englishmen who with wet towels about their heads have got the lingo of *Babbitt* are quite willing that Mr. McCormick and Mr. Mencken should have their way and call the language "American." Several Sunday nights ago at the Ethical Church where the pictures of Emerson, Browning and George Eliot decorate the walls, *Babbitt* was the subject for a very enthusiastic evening service.

Mr. Chesterton made paradoxes about our prohibition pranks at the Sociological Society; Mr. Laski "profitably irritated the Americans present" at the London School of Economics on the Levine case and the general question of freedom of thought in American universities—since then he has reviewed Upton Sinclair's *The Goose Step* at considerable length for the *Athenaeum*; all the women's clubs are inviting speeches on America's foreign policy; W. L. George has even printed his *Hail Columbia* in England; and the Fabian Society, where Mr. Shaw sits wrapped in an ulster on the front bench listening quietly always with his five inches of good head above his ears, heard for an hour and discussed for another hour St. John Irvine's impressions of America. Mr. Shaw is a much more sincere and shyish humble man than the arch-goist I had pictured him.

Hitherto for the ordinary Englishman America has been a land of wealth, standardized production, and negro lynchings; swinging doors to emancipate the life of women, three thousand Fords per day to bring contented workers from their suburban homes to the factories, and a hooded night per week in the South to keep the nigger in his place in the Great American Democracy.

The old ideas and the hackneyed almighty-dollar criticism have now

quite given way to a new criticism that centers around the evil of uniformity in American life. Not the standardization of our machines but the standardization of our ideas is now the catchword. They are learning about our straw hat days in May and September, our organized college yells, our Chautauquas, and our Chambers of Commerce. Prohibition added to lynchings has set them speculating on our attitude toward law and personal liberty. They think we adopted prohibition in order to make more efficient workers of the poor men. The London press is firmly convinced our effort is a failure which we dislike to admit. They accept some very nonsensical comment for serious criticism. Such things as this circulate about American politics, "Whether the 7,000 Ford agents and the 7,000,000 users of Ford cars will become supporters of the Ford candidature is a question that troubles the political experts." The Fabians gasped with mirth and wonder when Mr. Ervine told them the simple uncolored story of men chewing tobacco and spitting into cuspidors, in a New York hotel lobby. Now the English ought to have known worse things than this about us years ago.

Their attitude toward us is nothing like it was in 1917. They are disillusioned. We are again the lesser people we once were. This isn't said, but it is felt. Even Ramsay McDonald, a high-souled man if I know one, speaks unconsciously of "handling" America. But I think I have not heard criticism against America that was not followed by a defence from Englishmen that was as able as most of us could give.

They deal in cudgel blows and keep good humor. But emotionalism in public speech is taboo. During the General Election, Bertrand Russell talked bread-and-butter to the unemployed workers of Chelsea, without mentioning the feasts of the rich. And the shabby workmen (I wish the Englishman would bow to uniformity enough to wear working clothes) would ask the philosopher questions as tho they thot the election was for their interests and not for the candidates. Their speech methods otherwise are usually very poor. They mumble, hide their heads in manuscript, and fumble about like schoolboys. Exceptions, of course; but they seem suspicious of technique, in speech as much as in dress and business. Of the poorest speakers I believe none other than our friend Dickinson, of the **Modern Symposium**, gets the first distinction. But he is tremendously at work fighting war, speaking and writing his lucid and rational analysis of its economic causes.

Santayana begins one of his discerning and beautiful essays in **Soliloquies in England**: "This war will kill the belief in progress and it is high time." I don't believe it will. It seems to me that the very exhaustion of England is going to be an advantageous condition for the progress of reason. The care of self-preservation is impressed upon these people by pain. Their thinkers are linking arms and pooling brains to save the English race. Science, applied and philosophic, is invading all the courts of public discussion. The biologists have taken the program of the Sociological Society, the psychologists have invaded the Aristotelian Society, the home of the Idealists, the Ethical Society, is laboring with the biology of war, and even Parliament, without a scientist, is debating the biological aspects of emigration and divorce. The Dean of St. Paul's with many other critics has accepted the necessity of limiting and improving England's population and is championing the causes of eugenics and birth-control. When pure philosophy becomes the subject the atmosphere loses its vitality and becomes that of logical tournament.

But the scientists are speaking philosophically. Professor J. A. Thomson speaks from Maude Royden's pulpit in the Guild house. Doctor Haldane, the Oxford physiologist, is introduced at King's College by the Dean of the Divinity School to deliver a resounding verdict against mechanistic biology.

All this matter is beyond my understanding, but I can tell that it is no atmosphere of pessimism that is about the councils. It is probably no Renaissance spirit either. Most people, I believe, feel that Europe had her chance for a Renaissance before the war, overlooked and mutilated it, and is now facing a long and painful recovery period.

The new, the fresh and abundant things, do not seem so different or so obtruding in London as I imagine they do in New York. I know no centers of newness where rebels gather as I suppose they do in Greenwich Village, to nurse each other. The "Young Moderns" come in for adversity from their elders, but I imagine it is a sympathetic severity as measured against any former criticism of new schools. Noyes seems to bear a chip on the shoulder hunting for the *vers libre* writers who have ignored his own kind of poetry which he had confidently placed in the grand succession from Chaucer. Drinkwater speaks as you would expect him to speak. He kindly but firmly refuses to see sense in nonsense. Galsworthy, in a lecture on his five favorites (Dickens, Turgenev, Maupassant, Tolstoi, Conrad) said the notes of modernism in every language were egoism, destruction, hardness, and vagueness, or in more friendly terms originality, sanitation, scientific spirit, and decoration. His own genius and cult of kindness make him speak as a friend, and with hope, but artistically I think he feels that most of the moderns are shooting wide of the mark.

Of other branches of literature memoir-writing is deafening in its flow. Drama is at a low ebb. Only two theaters are doing significant work: the Everyman, far out at Hampstead, is playing principally Shaw and Drinkwater; the Old Vic, in the dirt of Lambeth, is doing Shakespere and opera in English to full houses of common people. A Finn friend writes me from Berlin: "Even in these times of misery the intellectual activity of this country is marvelously vigorous, not to speak of theater and music, which continue to maintain the high level they always have had in this country. The theater has not yet been commercialized down to such a degree of low entertainment as in England. Theatrical as well as other art institutions continue to be cared for by the State."

Education is battling to hold the advance ground it gained in the war days. All the educators are complaining that the schools today are being treated solely on the principle of economy and not on the principle of educational progress and efficiency.

I have played the critic widely enough. All the coins in one's pocket are seldom silver. But I do not mind spending my coppers in public, if bystanders do not think I mistook them for gold.

—EDMUND L. FREEMAN.

The Frontier Book Shelf

Kai Lung's Golden Hours: Ernest Bramah, (Grant Richards, London, 1922). "Kai Lung's Golden Hours" are strung together like amber beads. They suggest, rather, the exquisite fragility, the delicate luxuriousness, of patterns in Chinese cloisonne, themselves inlaid, set in a network of inlay, subduedly lustrous, radiating unexpectedly rare and minutely vivid flashes of color. Like the Arabian Nights, the Golden Hours stretch their meshes to preserve their narrator from his tormentors, and in their spell, leave time and the ordinary behind them. There are, in the leisurely windings of the book, subtlety of design and studied beauty that have yet the sparkle of spontaneity. And there is also that intangible quality that preserves in the English the spirit of the Chinese, that makes it Oriental in more than name, and gives it artistic significance. The whole is pervaded by a sympathetic appreciation of life, as scintillatingly alive, as it is quaintly delightful.

—G. D. B.

The Dream: John Masefield, (Macmillan, 1922). In a mood of puzzled weariness with life the poet falls into a dream, sudden, shifting, fantastical, strangely beautiful. Through many corridors and tapestried rooms of an ancient castle we follow the dreamer till in confusion we ask, Is there meaning in all this riot of bright sense-experience? By the magic of his art Masefield makes us feel that the questions we ask of such a phantasmagoria are those which in the troubled opening of the piece he himself was asking of life. He haunts us with the sense that life is a dream. And then he passes into a shadowy room where "Daniel" stands

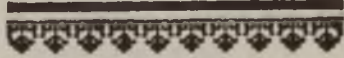
"Deep in the red and black of books
immerst";

and we know that Daniel is the poet's self, and that all this patchwork dream of life has, for him at least, a cumulative meaning and rich purpose, for

"All these forms of thought, and many more
Passed into books and into Daniel's hand."

—H. S. W.

Flame and Shadow: Sara Teasdale, (Macmillan, 1920). Light, color, springtime plead a cause. So does audacious, extravagant lyric treatment of nature and man. Predominantly cold imagery and chill flame likewise plead—tho temperately eager. One fits into her scheme delicate tinging of people and place by a lyric mood venturesome in its use of tone and color. Beauty becomes both



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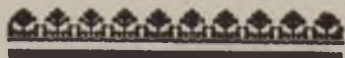
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"wine and bread." Beauty alone "fights with man against Death." These are single lines of studied sweetness and several poems of strange, transcendent beauty. Exotic settings invite silver snakes, brass starlight, orange moon or blue hills. The substance of some of this poetry is not flesh and blood. A certain fantastic unhealthiness pervades it. Intellect and Philosophy deck themselves clumsily with lyric, exuberant trappings. Death and the frailty of living things are ever in Miss Teasdale's mind. —T. M. P.

The Three Lovers: Frank Swinnerton. (Doran, 1923). In handling his latest novel, Swinnerton fails as an artist in the important matter of having a zealous understanding of his material. The quaint sex experience of his heroine remains unavoidably insignificant because he himself does not secure its meaning. It is presented, not understood. Swinnerton is oblivious of the consequences of his creation. There is no insuppressible, rigorous conception of life emerging from the work: no able individual, no diligently reasoning artist. Swinnerton's failure can be best indicated by the contrasting success of Joseph Hergesheimer, whose adultery earns an adequate distinction solely because it never obscures the writer's insistent attitude toward life—even though this sense of life is nothing more portentous than a modern, rather sterile, temperament.

Swinnerton insists on stressing sex yet is unable to make it appear influential in life, as he removes it from its impassioned background of life for his purposes of observation. The result is obvious artifice. The characters seem artificial; the events fail to succeed each other with the inevitableness familiar to life. Swinnerton's æstheticism lacks the exalting benevolence of cerebral strength and persuasion.

His preceding novel, *Coquette*, was more adequate and convincing as a fragment of life than *The Three Lovers*. It gained, at least, an entrancing naivete from its immersion in sex sordidness of the tenement order—sex unabashed by any civilized excrescences. It was, unrestrainedly, below the diaphragm; *The Three Lovers* is above, but is decidedly attenuated—it is not even so wholesome as the untrousered obscenity of Sherwood Anderson's *Many Marriages*. Detached from life, it lacks the poetry of sex: sex as an influence in life. It presents sex as an absorbing anomaly. —C. T.

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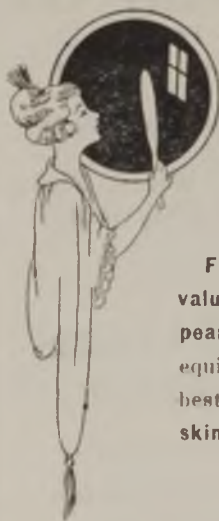
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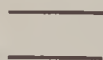
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