The FEBRUARY 15 cts

INTERNATIONAL

ABSINTHE

THE GREEN GODDESS

By Aleister Crowley

THE INTERNATIONAL

JUGGING THE MARCH HARE.

Yes, this number is of a rich gloom like a poem of Baudelaire. There is something in February which makes one want exotic luxury. If we are wealthy, we roll off to Palm Beach; if we are sensible, we get what is after all a much better effect out of the International. As the Earth passes through the waters of the month of Rains, we shall gloat. And is not winter nearly over? Will not the Sun come back to us at the end of March?

All ancient peoples have been careful to celebrate the return of the spring with drama. All plays are, properly speaking, based upon this one supreme comedy-tragedy which appeals to us all of necessity, since we are ourselves partakers of that Mystery.

Some such thoughts, stirring in ourselves, made us wonder whether we could not offer a banquet of drama to the readers of the International. Some of our best contributors hastened to our aid. Dr. Hans Ewers offered his "The Price He Paid"; Mr. Charles Beadle brought out his Eastern comedy, "The Palm Tree and the Window." We have a charming little Scottish dialect play from the pen of Lord Boleskine, which may fail to please our Puritans, but that cannot be helped. The Master Therion is contributing his Gnostic Mass, which is of intense interest as well to the general readers as to the Theologian and Archaeologist.

Joseph Bernard Rethy's "Lady Godiva" is one of the wittiest, albeit most romanesque, mummeries ever staged. You will all like it.

I am not so sure about "The Saviour," by Aleister Crowley. The author is not all I could wish, in many ways. His play is decidedly not for all tastes. In fact, it is mostly to please him personally that we print the beastly stuff.

However, there are others.

The rest of the paper would be more interesting if there were more of it. When, oh, when, will the bright day dawn when we can offer forty-eight pages with illustrations? A little bird has whispered that it may be soon. However, if our readers want to help us, it is only necessary for each one of them to go out and get six more.

And so we wish you all a safe passage through the month of the Waters. A. C.

CONTENTS FOR FEBRUARY

Published Monthly by the International Monthly, Inc.

1123 Broadway, New York City. Telephone, Farragut 9777. Cable address, Viereck, New York.

President, George Sylvester Viereck; Vice-President, Joseph Bernard Rethy; Treasurer, K. Bombard; Secretary, Curt H. Reisenger.

Terms of Subscription, including postage, in the United States and Mexico: $1.50 per year; $0.80 for six month. Subscription to all foreign countries within the postal union, $1.85 per year. Single copies, 15 cents.

Newsdealers and Agents throughout the country supplied by the American News Company or any of its branches.

Entered at the Post Office at New York as second class matter.

Manuscripts addressed to the Editor, if accompanied by return postage and found unavailable, will be returned. The Editor, however, accepts no responsibility for unsolicited contributions.

WANTED — MODERATE MEN.

King Solomon said that he who ruleth his spirit is greater than he who taketh a city. Truly, indeed, it has been a giant's task in these days to avoid the contagion of hysteria, the spiritual rabies of the baser sections of the press.

But in the last week or so statesmen have taken to borrowing (often without acknowledgment) from the editorial matter of the International. There is no longer any pretence that the Germans are other than "men of like passions with ourselves," or that the Kaiser has dragooned them into unwilling submissives.

Also, there is a general acceptance of the belief, highly unpopular in Bolshevik circles, that the organized hierarchy is the most stable structure of society, that a man is better than a mess, and a cathedral than a pile of stones.

The excuse given in private by the extremists for their bombast in public has been that it was necessary to spur the unwilling public into war. The situation would be Gilbertian were it not so devilish; but its usefulness is over. It is time that the voice of reasonable men should be heard in the land. It is probably hopeless to ask people to think for themselves. In the last week or so the New York Times, Sun, and even the World, have more or less turned upon the President to rend him. The public is becoming familiar with what must be to the man in the street quite inexplicable tergiversations. The extremists are now attacking Mr. Wilson as they attacked us a month or so ago. We can, therefore, appeal to rational thought and calm balance, and say to men and women of good will everywhere in the world, "Come forward, make yourselves heard, give your support to the people who are fighting the battles of good sense."

It is not for us, perhaps, but for other statesmen, to determine what can honorably be accepted by any given nation, but we can at least insist that those who speak for us shall speak with good faith and without rancor, with sympathy and understanding. We shall not fight with less courage and determination because we are chivalrous. The days of the cave-man, when crazy and unthinking rage could determine a victory, are past. A handful of British soldiers were able to defeat countless hordes of Madhists because this was understood. It was the Dervish who possessed the fanatical rage, the unthinking courage. The Briton opposed to him cool thought, armchair organization, careful aim. He did not hate his enemy. He simply shot him dead. Kipling expressed the feeling of the British soldier admirably in his famous poem:

> "So 'ere's to you, Fuzzy Wuzzy, an' the missus an' the kid,
> We 'ad orders for to smash you, so course we went and did."

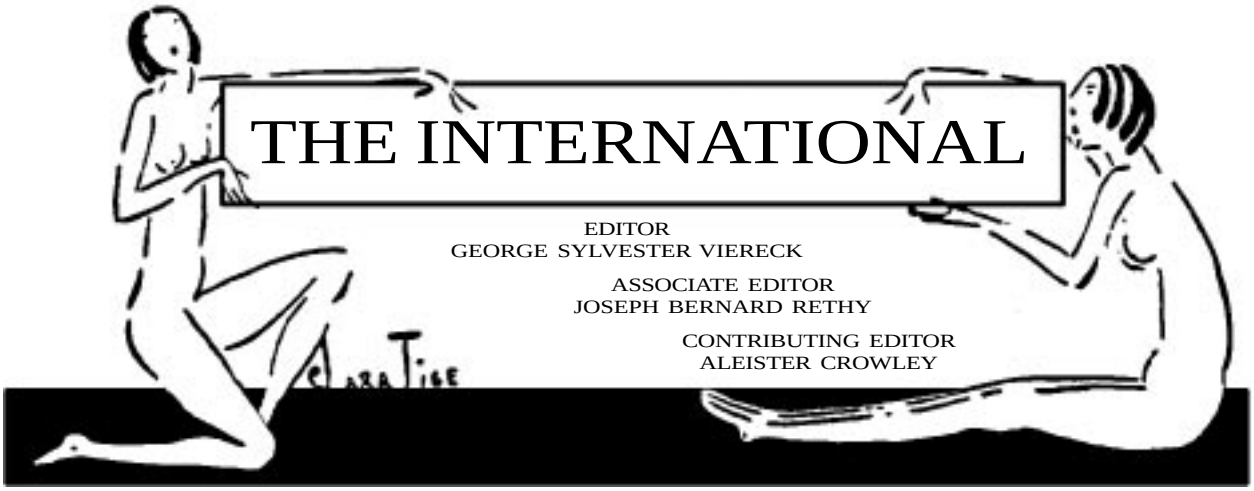
That is the spirit in which should all of us be fighting. The observer will notice that, ever since Lord Lansdowne formulated the feeling of that silent element in England which determines her policy, statesmen have been making clear their war aims with much more elasticity than before. There is a feeling in the air that it is time to talk things over quietly. One cannot do this with a cannibal who is suffering from acute delirious mania; and, therefore, the theory that the enemy was this kind of a person had to be given up by all parties. In other words, the slogan of "Deutschland uber Alles" and its equivalents in other languages have had to be altered to our own little effort in motto making: "Humanity first."

I have no wish to rub it in with an "I told you so," to point out that my so-called pro-German-writings of last year are the same as the utterances of the President of the United States and of the Premier of England of this year. For, in truth, I am not conscious of victory, but of defeat. It has not been the spirit of humanity which has dictated the change of policy. That change has been forced upon the various governments by necessity. My work is yet to do. It is still necessary to prove to men that they are cutting their own throats by anger, greed and ambition. It is still necessary to appeal to self-interest. The planet has been taught an appalling lesson; but will men learn it? Will they really understand that even on the lowest ground the philosopher and the poet are their real friends, that the man of the world is really as much of a fool as he is a knave. Selfishness is the highest stupidity. I cannot hurt my brother without hurting myself. That is what some of us have been preaching for many a long day; and because we have preached it we have been called unpractical; we have been called traitors. The event has proved only too terribly that we were the patriots and the sages. The time has come to put that lesson into practice. We must take away the power from the self-seeking scoundrels who have been boosting themselves as practical men; and, although the mechanical details of reconstruction must necessarily be left to people of experience in each branch, yet the theory must be left to people who understand truth in its deepest sense. We must entrust the supreme government to the supreme philosopher.

In the meantime our urgent necessity is to make place for the moderate man, to him who has shown by his detached attitude that he could see an inch or two beyond his nose. The President's "war aim" message is most significant in this connection. We do not want people with entirely new theories of government. This is no moment for revolutionary social measures. The world is one vast wound, and the business of the moment is to heal it so far as may be. For this purpose we need soothing applications such as universal charity, and we must complete the work of sterilizing the bacillus of hatred. There could never have been a war if the men in power had had the slightest realization of what it was going to be like. Yet these people were all excellent specimens of the type of man that has been in power for centuries. The moral is to get rid of the type. However, for the moment, the political issue is less radical in character. It will be enough if we sternly refuse a hearing to the bloodthirsty cries of those people who think that the People is but a mob of savages, and that the only way to obtain power over them is to appeal to their most senseless passions.

We want moderate men.

ALEISTER CROWLEY.



VOL. XII. No. 2. FEBRUARY, 1918. PRICE 15 CENTS

THE SCRUTINIES OF SIMON IFF

By EDWARD KELLY

No. VI — Ineligible

Simon Iff, the mystic, was the most delightfully unclubbable man in the Hemlock Club. But all was forgiven to a man of his powers — and of the extraordinary charm which he radiated, even when sitting silent in his favorite window. It was a genuine triumph for any one to get him to talk. One Christmas evening after dinner, the editor of the "Emerald Tablet" informed him that the Committee had made a new rule to the effect that the eldest member of the Club who happened to be present must tell a story under penalty. It was a genial lie, and appealed to Simple Simon's sense of humor. "What sort of a story?" he grunted.

"Tell us of the first occasion on which you used your powers of reading men."

The mystic's face darkened. "It's poetic justice. You shall be well paid out for your impudence in inventing new rules. The story is hideous and horrible; the gleams of heroism that shine in it only serve to make the darkness more detestable. But you shall hear it: for one reason, because the result of my interference was to save this Club, and therefore the Universe (which revolves about it) from irreparable disaster.

I.

His Majesty's Sloop "Greyhound" was wrecked in the Bay of Biscay in the month of April, 1804, of the vulgar era. She was carrying dispatches to Sir Arthur Wellesley. Captain Fortescue, who was in charge of them, escaped the wreck, in company with a sergeant of marines named Glass. They found themselves cast ashore on the north coast of Spain. Many days' journey lay between them and their destination. However, they fell in with friendly guerrillas, who aided them in every way. But the luck changed when they were within sight, almost, of their goal. A battle had taken place; and Masséna, retreating, had chosen a line which cut them off completely from Sir Arthur's positions. Becoming aware of these facts, they broke away at right angles towards some mountainous country, intending to traverse it, and, descending the opposite slopes, to fetch a compass round about the flank of the French army. Unluckily for them, they were perceived as they crossed the first range of hills, and a detachment of light infantry was sent in pursuit.

Immediately on seeing this, their Spanish guide took to his heels. They were thus not only hunted but lost. They knew the general direction of the British lines; they had about two hours' start; otherwise they were hopeless.

They gained the crest of the second range just as their pursuers, spread out in a long line, swarmed over the first; but in beginning their descent, which was excessively steep, with only a narrow mule-path among the enormous tangle of rocks, they came upon a cottage; and the path ended. Fortescue recognized the place, for the guide had spoken of it on the previous day; it was the home of a desperate brigand, a heavy price upon his head from French and English alike. They had no choice, however, but to go on. Chance favored them; the brigand was away, leaving but one drowsy sentinel. Fortescue ran the man through with his sword before he had time to seize his gun.

The two Englishmen found themselves alone in the cottage. Could it be defended? Possibly, but only for an hour or two; reinforcements would arrive in case of a prolonged resistance. The vital question was to find the way to the valley.

The cottage was perched upon the edge of a cliff; they could see the path winding away below. But access to it seemed to be cut off. Glass it was who reasoned out the situation. There must be a way through some cellar. Quickly he searched the cottage. A trap-door was found. Glass descended the ladder. All was well. He found himself in a large room, half filled with barrels of gunpowder. A narrow door gave exit to the path below. "Come on!" cried Fortescue.

"We shall be caught, sir," answered Glass. "Let me stay here; I can delay them long enough to let you get away." The officer saw the good sense of this; his first duty was to deliver the dispatches. He wrung Glass by the hand, and ran out.

The sergeant of marines knew that he had barely an hour; but he had a plan in his mind. His first action was to twist a long match from the gunpowder to that window of the cottage which looked over the cliff; his next to strip himself and the dead sentinel of uniform, and to dress the corpse in his own. He then found a piece of rope and hanged the body in the doorway.

He dressed himself in the brigand's best clothes; but, not content with masculine adornment, he covered himself with the all-sufficing mantilla. He was a smooth-faced good-looking boy; with the shawl, he made a quite passable Spanish girl — to the waist.

He then took up his position at the window by the door, so that the lower part of his body was hidden, and awaited the pursuers. It was near twilight when they arrived. Their leader grasped what he thought to be the situation. "Where is the other?" he cried. Glass smiled divinely. Unluckily for him, he knew only a few words of any tongue but English. But a finger to his lips, and the sign of beckoning, reassured the others; they filed down the path, and crowded into the cottage. "Where's the girl?" cried the leader, "are we in a trap? Look to your arms, men!" Before he had ended, Glass, who had run upstairs to the other room, had touched fire to the match. "Let Samson perish with the Philistines!" he roared, and at the same moment leaped from the window.

The cottage sprang into the air, killing every man in it; Glass lay fifty feet below upon a thorn-bush, with one arm broken and many bruises, but good for many another day's adventure.

A day later he had scrambled to the valley, where a shepherd showed him kindness, and led him by a circuitous route to the British lines.

Here he found himself a hero; for Fortescue had seen the explosion, and given all due credit to his companion. But the sergeant's arm went ill; for default of treatment, it had begun to mortify; the same night the surgeon removed it at the shoulder.

Sir Arthur Wellesley himself came to the hospital to salute the gallant lad. "Be glad it is the left arm;" he said brusquely: "Nelson lost his right. And for you, we'll salve you with a commission as lieutenant in the regular army." Glass was overjoyed; the loss of his arm seemed little, if he could have a sword at his side, epaulets on his shoulder, and the rank of an officer and a gentleman thenceforward.

II.

Lieutenant Glass, obtaining six months leave, at the end of the campaign of 1805, returned to his ancestral croft on the northwest side of Loch Ness to find that both his father and mother were dead. A friend in Inverness had warned him as he passed through; but piety made him persist in his journey; he might as well spend his leave there as elsewhere.

It was a stone cottage of two rooms, set high above the loch upon the moor. Away westward stretched the desolate slopes of Meallfavournie; below, the gloomy waters of the loch growled with the cold anger of the Highland winter.

There was no other habitation for a couple of miles. Around the croft was a niggard space of cultivated land, yielding with bitter toil a few oats and a few potatoes; nothing more.

The laird, Grant of Glenmoriston, had sent a man to take possession of the croft, pending instructions from Glass. He was a sturdy lad of sixteen years, self-reliant and secretive; he had kept the cottage in excellent order, and tilled the soil as well as may be in that inhospitable country. Glass kept him on as permanent gardener and servant; but he was rather an accentuation than an alleviation of the loneliness. However, on the first Sunday, when the lieutenant walked down to Strath Errick to church, he found himself the apple of the congregational eye. Even Chisholm, the minister, a dour narrow Calvinist of the oldest school, was moved to make a complimentary reference in his sermon; and, after kirk was over, carried away the officer in triumph to the manse, there to share the miserable substitute for a meal which is all that any Scot dare eat on Sunday, in apprehension of the Divine displeasure.

Chisholm was a widower. He had one daughter, skinny and frosty, with a straight back, thin lips, a peaked nose, bad teeth, and greedy eyes. But her flat chest almost burst as the idea came to her, as it did in a flash, to become Mrs. Lieutenant Glass. It was a way out of her horrible environment; despite the lost arm, he was a fine figure of a man; he was a hero, had been mentioned twice in despatches since he had gained his commission; he would get his company very soon. Promotion was quick in those days. Captain, major, colonel — possibly even General Glass! She saw Strath Errick left far north; instead, presentation at Court, social advancement of every kind; possibly a stately visit or so later on, and a snubbing of the local gentry who had always looked down upon the minister's daughter. She soon discovered that she had four clear months to catch her fish; poor and plain as she was, she had no rivals in the district; Glass, the crofter's son, for all his epaulets, had no more chance to marry into the local aristocracy than she had. She went to work with infinite thoroughness and persistence; she enlisted her father's aid; she laid siege to Glass in every known form.

The lieutenant, for his part, knew that he might do much better. The salons of London were full of better matches; and his peasant ancestry would not be known there. All Highlanders of rank were "gentry" to the average London mother. But the same instinct that led him to live in the deserted croft made him now hesitate to transplant himself to London; the soil gripped him; he soon determined to throw out a new anchor in the granite; and in March, 1807, he was married to Ada Chisholm in the kirk of Strath Errick. A month later he rejoined his regiment; he had taken his wife to Edinburgh for the honeymoon, and she left him at Leith to return to her father's house, while he set sail for the new campaign in Europe.

He gained his captaincy the same year; two years more elapsed before he saw his wife again. In the summer of 1809 he again distinguished himself in the field, and obtained his majority. A severe wound left him in hospital for three months; and on recovery he asked, and was granted, six months' sick leave.

His wife was enthusiastic; she had traveled all the way to London to meet him; and he arranged to have her presented at Court. Her head was completely turned by its splendor; and she resolutely opposed the spending of the six months in Scotland. They went accordingly to Bath instead, and she revelled in the social glories of the place.

Glass was not at all in love with his wife; and she had no more sex than one of the oatmeal scones; but he was an extraor-

dinarily simple soul, with rigid ideas of honesty. He had accordingly been faithful to her in his absence, while she would no more have thought of deceiving him than of eating grass.

They left Bath in December, 1809. They had been extravagant; and, nolens volens, she was obliged to go back to her father's manse to live. Probably her husband would get his regiment in a year or so; the war might be over too, by then; and they could live pleasantly enough in London, or a jolly garrison town, for the rest of their lives.

In June, 1810, Glass had a letter from his wife, apprising him of the birth of a son. She proposed to call him Joshua, as his father was so great a captain.

The arrival of Joshua changed Glass as completely as a drug-habit or an access of insanity. He knew that he would have to wait a long time for his colonelcy. Short of capturing Napoleon single-handed, he had no chance in the world. His quick rise from the ranks had made him hated by snobbish and incompetent fellow-officers; and the extreme modesty of his manner was no protection. They hated him, as birth without worth always hates worth without birth. Even Wellington — who had never lost sight of him — could not do every thing against so bitter an opposition. His fellow-officers had even laid trap after trap for him, and it had needed all his Scottish caution to avoid them.

These reflections settled him in one momentous decision. He must save ten thousand pounds. Joshua must go to Eton, and start on fair terms, if human determination could secure it. He consequently, from an open-handed, free and easy man, became a miser. Instead of increasing his wife's allowance, he cut it down. And he sent every penny he could save from his pay to a friendly banker in Edinburgh, who promised to double it in five years. I may tell you at once, lest you start the wrong hare, that he kept his word.

III.

That is not such a horrible story, so far, is it? And there seem few elements of tragedy. Well, we go on.

After the banishment of Napoleon to Elba, Major Glass rejoined his wife. This time there was no trip to Bath. The cottage was furnished with just the extra things needed for Joshua; Glass himself helped to till his own land, and market the produce.

Ada resented this bitterly; there was no open quarrel, but she hid poison in her heart. "I have six thousand pounds in bank," he had said, "but there's no hope of a regiment now the war's over; let us play safe a year or two until we have ten thousand; then we can live where we like, as gentlefolk, and make a greater career for the boy." She saw the prudence of the plan, and could not argue against it; but she really hungered for social pleasures, as only those do who are not born with the right to them.

The boy himself gave no concern on the score of health; he was hardy as a Highland lad should be; but his disposition troubled his father. He was silent and morose, was very long in learning to speak, and he seemed lacking in affection. He would lie or sit, and watch his parents, in preference to playing. When he did play, he did not do so simply and aimlessly, as most children do. Even when he broke his toys, he neither cried nor laughed; he sat and watched them.

Major Glass went back to his regiment at the end of 1814; his wife once again took shelter with her father. But a month later the minister fell ill; in March he died. Another minister occupied the manse; and there was nothing for Mrs. Glass but to go back to the croft on the moor. The boy still worked on the little apology for a farm; and his sister came to help tend Joshua, and assist in the housework.

In 1815 Major Glass was present at the decisive battles in Belgium. And here befell the fate that transformed this simple career into the tragedy of horror which you have insisted that I should relate to you. The major was in command of the last party that held the shot-swept walls of Hougomont; and he rallied his men for their successful stand against Napoleon's final and desperate effort to regain that critical point. The British were flooded at one spot; Glass, with a handful of reserves, led a rally, and broke the head of the French dagger-thrust. And then it was that a sabre-stroke beat down his guard; a second blow severed his sword-arm. He was carried hastily to the ruins of the farm, and his wound bandaged; but Napoleon, seeing his troops flung back, ordered another artillery attack; and a cannon-ball, breaking a rafter of the building, brought down the remains of the roof. A heavy beam fell across the Major's legs, and crushed them.

Such, however, was the prime soundness of his constitution that he did not die. It was a helpless, but perfectly healthy, torso which was carried some months later into the little croft above Loch Ness. His wife recoiled in horror — natural horror, no doubt. It was only when he told her that the surgeon said that he might live fifty years that she realized what infinite disaster had befallen her. All her schemes of life had gone to wreck; she was tied to that living corpse, in that wretched cottage, probably for the rest of her life. "Half-pay," she thought; "how long will it take now to make up the ten thousand pounds?"

IV.

If Ada Glass had been a woman of intelligence, either good or evil, she would have found some quick solution. But her thoughts were slow and dull; and she was blinded by the senseless hate in her heart. Her days had been infinitely dull, ever since her father's death; now, in that emptiness, a monster slowly grew. And her husband understood her before she did herself. One day he found it in his mind that she might murder him; she had dismissed the girl who had helped her, saying that now they must save money more carefully than ever. His quick wit devised a protection for himself. Calling the boy Andrew, now a stout fellow of twenty-six years old, he sent him into Inverness for a lawyer.

With this man he had a long private interview, during which several papers and memoranda were selected by the lawyer from the Major's portfolio, in accordance with his instructions.

That evening the lawyer returned to the croft with the new minister of Strath Errick, thus disposing of the difficulty caused by the inability of the soldier to sign papers.

Later that night, Mrs. Glass having returned from Glenmoriston, where she had been sent so as to have her out of the way, the major told her what he had done.

I have placed my money, he explained, in the hands of two excellent trustees. If I should die before Joshua comes of age, the whole will be left to accumulate at the bank, and you must live upon the pension you will receive as my widow. The capital will then be transferred to him at his majority, under certain restrictions. But if I live, I shall be able to bring the boy up under my own eye, and therefore as soon as the capital amounts

to ten thousand pounds, we shall not only be able to educate him properly, but to bring him, while yet a child, into those social connections which seem desirable.

Once again the wife could raise no protest; but once again her heart sank within her.

Yet, as the days went by, the hate devoured her vitals, began to eat her up like some foul cancer. She began at last, deliberately, to pass from thought to action, to make her husband's life, hideous at the best, into a most exquisite hell.

You are perhaps aware that our greatest misery is impotence to act freely. Deprivation of a sense or a limb is wretched principally because of the limit it sets to our activities. This, more than anything else, is at the root of our dread of blindness or paralysis. You remember Guy de Maupassant's story of the blind man on whom his family played malicious tricks? It seems peculiarly cruel to us because of the victim's helplessness. Now, of all the savages upon the earth, there are none more ferocious or more diabolical than the Highlanders of Scotland. Dr. Frazer gives many instances of incredibly vile superstitions, in vogue even at this hour as we sit in the enlightened Hemlock Club. "Scratch the Russian and you find the Tartar?" well, scratch the Scotchman, and you have a being who can give points and a beating to the Chinese or the Red Indian. The sex-instinct is especially powerful in the Celt; where it is nobly developed, we find genius, as among the Irish; but where it is thwarted by a religion like Calvinism, it nearly always turns to madness or to cruelty — which is a form of madness.

To return to the point, Ada Glass set her wits to work. The hideous loneliness of the Highlands in the eye of all those who have not the true soul of the artist is a true antecedent condition to morbid imagination; and Ada Glass and her sexlessness the pendant to it.

She began operations by neglect. She postponed attention when he called for her; and she became careless in the preparation of his meals. He saw the intention, and agonized mentally for weeks. Ultimately he resolved to kill himself in the only way possible, by refusing food. She retorted by the tortures of Tantalus, setting spiced and savory foods under his nose, so that he was physically unable to resist — after a while. The fiendishness of this was heightened by its manner; the whole plan was carried out with inconceivable hypocrisy on both sides. She would use such words of love and tenderness as had never occurred to her on the honeymoon.

Such courses are set upon a steepening slope of damnation. Soon ideas incredibly abominable came into her mind, perhaps suggested by the tortures of hunger and thirst to which she submitted him. For she varied her pleasure by offering him sweet-smelling foods that on tasting were found to be seasoned with salt and pepper, so that only extreme hunger would make a man eat of them. Then she would excite his thirst by such hot dishes, and put salt in the water which he demanded to assuage it. But always she would apologize and blame herself, and weep over him, and beg forgiveness. And he would pretend to be deceived, and grant his pardon. And then she would speak of love, and —— but no! gentlemen, I must leave you to dot the i's and cross the t's in the story.

Presently — after months of this miserable comedy — she took it into her head to excite his jealousy. (I want you to remember all the time, by the way, that these people were absolutely alone, with no distraction whatever, save the rare and formal visits of the minister. And Glass was far too proud and brave to speak of what was going on.) She began to set her cap at the gardener. As I said, she had no more feeling than a saucepan; it was all bred out of her by Calvinism; but she knew how to act. She knew her husband's own stern view of marriage; she thought she would break his spirit by infraction of her vows. For that is what it had come to, though she probably did not realize it; she wanted to see the hero of a dozen campaigns snivel and whine and whimper like a cur. Many women indulge a similar ambition.

So she set herself to snare the gardener. It was an easy task. He was a rough, rude laborer, a vigorous, healthy animal. And she wooed him as she had seen the fine ladies of Bath do with their cavaliers. Once his first shyness was overcome, he became her slave; and from that moment she began to play her next abominable comedy. Her husband must suspect for a long while before he knew for certain. And so she laid her plans. She watched the fleeting thoughts upon his face hour by hour. Soon she imbued her lover with hatred of his master; and she persuaded him one day to kiss her in the room where the Major lay on his pallet of straw. She had long since deprived him of a bed, urging the trouble of making it up. The spasm of pain upon his face, the violent words that he addressed to her, these were her greatest triumph so far. She went on with her plan; she went to the utmost extremity of shamelessness; the gardener, with no sensibility, thought it merely a good joke, in the style of Boccacio. For weeks this continued, always with increasing success; then Glass suddenly made up his mind to bear it — or something in his heart broke. At least it became evident that he was no longer suffering. Her refinement imagined a new device, a thing so abominable that it almost shames manhood even to speak of it. She resolved to corrupt the child. Joshua was now old enough to understand what was said to him; and she privately coached him in hate and loathing for his father. Also, she taught him the pleasures of physical cruelty. (I told you this was a hideous story.)

Major Glass, deprived of all exercise, had become terribly obese. He was a frightful object to look upon; a vast dome of belly, a shrunk chest, a bloated and agonized face. Four stumps only accentuated the repulsion. It was only too easy to persuade the child to play infamous tricks. By this time she had thrown off the mask of her hypocrisy; she taunted him openly, and jeered; she spat out rivers of hate at him; and she let him know that she no longer wished the society of Bath, that she was glad that he might live half a century; for never until now had she known pleasure. And she incited the boy to stick long pins into the helpless log. "You're not even like a pig any more," she laughed one night, "you're like a pincushion!" And Joshua, with an evil laugh, walked up upon that word, and thrust three pins into the tense abdomen. He ran to his mother gleefully, and imitated the involuntary writhings of the sufferer.

This game recommenced every night. The intervals were but anticipations of some further abomination. He had long prayed audibly for death; now he began to beg her for some means of it. She laughed at him contemptuously. "If you hadn't settled the money as you did, I might have thought of it. After all, I ought to marry again."

He answered her in an unexpected vein. "I'll make it easy for you. One night, when snow threatens, take Joshua down to a neighbor's. Pretend you are ill, and stay the night. Leave the door open when you go; I think a chill would kill me. And I

want to die so much!" She gloated over the weakness of his spirit. "If you'll swear on the Bible to do that," he went on, "I'll tell you the great secret." Instantly she became attentive; she divined something of importance. "When I was in Spain," continued Glass, "I was quartered in a certain castle belonging to one of the grandees. He was an old man, paralysed, as helpless as I am to-day. His lady, at the first of the invasion, had buried the family treasure in a secret place. There are diamonds there, and pieces of eight, and many golden ornaments. They told me this one night under the following strange circumstances ——" he broke off. "Give me water! I'm faint, of a sudden." She brought it to him. Presently he continued in a firmer voice. "One day we were attacked by a body of French troops — a reconnaissance in force. The castle was surrounded. I and the few men with me, our retreat cut off, prepared to defend ourselves, and our host and hostess, to the last. We were driven from floor to floor. But one of my men, sore wounded, lying below, determined on a desperate resource. He managed to crawl to the cellar, where great quantities of wood were stored; and he set it on fire. The French, alarmed, beat a hasty retreat from the precincts; I and my few remaining men pursued them to the gates. The fight would doubtless have been renewed, but at that moment the plumes of our dragoons appeared in the distance. The French sprang to their horses and were off. I returned hastily to the castle, and we succeeded in extinguishing the fire. I bore the lady in my own arms into the fresh air, through all the smoke; two of my men rescued the old count. That afternoon they had a long conference together, and in the evening said that they had decided to tell me of the treasure.

In case misfortune should happen to them both, I was to pledge myself to convey the paper, which they then intrusted to me, to their only son, who was fighting in our army. I readily agreed. A few nights later the devil tempted me; I opened the paper. It was a mass of meaningless figures, a cipher; but I had the key. I worked it out; I went to the place indicated; there lay the treasure. But my heart smote me; not mine be a fouler than the sin of Achan! I replaced the earth. I returned, and prayed all night for a clean heart.

Shortly afterwards I changed my quarters; we were retreating. On our next advance I returned to pay a visit to my kind hosts. Alas! They had been murdered by a band of guerillas. As duty bade, I sought the son; but again I was too late; he had fallen in battle on the third day of our advance.

I have kept the secret locked in my breast; I would not touch the treasure, though it was now as much mine as anybody's, because I had been tempted. But now I see necessity itself command me; I am no longer man enough to endure the torture which I suffer ——" Here his voice broke. "I will give you the key if you will do as I say; and when I am dead you are free to go and find it."

Ada Glass made her mind up in a moment. She was eager. After all, there were other pleasures in the world than — what she had been enjoying.

"Take the Bible," said Glass, "and swear!" She did so without a tremor. It was an oath to commit murder; but the Scots mind does not halt in such a case.

"Good," said the Major. "Now look in the uniform case; you'll find the cipher sewn into my tunic; it's in the lining of the left sleeve." His wife obediently unpicked the stuff. A small map, with a row of hieroglyphic figures, was in her hand. "Now tell me the key!" Glass began to breathe with difficulty; he spoke in a faint voice. "Water!" he whispered. She brought him a full glass, and he drank it, and sighed happily. "The key's a word," he said. "What? I can't hear you." She came over close to him. "The key's a word. It's in the Bible. I'll remember it if you'll read the passage. I marked it in the book. It's somewhere in Judges." He was evidently speaking with the greatest possible effort; and even so, she could hardly hear him. She brought the Bible across to him, but it was too dark to read; so she fetched the lamp and set it upon the floor at his side. "About Chapter Eight: I can't remember." "Chapter which?" "I think it's eight." "Eight?" "Yes." It was the faintest murmur. He had been like that for some days; now it alarmed her; might he die without revealing the secret? She fetched some whiskey, and gave it to him to drink.

"Oh, is it this," she said, "about Samson in the mill? It's marked in red." "Yes," he said, still very faintly, "read from there." She sat down by his head, and began to read. After each verse she questioned him; he signed to her to go on. Presently she came to the verse "And Samson said 'Let me perish with the Philistines'." "It's there," he said. "It's ——" his voice died away to nothing. "You're not ill, are you?" she cried in alarm. "I'm going to die," he gasped out, word by word. "Tell me the word!" she screamed, "for God's sake, man, don't die first!" "It's ——" Again the voice died away. "Do, do try!" she said, putting her ear over his mouth. Instantly, with utter swiftness, his iron jaw closed like a vice upon her ear. She pulled away, screaming, but she might as well have tried to dislodge a bulldog. Indeed, she helped him to roll over toward the lamp. A jerk of one stump, and the oil flamed among the straw of the pallet.

The dying shrieks of his mother woke Joshua. He jumped out of bed, came into the room, saw the two bodies writhing in the flames. He clapped his hands gleefully, and ran out into the snow.

———

"I admit it's a pretty ghastly story," cried Jack Flynn, who had evoked it; "but I don't see what in heaven's name it has to with you, and saving the Hemlock Club!"

"Because, my young friend, as usual, you have not condescended to wait for the end of it. The events that I have been at the pains to recount occurred during the usurpation of George the Third, so-called." (It was the club custom always to speak of the Georges as usurpers.) "My part begins in the year 1850 of the vulgar era."

In February of that year an anonymous book entitled "A Jealous God," was published through a well-known firm — I forget the name for the moment. The book made a great stir in religious circles. The author, evidently an authority on theology, had taken the teachings of Victorian Science as a commentary, and his work was principally intended to complete the ruin of Deism. The author insisted upon the cruelty and imbecility of nature; pointed out that all attempts to absolve the Creator from the responsibility must culminate in Manichaeism or some other form of Dualism; and proceeded to interpret the wisdom of the Deity as His ability to trick His creatures, His power as His capacity to break and torture them, and His glory as witnessed chiefly by the anguish and terror of His victims. I need hardly say, that the author, although anonymous, professed himself a member of the Exclusive Plymouth Brethren.

He was proposed for this club, as a prominent and deserving heretic of great originality; and I was the youngest member of the committee appointed to inquire into the matter. I took an instinctive dislike to the unknown author; I opposed the election with my ability. I proved that the book was perfectly orthodox, being but an expansion of John III:16. I pointed out that Charles Haddon Spurgeon had endorsed the principal teachings of the book; that evangelical clergymen all over England were doing the same thing, with only negligible modifications; but I was overruled.

We then proceeded to inquire into the authorship of the book; we discovered that his name was Joshua Glass."

A thrill of terrible emotion passed through the old man's hearers. "I refused to withdraw my opposition. I investigated; and I discovered the facts which to-night I have set forth before you."

"But there's nothing in the rules against that sort of thing!" interrupted one of the men.

"You will not let me finish!"

"I beg your pardon."

"I studied the facts with intense care; I tried to trace to their true source the phenomena displayed by all parties. Ultimately I came to a conclusion. I began to believe that in this case a physical correspondence with the mental and moral state exhibited might exist. . . ."

"And so?" interrupted Jack Flynn, excitedly, a gleam in his eye. "I insisted upon a physical examination. I found a malformation so curious and monstrous that, despite his human parentage, it was impossible to admit him any title to membership of our race."

There was a long silence of complete astonishment. The old magician opened his case, drew out a long cigar, and lighted it. "Any one coming my way?" he asked, rising.

"I'm coming, if I may, sir," said Flynn, sprightly. "I want to talk mysticism for an hour, to get the taste out of my mouth."

COSTLY PILLOWS

By KONRAD BERCOVICI

Wolf looked like a poet. He had the traditional long hair and dreamy eyes ornamenting a dark face, and he was as poor as a poet, but he wrote the most miserable drivel —— But he was a very agreeable fellow, Wolf was, and all the Yiddish writing fraternity was very anxious about his welfare. None of the new Weeklies or Monthlies ever started without at least one of Wolf's poems. Yet Wolf was slowly starving.

Berger, the well known Jewish banker, was a very frequent guest of the writer's club. So Berger was approached in Wolf's behalf; not that he give the poet alms but that he give him a job. Wolf got the job and was paid fifty dollars a month. His duties were manifold; he had to roll packages of nickel and silver coin, and in spare time he turned out rhymed advertisement which the banker published in the papers.

Wolf must have felt at first very grateful to his patron employer. Regular meals after a long period of intermittent starvation make one cheerful and happy. This was the cause that after a while his appetite was more directed to quality than to quantity; it frequently happened that Wolf should run short of money at the end of the week.

He would then come around the club and borrow a dollar or two to be returned at the first opportunity.

As he had a job, Wolf's poems were no longer forced upon editors by kind friends. They had to stand on their own merit. Very few of them were either bad enough or good enough to be printed, so Wolf became known as "The Banker" and lost standing as a poet.

One Sunday afternoon Berger sat in the cafe of the club drinking tea and talking of the expensive things he owned. He was not given to bragging. It was business. He wanted to gain the confidence of the people so that they might deposit with him the money of the Jewish war relief-funds.

"I made some improvements on my country house and it cost me forty thousand dollars."

"And what is the house worth?" someone asked, which was just what Berger wanted.

"A quarter of a million," he replied negligently between sips from his glass.

Wolf came in and sat down at the same table with his employer and the rest of the people. To talk of his fortune was plainly inviting disaster; and a well known journalist who was collecting funds for the war relief saw his opportunity and asked the banker to contribute. It was a bad stroke. The whole café stood at attention.

"What is the top figure on your list," the banker calmly asked.

"Hefner, with thousand dollars."

"Which Hefner, the banker or his brother, if you please, tell me?"

"The banker."

"Well, if that be so, if Hefner gives thousand dollars, I can easily give five thousand dollars and feel it less than if he gives fifty cents."

Thus speaking Berger took out his check-book and the while all the heads drew into a circle over the piece of paper, the banker filled out the promised sum, and tendered it to the happy solicitor. It created a sensation. Every new guest was told about it. "Berger gave five thousand dollars."

People hastened down the stairs, rushing to the cafe to tell to everybody the great news. It was telephoned to the Jewish and English papers. While expecting the reporters, Berger continued to speak as though nothing important had happened, of the costly things he possessed. All the while Wolf sat as quiet as a mouse. Simply struck speechless.

"I bought last week two chairs and they cost me a hundred dollars," Berger said; "a carved oak table for a hundred and fifty, a candelabra for seventy dollars; and my cane costs me forty dollars."

The eyes of every one were on this lucky mortal when Wolf

suddenly exclaimed, "That's nothing, I have two pillows, and they cost me more than a hundred dollars."

"What?" every one asked in amazement.

"Yes, yes," Wolf continued, his eyes riveted on his employer. "You see, originally they cost only six dollars a piece, feather pillows, you know; but in the last two years since I work in a bank I have pawned them every Wednesday or Thursday and redeemed them on the following Saturday. The twelve cents interest plus the fifty cents for storage the pawnshop-keeper charges every week, brought up the cost of those two pillows until they are the costliest things of their kind in the world."

When Wolf finished telling his story, Berger knew that his five thousand dollars were wasted. He left without waiting for the reporters.

Wolf lost his job at the bank.

DE THAUMATURGIA

Concerning the Working of Wonders

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

It is not possible for the Master, O my brethren, who has fought so long with those things within Himself which have hindered Him, to expect that if toys be given to children they will not play with them. But watch may rightly be held lest they injure themselves therewith; this paper, therefore, as a guard.

O my brethren, even as every dog is allowed one bite, so let every wonder-worker be allowed one miracle. For it is right that he should prove his new power, lest he be deceived by the wile and malice of the apes of Choronzon.

But with regard to the repetition of miracles the case is not similar. Firstly cometh forth the general magical objection. The business of the aspirant is to climb the Middle Pillar from Malkuth to Kether; and though the other Pillars must be grasped firmly as aids to equilibrium, he should in no wise cling to them. He aspires to the Knowledge and Conversation of his Holy Guardian Angel, and all other works are deviations. He may, however, perform miracles when necessary in order to carry out this main work; thus, he may perform a divination to assist him to discover a suitable house for the purpose, or even evoke a planetary spirit to guard him and aid him during the time of preparation, if it be necessary. But in all such works let him be well assured in himself that his sole object is really that Knowledge and Conversation. Otherwise, he has broken concentration. And the One Work alone being White Magick, all others are Black Magick.

Secondly ariseth a similar objection derived from considerations of Energy. For all miracles involve loss; as it is said, "she perceived that virtue had gone out of Him." The exception is therefore as follows, that such miracles as tend to the conservation or renewal of Energy are lawful. Thus the preparation of the Elixir of Life is blameless; and the practices of the IX° of O. T. O. in general, so far as they have for object the gain of Strength, Youth and Vitality.

It may further be considered just to perform miracles to aid others, within certain limits. One must consciously say: I deliberately sacrifice Energy and my own Great Work for this Object. Therefore the magician must first of all calculate whether or no the Object be worthy of the sacrifice. Thus, in the first year of the Path of the Master Therion, he, with V. H. Frater Volo Noscere, evoked the Spirit Buer to save the life of V. H. Frater Iehi Aour; saying in themselves: The life of this holy man is of vast importance to this Aeon; let us give up this small portion of our strength for this great end. The answer might have been made: Nay, nothing is ever lost; let him rather work out this evil Karma of ill-health, and die and incarnate anew in youth and strength. It is hard even now to say if this had been better. The holy man did indeed recover, did attain to yet greater things, did awake a great people to aspiration; no operation could ever have been more successful. Yet still remaineth doubt as to whether the natural order of things had not conceived a finer flowering.

But this is a general objection of the sceptical sort to all miracles of whatever kind, and leadeth anon into the quagmire of arguments about Free Will. The adept will do better to rely upon the Book of the Law, which urgeth constantly to action. Even rash action is better than none, by that Light; let the magician then argue that his folly is part of that natural order which worketh all so well.

And this may be taken as a general license to perform any and every miracle according to one's Will.

The argument has therefore been swung to each extreme; and, like all arguments, ends in chaos.

The above concerning true miracles; but with regard to false miracles the case is altogether different.

Since it is part of the Magick of every one to cause both Nature and man to conform to the Will, man may lawfully be influenced by the performance of miracles. But true miracles should not be used for this purpose; for it is to profane the nature of the miracle, and to cast pearls before swine; further, man is so built that he will credit false miracles, and regard true miracles as false. It is also useful at times for the magician to prove to them that he is an impostor; therefore, he can easily expose his false miracles, where this must not be done where they are true; for to deny true miracles is to injure the power to perform them.

Similarly, none of the other objections cited above apply to false miracles; for they are not, properly speaking, magick at all, and come under the heading of common acts. Only in so far as common acts are magick do they come under consideration, and here the objection may be raised that they are, peculiarly, Error; that they simulate, and so blaspheme, the Truth. Certainly this is so, and they must only be performed for the purpose of blinding the eyes of the malicious, and then only in that peculiar spirit of mockery which delights them that be initiates in the Comedy of Pan.

The end of the matter then is that as in Comedy and Tragedy all things are lawful, live thou in Comedy or Tragedy eternally, never blinding thyself to think Life aught but mummery, and perform accordingly the false miracles or the true, as may be Thy Will.

Love is the law, love under will.

THE MASS OF SAINT SECAIRE

From the French of Barbey de Rochechouart
Translated by Mark Wells

Outside the village inn at Arques-le-Roi in Gascony sat Captain Pierre Larue, leaning on his crutch and chatting to the local doctor over a bottle of Burgundy. “Another week, and you may burn that for firewood,” said the doctor, pointing to the crutch; “but, as I told you, no more active service.”

“I have something better than that,” replied the soldier. “As you know, I care for adventure, and for adventure only. When I heard your opinion, there was only one thing for me to do; I wrote to cousin Henri in Paris, and he has got me a position I would rather hold than take out of my knapsack that field-marshal’s baton that they told me hid there!”

“And what is that?” asked the doctor.

“I am to go with du Chaillu to the Gold Coast — with du Chaillu, the greatest of all our explorers! Think of that! New country, never seen by man, great forests, each one as large as Gascony, rivers to which the Rhone is but a mountain stream, strange flowers and fruits, wild men, wild beasts — ah! my friend, the greatest of all the wonders of the world is there — the ape-man, twice a man’s height, so strong that he can twist a rifle-barrel as I twist this piece of cord — and we are going after him: we shall catch him, and cage him, and bring him back to France!”

“And what of little Félise while you are catching the ape-man? Hadn’t you better catch her first?”

“Ah no! I trust her. And she is better with her people for a year or two. She is very young yet to marry. And they will never let her marry any one else; there are family reasons, too, you know. Besides, she loves me. Ah! bonjour, Monsieur le Curé,” he broke off, rising on his crutch and bowing. The doctor rose, too, but his bow was painfully formal. The priest gave them his greeting, and passed on.

He was an extraordinary type, strong and long, but so lean that he enjoyed the reputation of the most stern asceticism. His face was in contradiction, for it was haughty, passionate, ambitious, and overwhelmingly sensual, with an expression of avid and insatiable desire. His eyes were dead, lack-lustre wells of quenchless passion. He was either a very good or a very bad man.

“You do not like Father de Choisy,” said Larue.

The doctor was silent a moment. “Why should a man of his noble family and his amazing ability be lost in this desert?” he said at last. “He ought to be a bishop, by now, and here he is in Arques-le-Roi. Oh well! we know what we know. We have seen what we have seen.” The soldier’s frankness took some offence. “I cannot hear you speak evil of my priest,” said he.

“I was wrong,” replied the doctor, crossing himself, “and may God pardon me! I had better stick to my bistoury. Here’s your hated rival, by the way. A surly fellow swaggered towards them and, sitting down at a table on the other side of the doorway, called for brandy. He was already partly drunk, and his nod to the others barely civil; his greeting an unintelligible grunt. When the patron of the inn came out with the brandy, he invited him to take a “petit verre.” The good man complied.

“Should I fear a drunken lout of that type for a rival?” said the soldier aside to his medical friend.

The young man, whose name was Dufour, cast a hostile glance at the Captain, and, touching his glass to the innkeeper’s, proposed “The fairest eyes, and the truest heart in Arques!” The good man drank willingly; he did not guess that all this would lead up to a brawl. Dufour’s next toast was more provocative. “Drink to my love, the fair Félise!” he cried. Captain Larue made no movement; ‘Felise’ was non-committal, though he knew that insult was intended.

“I am a lucky man, patron,” the boor went on; “she loves me so, Félise! Every night we have a stolen meeting in the wood behind the château. The old man suspects nothing, or the dragon on guard either. Ah, but she is sweet, the little piece of mutton!”

This time the doctor spoke to his friend. “It is useless to have a row. Let us go down to your house together!” Larue nodded, and rose stiffly. “Bon soir, patron!” he said, and the old man rose politely and returned the salutation. But the youth was out for trouble, and filled his glass again.

“And here’s luck to my Félise; and when I’ve done with her, may she marry some rotten old cripple!” Larue turned and faced him.

“Your conversation is interesting, sir; pardon me if I ask whether you are referring to me!” The sot replied with the one French monosyllable that cannot be construed as a compliment.

Larue turned and faced him. He clubbed his crutch, and struck the boor a swinging blow on the head. He dropped like a tree under the axe of the backwoodsman. The captain took no further notice; he walked home nonchalantly with the doctor. “If I were not a good Catholic,” was the latter’s only comment, “I could cry Vive la Revolution Sociale! To think that that swine should be the richest man in Arques!” Just then the door of a very smart little house opened, and a lady appeared. She was dressed in widow’s weeds, very heavily and very quietly, and she had composed her face to melancholy. Sacred books were in her hand; she was evidently on her way to vespers. Her face belied the rest of her attire; for all its composure, it radiated some element of matured rottenness which would have better suited a woman of the Buttes Montmatre or the Halles. Evil, conscious, joyous evil, laughed behind her mask. The soldier could hardly refrain from a gesture of aversion as she passed. “I am not a good Catholic, my dear doctor,” he replied, “for charity is above all the Catholic virtue; and when I see that woman I say ‘There goes the devil to mass.’” “Shame!” cried the doctor, “the good Marquise! she is the model of all the virtues. I wonder what my hospital would do without her. Why, she offered to nurse your leg!” “I know, I’m a brute,” answered the soldier, “and I’ve a silly way of trusting instinct instead of reason; if I must find you a reason, it’s this; I notice that the children avoid her. Come in, and have a glass of wine before we part. Next week I’ll be packing my kit, and off on the long trail again!” “Well,” laughed the doctor, “with our funny likes and dislikes, you had better bring your ape-man back to Arques to teach us manners. I wish I had seen the world,” he added wistfully; “here I am, a poor three-franc doctor in a lost little village in Gascony. I cannot even keep up with the progress of medi-

cine. But God knows what is best for all of us." "He certainly has blessed us with good wine," laughed Larue, and brought out his most ancient bottle.

II.

It was two and a half years later. It was midnight. The great clock of the ancient church of Arques tolled twelve. Arques, by the way, was a place of some ecclesiastical importance. As its name, Arques-le-Roi, implied, it had at one time been a favorite resort of the Kings of France, who had a château there. This chateau had passed into the hands of the Dufours, enormously wealthy manufacturers of silk, with factories at Lyon employing 20,000 people.

So the church was disproportionate to the village. It contained some extraordinary fine stained glass, and the architecture was superb. It occupied a charming situation against the slope of a green hill, crowned with fantastic rocks about which popular fancy wove many a legend of fays, and druids, and magicians.

It was winter, and the skies were cold — glittering with stars. But when the half hour sounded after midnight, and the vestry door opened suddenly, young Dufour, who came out, was pale and sweating heavily like one in a great fever. He staggered rather than walked; he seemed to grope both for sight and for support. Presently, reaching the white road, he seemed to recover himself a little; but he still shook and trembled as he walked along it.

Presently de Choisy himself came out. He was in perfect possession of all his faculties; but instead of turning into his house, as might have been expected, his long determined stride took him to the old bridge across the river. On this bridge were certain shelters, Gothic in type, which had been shrines before the Revolution. At the sound of his step, the lady who so aroused the antipathy of Captain Larue stepped out of the central niche. "You are late, François!" she cried. "It is a wonder I am here at all, Jeanne; something happened."

"Good!"

"It nearly killed Dufour."

"Oh how splendid! How I wish I had been there. What was it?"

"Probably imagination. But I'm not given that way. Dufour howled, and then fainted. Bringing him round has kept me all this time."

"But what was it?"

"Well, it seemed to both of us that there was something above the altar — something with an ass' head and bat's wings; but enormous — enormous!"

"Oh how I wish I had been there!"

"You shall come next time. But he must never know, of course."

"Of course. These three months have been hell upon earth. How happy I am!" She put a hand upon his arm, and a look of tigerish ecstasy came into her eyes.

"To be the altar!" she cried, "to hold the chalice of the Living One! To outrage God and Christ! I live for nothing else! Here was what hindered me!" She drew a square black case from the folds of her heavy fur.

"The imp of Satan?" laughed the priest.

"You told me; I obeyed."

"No baptism, no burial. But not here. Let us go to the old well behind Pére Fauchard's orchard!"

As they walked the conversation turned on other themes. It appeared that Dufour, an atheist, not by conviction, but by perversity, and very superstitious, was squandering his father's millions on an attempt to learn black magic. He was absolutely crazy about Félise, the betrothed of Larue, and not only used the priest to teach him the Black Art, which he supposed a short cut to all his longings, but to supply him with information, and to use his influence with the girl's parents. The mother, a bigot, was rather in favor of the rich young man; but the father was an old soldier, and counselled Félise to be true to his brother-in-arms. No news had come from Larue in the two years, except one letter, dirty and brief, written in pencil with a hand quaking with high fever, in which he announced that he was well, but was about to plunge into a swamp even deadlier than that he had been through, and heaven only knew when he could write again.

De Choisy then began to speak of his own affairs. He seemed to build great hopes of his bishopric on Dufour's wealth and influence; strings were being pulled in all directions at Rome and elsewhere.

"How good you are!" cried the Marquise, "you never reproach me. I can never forgive myself that it was I who broke your career."

"It was worth it," he replied, with a smile.

"I have sold my soul to the devil," she purred, "to you — and the price is your bishopric. You shall have it! And will you give Dufour his heart's wish, too? I should like him to have that thin little beast of a Félise!"

"I think she would yield but for her father!"

"Well — can we not do as we did for my — for the Marquise?"

"I think we may have to. It is a pity; the doctor here is a great fool, but he is incorruptible, and he suspects me, for all my holy orders."

They came to the well. The priest took the black bag. "In the name of the devil," he cried aloud, "sin to sin, shame to shame, fire to fire, child of Satan, I give thee to thy father!" With that he flung the bag into the well. Then the apostate priest and the wretched victim of his abominable desires embraced with all the ecstasy of long-pent passion.

An hour later they suddenly became aware of the gray world without their self-kindled hell of unlawful lust.

On the hard road a mile away they heard the hoofs of a great horse that thundered through the night. They started up in alarm; who, in the devil's name, rode such a gallop in the small hours before dawn? With quick understanding of the exigencies they parted silently. They had no need of assignations; they would meet again at the first mass of the morning.

III.

Indeed, the morning brought some confirmation of their alarm. One of de Choisy's plans — a plan which would net him half a million francs could he carry it through — had gone exceedingly agley. For the horseman of the night was none other than our old friend Larue, back safe and sound from Africa. He had taken horse and ridden like the wind. He could not waste a moment on his way to the girl whose love had helped him to endure the thousand hardships of his journey, and steeled him to be sword and shield to du Chaillu, to bring his expedition to a successful end. The fabled ape-man was no fable after all, but a reality.

The news was all over the village by early mass. The good

old patron of the inn, awakened by Larue with a colossal shout, had served him breakfast, and as the early laborers passed, they spread the tidings. Larue had gone straight over to the château of his betrothed to put an end to her anxieties — a man from Africa does not stand on calling-hours — and every one was in raptures. Except Dufour.

This forlorn wretch sought out de Choisy, and found him at breakfast, in his garden; for the morning had broken warm and sunny. The youth was in a state bordering on madness; having blasphemed God, he now blasphemed the devil; and he brutally reminded the priest that he had invested a quarter of a million francs or thereabouts in black magic, and all he had had for it was the scare of his life. The priest put him off smoothly; all would yet go well; they would find a way to get rid of the obnoxious soldier. But Dufour had spent the night with the brandy bottle, to try to recover the nerve which he had lost when the apparition above the altar had knocked him senseless; he had tried the same medicine for the shock of the news of Larue's return; and he was in no condition to listen to the priest's sophistries. In vain de Choisy explained that the appearance in the church was a sort of warning of the ill luck that had followed, that it was only needful to evoke the devil again, ask his advice, and follow his instructions.

Luckily Madame la Marquise de Branlecu happened to pass by. On her arm was a basket of fine cakes and meats; she was visiting her poor. She paused, and looked over the wall, courtesying to the priest and asking his blessing. But Dufour, now savagely drunk, roared out his story at her. Her woman's wit rose deft to the occasion. "How nice for you!" she exclaimed, pretending to misunderstand, "and so your friend has come back after you thought him lost. You must ask the good father to say for him the Mass of St. Sécaire!" She courtesied again; the priest rose and blessed her solemnly; Dufour stood aghast. Her misunderstanding, her nonchalance, stupefied him. The priest improved the occasion. "You are a young fool," he said; "go home and drink no more. Come to me when you are sober! I promise you by the faith of him we saw last night that you shall have your wish." With a heavy hand on the wretch's shoulder, he pushed him through the gate.

Some hours later, the Marquise sought her lover in the confessional. "Abandoned woman!" he cried out upon her, "are you so lost that you dare to mention that accursed rite? I have sinned, no doubt, but — the Mass of Saint Sécaire!"

"My dear Father," she answered laughingly, "I dare not argue with a priest upon theology. But it seems to me that we have no hope of salvation — unless we repent, which the devil forbid! — and that being so, the best thing we can do is to stand as high as we can in the hierarchy of the damned! Come, let us do it! If it succeeds, the money means success for us; if it fails, we are no worse off. Besides, I want to do it; I want to do it! I want to do it! I want to be your clerk!" "By all the flames of hell!" replied the apostate, "certainly men are lost through women. I will do it, though the devil drag us to damnation in the very church itself!"

That evening de Choisy explained to Dufour the peculiar merits of the Mass of Saint Sécaire. "Let it work quickly!" grumbled the fool, "I bet he wastes no time in putting her in the pen."

In point of fact, the preparations for the mass took longer than those for the marriage; the Church joined Captain Larue and Félise D'Aubigny in holy matrimony only four days later.

It was a hard task to persuade Dufour to patience; but one cannot perform the Mass of Saint Sécaire except at the half-moon when she is waning. The priest and his mistress thought it best to admit him to a portion of their secrets; and he was comforted.

The Marquise exercised all her fascination and her tact; he had only a few weeks to wait; if he got no satisfaction by then, why, we were all in the same boat. We would all give up this silly magic, which led nowhere; Dufour should have his money back; we would try to get Félise for him in some other way, and all remain good friends.

And, alone with de Choisy: "If the fool kicks, put him on to cocaine; he'll be mad in ten days, and no one will believe a word he may say. But that's a last resource."

One night — they were rehearsing the mass for the grand occasion — she asked him point blank if he believed in magic.

"Well," he answered, "I do and I don't. Nothing has ever happened — nothing to be sure of. And yet — I hardly know how to put it — well — it comes off. I do an evocation to produce a certain effect: nothing comes of it. But I hear a fortnight later, perhaps, that something happened at that very time which brings about that effect in a perfectly natural way."

She showed that she did not care if it happened or no. "I love it; I love it!" she cried; "there is nothing else in the world for me. But I want to see the devil myself; I want to give him all I have given you." The priest made a wry face; then he turned and crushed her with a kiss. "I love you for everything," he cried.

IV.

The great clock of Arques-le-Roi boomed out eleven strokes. Instantly, at a distance of some three miles, a man's voice answered it.

The man was Father de Choisy. He was dressed in his most noble vestments, but the crosses on them had been elaborated by dividing each arm into two parts, so that each cross made four Ys at the base. He was standing at the ruined altar of a deserted chapel, a place long since given over to the owl and bat. There was enough roof left to give shelter to occasional tramps or gypsies, but all trace of door or window was departed. By his side stood the atrocious woman who inspired him, robed also as a priest, but with her garments looped in such a manner as to make the dress indecent. There were two lights upon the altar, candles of black wax, both on the north side of what served for crucifix.

This was a live toad nailed to a scarlet cross. Around it was wrapped a strip of linen, torn from one of Captain Larue's shirts by a bribed laundress. For incense a stick of yellow sulphur smouldered on charcoal.

Through the open roof the stars looked calmly down upon the profanation. The voice of de Choisy was the sole vibration in that still air. He began to say the Mass, but reversing the order of the words of every sentence. His voice was a peculiar nasal drone, rising and falling by sharp and inharmonious changes. When he should have made the sign of the cross, instead he spat upon the ground, and crossed it with his left foot. The divine names he replaced by a peculiar hissing whistle.

The host was triangular, made of unleavened oatmeal mixed with blood. For chalice he used a vessel consecrated to all baseness and impurity, and the cloth with which he covered it was a

napkin drenched in blood. It held no wine, but water from that well where he had hidden the evidence of his guilt.

As the hideous rite proceeded, the priest became aware of great need of firmness. His knees shook under him; again and again he looked round as though to see some presence that he felt. No: there was nobody there but his clerk, whose flaming red hair shone like fire itself in the night, curling out like serpents from under the biretta, and whose tigerish green eyes were blazing with intense excitement. Neither noticed that the stars no longer shone above the chapel; neither realized that the atmosphere had become suddenly hot and suffocating.

It is impossible to tell the details of the final consecration of the accursed elements, with what defilements and curses the consummation of the mass took place, or with what hideous gestures the apostates abandoned themselves to the adoration. But this must be told, that with the consecrated water the priest baptized the toad in the name of Pierre Larue, saying: "As this creature of toads shall wither and die upon the cross, so let it be with Pierre Larue!"

The great clock of Arques-le-Roi boomed midnight. The ceremony ended. The hysteria of the abominable celebrants died down; suddenly the woman took the priest's arm. "Look!" she cried. The priest came to himself. The whole chapel was ablaze with globes of fire, and the storm shook the walls of the chapel with whirling rage. A rotten beam came crashing from the roof. "Come away!" said the priest, unshaken, "there is danger here." But at that instant the storm died down; the electricity of the air discharged itself finally to earth; the stars shone out again. But the horror of real loneliness enveloped the celebrants as they stood without the chapel. From their sanctuary they had come back into the world; and they were no longer of the world. They had cut themselves off irrevocably from their fellow-creatures. The realization came to them simultaneously; for a moment they stood aghast. Then the woman's passion turned loneliness to exaltation; she clung wildly to her accomplice, and their mouths met in solemn resignation to, and acceptance of, their ineffable and appalling doom.

V.

It was six months later. Pierre Larue and his bride had returned from a long honeymoon, beginning at St. Moritz, and continuing through Pallanza and Florence, Rome and Naples, whence they had gone to Seville for Easter, and returned through Spain.

The village heard that they were well, and Dufour was in despair. But the priest had bethought him to pretend that the devil had given him a certain "Wine of the Sabbath," and plied him with a decoction of strange-sounding but quite innocent herbs which they gathered in mysterious ways at moonwane; in this brew the cunning priest had infused solutions of morphine and cocaine. The sot soon took the habit, and thought less of Félise every day; he spent most of his time running to the priest's house for a draught of the Devil's Wine. De Choisy naturally refused to supply it for home consumption; unless it were kept under a priest's roof (it appeared) it would lose its virtue.

It was early in June when Madame Larue came to the priest's house. She was a slight pretty girl with dark brown hair, a quiet and pleasing manner of real delicacy and elegance. Marriage had apparently not changed her; she was still looking out upon the world with the child-eyes of innocence. One could see that she feared no evil; she had never known it. Her manner towards the priest was as simple and reverent as if she had been at first communion. She told him her trouble very childishly, as if he had indeed been her father in the flesh. "Pierre is changed," she said; "he is not the same man that I married. I think he is ill, but he will not admit it. He does not seem to care about any thing. He is always drowsy, and I think he has lost flesh." De Choisy gave her the obvious counsel, to tell her trouble to the doctor, ask him to dinner, and get him to make a quiet examination of her husband. She promised to do so, and went away smiling. Only a few minutes later Dufour arrived for a dose of the Devil's Wine. "Courage, my son!" cried the excited priest, "the Mass of Saint Sécaire is working at last. Pierre Larue is sick of a mysterious malady. Courage, and a little more patience; the goal is in sight."

Two months later the illness of Larue was the common talk. Occasionally he would sally forth as of old to drink his wine on the terrace of the inn; but he hardly spoke to any one, and would fall asleep in the sun, his Pommard barely tasted. He had grown strangely thin and haggard; his weak leg seemed to give him trouble, and he walked leaning heavily on a stout cane. The doctor had no idea what was the matter with him; his treatment had no effect whatever. One day the patron of the inn asked him point-blank if he knew, and if he hoped; the doctor shrugged his shoulders. The innkeeper bent down and whispered in his ear. "Everybody says that he is dying of the Mass of St. Sécaire." "Bah, my friend, God is stronger than the devil. I am a good Catholic, I hope, but this is superstition, not religion. Trust me; I'll get to the bottom of it. It's more like poison than anything I know; but I don't know what poison could produce the symptoms; besides, his wife's devoted to him, and the servants have been with him for twenty years." However, he wrote a letter that night to a Paris doctor, one Arouet, who had been with Larue on his travels. "Your old friend is sick," he wrote, "beyond either my diagnosis or my treatment. You know his constitution, and you are up-to-date in medical knowledge as I, alas! cannot afford to be. Will you come and see him?"

A fortnight later the great doctor was with his friend. He made a thorough examination, and took back to the local doctor samples of blood and so on for analysis. Arouet was working at the microscope that evening in the doctor's study. "You know," said the local man, "this is one of the mysterious cases which make men superstitious. The village folk all say that a bad priest has bewitched him with the Mass of St. Sécaire." "What in the devil's name is that?" cried the man at the microscope. "Look here!" and the other took down a copy of Bladé's "Quatorze superstitions populaires de la Gascogne," and pointed out a passage in its early pages.

The great man read it in astonishment; it was as follows.

"Gascon peasants believe that to revenge themselves on their enemies bad men will sometimes induce a priest to say a Mass called the Mass of Saint Sécaire. Very few priests know this mass, and three-fourths of those who do know it would not say it for love or money. None but wicked priests dare to perform the gruesome ceremony, and you may be quite sure that they will have a very heavy account to render for it at the last day. No curate or bishop, not even the archbishop of Auch, can pardon them; that right belongs to the Pope of Rome alone. The Mass of Saint Sécaire may be said only in a ruined or deserted church, where owls mope and hoot, where bats flit in the gloaming, where gypsies lodge of nights, and where toads squat under the desecrated altar. Thither the bad priest comes by night with his

light o'love, and at the first stroke of eleven he begins to mumble the mass backwards, and ends just as the clocks are knelling the midnight hour. His leman acts as clerk. The host he blesses is black and has three points; he consecrates no wine, but instead he drinks the water of a well into which the body of an unbaptized infant has been flung. He makes the sign of the cross, but it is on the ground and with his left foot. And many other things he does which no good Christian could look upon without being struck blind and deaf and dumb for the rest of his life. But the man for whom the mass is said withers away little by little, and nobody can say what is the matter with him; even the doctors can make nothing of it. They do not know that he is slowly dying of the Mass of St. Sécaire."

"You know," said the sad little man, "I am a good Catholic, and I sometimes wonder whether God does not now and then allow the Devil such power. Certainly Larue is wasting terribly, and I believe the priest here is a bad man."

"To hell with your nonsense!" roared the other, "you ought to be ashamed of yourself, you, with your scientific training! If he's a bad man, you're a bad doctor! But I don't blame you; as it happens, I'm one of about three men in France who can tell you what is wrong. Come and look at this slide!" The local man came over. "Those things are filaria," explained the Paris doctor, "it's a kind of worm; you get it in drinking-water. Poor old Larue is dying of what the Africans call the Sleeping Sickness, and there's not a damned thing we can any of us do to save him."

"Ah!" sighed the other, "there is mercy in God; it would have been more hopeful if he were dying of the Mass of St. Sécaire!"

"Incorrigible!" shouted the man from Paris, the whole argument of the incompatibility of an all-powerful and yet benevolent deity with the existence of the plagues that torture man thundering through his ill-trained and therefore atheistic mind.

VI.

Seven years had passed. It was the high Mass of Easter in the Cathedral at Auch. In her carved oak seat, with its gilt coronet, sat the most devout and most esteemed of the ladies of the district, Jeanne, Marquise de Branlecu, her charms yet riper and lovelier than of old. Humbly she knelt to receive the blessing of François de Choisy, the Cardinal Archbishop.

And further down the nave were two others; Dufour and a woman, the long agony of her life making her look twice her age — his wife. For after the death of Pierre, Félise had bowed to the inevitable, and accepted the millions of the great silk manufacturer of Lyon. They have three charming children.

A POEM

By ALEISTER CROWLEY

I have ransacked heaven and earth,
  Hilarion, for gramarye
Of words to witness to thy worth.
  For incense-clouds of poesy
I have ransacked heaven and earth.

God came, and Light and Love and Life;
  The mystic Rose flowered fair and fain;
All skies ensphered the worshipped wife;
  All failed in fragrance; all in vain
God came, and Light and Love and Life.

Jewels and snows and flowers and streams
  Lent flashing beauties to my verse;
They are but phantoms fed on dreams
  To thy reality — I curse
Jewels and snows and flowers and streams.

I sought for fancy's witch-device;
  Arabian fable, Indian hymn,
Chinese design and Persian spice —
  Besides thy truth how ghostly dim
Is fancy's bodiless witch-device!

I love the legends of the past;
  Egypt, Assyria, Greece and Rome,
The Celtic rune, the saga blast —
  Thou art the sea, and they the foam,
The lovely legends of the past.

In the heart's wordless exaltation,
  The silence of the depth of things,
There only sobs mine adoration;
  There only may I wave my wings —
Silence, and love, and exaltation.

TO-DAY

By DAVID ROSENTHAL

To-day, I live again
The love of yesterday;
The rose that shed
Its petals red
Still blows its perfume on my way.

The lips I pressed one time
I press again this hour;
The vintage dead,
Still spills its red
Enchantment, like some dawn-flung shower.

Once rolled your tears, like rain
From half reluctant skies;
And now like dew,
The tears of you
Again find refuge in mine eyes.

The hours you gave me once,
Of laughter, lutes and dance,
Are gusts of song
That blow along
The years' monotonous expanse.

To-day I live the love
That was youth's major part;
The rose that died
Once at my side
Still bleeds its fragrance in my heart.

ABSINTHE — THE GREEN GODDESS

By ALEISTER CROWLEY

I.

Keep always this dim corner for me, that I may sit while the Green Hour glides, a proud pavane of Time. For I am no longer in the city accursed, where Time is horsed on the white gelding Death, his spurs rusted with blood.

There is a corner of the United States which he has overlooked. It lies in New Orleans, between Canal street and Esplanade avenue; the Mississippi for its base. Thence it reaches northward to a most curious desert land, where is a cemetery lovely beyond dreams, its walls low and whitewashed, within which straggles a wilderness of strange and fantastic tombs; and hard by is that great city of brothels which is so cynically mirthful a neighbor. As Félicien Rops wrote, — or was it Edmond d'Haraucourt? — la Prostitution et la Mort sont frère et soeur — les fils de Dieu! At least the poet of La Légende des Sexes was right, and the psycho-analysts after him, in identifying the Mother with the Tomb. This, then, is only the beginning and end of things, this "quartier macabre" beyond the North Rampart; and the Mississippi on the other side, is like the space between, our life which flows, and fertilizes as it flows, muddy and malarious as it may be, to empty itself into the warm bosom of the Gulf Stream, which (in our allegory) we may call the Life of God.

But our business is with the heart of things; we must go beyond the crude phenomena of nature if we are to dwell in the spirit. Art is the soul of life; and the Old Absinthe House is heart and soul of the old quarter of New Orleans.

For here was the headquarters of no common man — no less than a real pirate — of Captain Lafitte, who not only robbed his neighbors, but defended them against invasion. Here, too, sat Henry Clay, who lived and died to give his name to a cigar. Outside this house no man remembers much more of him than that; but here, authentic and, as I imagine, indignant, his ghost stalks grimly.

Here, too, are marble basins hollowed — and hallowed! — by the drippings of the water which creates by baptism the new spirit of absinthe.

I am only sipping the second glass of that "fascinating, but subtle poison, whose ravages eat men's heart and brain" that I have ever tasted in my life; and as I am not an American anxious for quick action, I am not surprised and disappointed that I do not drop dead upon the spot. But I can taste souls without the aid of absinthe; and besides, this is magic absinthe! The spirit of the house has entered into it; it is an elixir, the masterpiece of an old alchemist, no common wine.

And so, as I talk with the patron concerning the vanity of things, I perceive the secret of the heart of God himself; this, that everything, even the vilest thing, is so unutterably lovely that it is worthy of the devotion of a God for all eternity.

What other excuse could He give man for making him? In substance, that is my answer to King Solomon.

II.

The barrier between divine and human things is frail but inviolable; the artist and the bourgeois are only divided by a point of view. "A hair divides the false and true."

I am watching the opalescence of my absinthe, and it leads me to ponder upon a certain very curious mystery, persistent in legend. We may call it the mystery of the rainbow.

Originally, in the fantastic but significant legend of the Hebrews, the rainbow is mentioned as the sign of salvation. The world had been purified by water, and was ready for the revelation of Wine. God would never again destroy his work, but ultimately seal its perfection by a baptism of fire.

Now, in this analogue also falls the coat of many colors which was made for Joseph, a legend which was regarded as so important that it was subsequently borrowed for the romance of Jesus. The veil of the Temple, too, was of many colors. We find, further east, that the Manipura Cakkra — the Lotus of the City of Jewels — which is an important centre in Hindu anatomy, and apparently identical with the solar plexus, is the central point of the nervous system of the human body, dividing the sacred from the profane, or the lower from the higher.

In western Mysticism, once more we learn that the middle grade of initiation is called Hodos Camelionis, the Path of the Cameleon; there is here evidently an allusion to this same mystery. We also learn that the middle stage in Alchemy is when the liquor becomes opalescent.

Finally, we note among the visions of the Saints one called the Universal Peacock, in which the totality of things is perceived thus royally apparelled.

Would it were possible to assemble in this place the cohorts of quotation; for indeed they are beautiful with banners, flashing their myriad rays from cothurn and habergeon, gay and gallant in the light of that Sun which knows no fall from Zenith of high noon!

Yet I must needs already have written so much to make clear one pitiful conceit: can it be that in the opalescence of absinthe is some occult link with this mystery of the Rainbow? For undoubtedly one glass does indefinably and subtly insinuate the drinker within the secret chamber of Beauty, does kindle his thoughts to rapture, adjust his point of view to that of the artist, at least in that degree of which he is originally capable, weave for his fancy a gala dress of stuff as many-coloured as the mind of Aphrodite.

Oh Beauty! Long did I love thee, long did I pursue thee, thee elusive, thee intangible! And lo! thou enfoldest me by night and day in the arms of gracious, of luxurious, of shimmering silence.

III.

The Prohibitionist must always be a person of no moral character; for he cannot even conceive of the possibility of a man capable of resisting temptation. Still more, he is so obsessed, like the savage, by the fear of the unknown, that he regards alcohol as a fetich, necessarily alluring and tyrannical.

With this ignorance of human nature goes an even grosser ignorance of the divine nature.

He does not understand that the universe has only one possible purpose; that, the business of life being happily completed by the production of the necessities and luxuries incidental to comfort, the residuum of human energy needs an outlet. The

surplus of Will must find issue in the elevation of the individual towards the godhead; and the method of such elevation is by religion, love, and art. Now these three things are indissolubly bound up with wine, for they are themselves species of intoxication.

Yet against all these things we find the prohibitionist, logically enough. It is true that he usually pretends to admit religion as a proper pursuit for humanity; but what a religion! He has removed from it every element of ecstasy or even of devotion; in his hands it has become cold, fanatical, cruel, and stupid, a thing merciless and formal, without sympathy or humanity. Love and art he rejects altogether; for him the only meaning of love is a mechanical — hardly even physiological! — process necessary for the perpetuation of the human race. (But why perpetuate it?) Art is for him the parasite and pimp of love; he cannot distinguish between the Apollo Belvedere and the crude bestialities of certain Pompeian frescoes, or between Rabelais and Elinor Glyn.

What then is his ideal of human life? One cannot say. So crass a creature can have no true ideal. There have been ascetic philosophers; but the prohibitionist would be as offended by their doctrine as by ours. These, indeed, are not so dissimilar as appears. Wage-slavery and boredom seem to complete his outlook on the world.

There are species which survive because of the feeling of disgust inspired by them; one is reluctant to set the heel firmly upon them, however thick may be one's boots. But when they are recognized as utterly noxious to humanity — the more so that they ape its form — then courage must be found, or, rather, nausea must be swallowed.

May God send us a Saint George!

IV.

It is notorious that all genius is accompanied by vice. Almost always this takes the form of sexual extravagance. It is to be observed that deficiency, as in the cases of Carlyle and Ruskin, is to be reckoned as extravagance. At least, the word abnormality will fit all cases. Farther, we see that in a very large number of great men there has also been indulgence in drink or drugs. There are whole periods when practically every great man has been thus marked; these periods are those during which the heroic spirit has died out of their nation, and the bourgeois is apparently triumphant.

In this case the cause is evidently the horror of life induced in the artist by the contemplation of his surroundings. He must find another world, no matter at what cost.

Consider the end of the eighteenth century. In France, at that time, the men of genius were made, so to speak, possible, by the Revolution. In England, under Castlereagh, we find Blake lost to humanity in mysticism, Shelley and Byron exiles, Coleridge taking refuge in opium, Keats sinking under the weight of circumstance, Wordsworth forced to sell his soul, while the enemy, in the persons of Southey and Moore, triumphantly holds sway.

The poetically similar period in France is 1850 to 1870. Hugo is in exile, and all his brethren are given to absinthe or to hashish or to opium.

There is however another consideration more important. There are some men who possess the understanding of the City of God, and know not the keys; or, if they possess them, have not force to turn them in the wards. Such men often seek to win heaven by forged credentials. Just so a youth who desires love is too often deceived by simulacra, embraces Lydia thinking her to be Lalage.

But the greatest men of all suffer neither the limitations of the former class nor the illusions of the latter. Yet we find them equally given to what is apparently indulgence. Lombroso has foolishly sought to find the source of this in madness — as if insanity could scale the peaks of Progress while Reason recoiled from the bergschrund. The explanation is far otherwise. Imagine to yourself the mental state of him who inherits or attains the full consciousness of the artist, that is to say, the divine consciousness.

He finds himself unutterably lonely, and he must steel himself to endure it. All his peers are dead long since! Even if he find an equal upon earth, there can scarcely be companionship, hardly more than the far courtesy of king to king. There are few twin souls in genius — rare even as twin stars.

Good — he can reconcile himself to the scorn of the world. But yet he feels with anguish his duty towards it. It is therefore essential to him to be human.

Now the divine consciousness is not full-flowered in youth. The newness of the objective world preoccupies the soul for many years. It is only as each illusion vanishes before the magic of the master that he gains more and more the power to dwell in the world of Reality. And with this comes the terrible temptation — the desire to enter and enjoy rather than remain among men and suffer their illusions. Yet, since the sole purpose of the incarnation of such Master was to help humanity, he must make the supreme renunciation. It is the problem of that dreadful bridge of Islam, Al Sirak; the razor-edge will cut the unwary foot, yet it must be trodden firmly, or the traveler will fall to the abyss. I dare not sit in the Old Absinthe House for ever, wrapped in the ineffable delight of the Beatific Vision. I must write this essay, that men may thereby come at last to understand true things. But the operation of the creative godhead is not enough. Art is itself too near the Reality which must be renounced for a season.

Therefore his work is also part of his temptation; the genius feels himself slipping constantly heavenward. The gravitation of eternity draws him. He is like a ship torn by the tempest from the harbour where the master must needs take on new passengers to the Happy Isles. So he must throw out anchors; and the only holding is the mire! Thus, in order to maintain the equilibrium of sanity, the artist is obliged to seek fellowship with the grossest of mankind. Like Lord Dunsany or Augustus John, today, or like Teniers of old, he may love to sit in taverns where sailors frequent; he may wander the country with gypsies, or he may form liaisons with the vilest men and women. Edward Fitzgerald would seek an illiterate fisherman, and spend weeks in his company; Verlaine made associates of Rimbaud and Bibi la Purée; Shakespeare consorted with the Earls of Pembroke and Southampton; Marlowe was actually killed during a brawl in a low tavern. And when we consider the sex-relation, it is hard to mention a genius who had a wife or mistress of even tolerable good character. If he had one, he would be sure to neglect her for a Vampire or a Shrew. A good woman is too near that heaven of Reality which he is sworn to renounce!

And this, I suppose, is why I am interested in the woman who has come to sit at the nearest table. Let us find out her story; let

us try to see with the eyes of her soul!

V.

She is a woman of no more than thirty years of age, though she looks older. She comes here at irregular intervals, once a week or once a month; but when she comes she sits down to get solidly drunk on that alternation of beer and gin which the best authorities in England deem so efficacious.

As to her story, it is simplicity itself. She was kept in luxury for some years by a wealthy cotton broker, crossed to Europe with him, and lived in London and Paris like a queen. Then she got the idea of "respectability" and "settling down in life"; so she married a man who could keep her in mere comfort. Result: repentance, and a periodical need to forget her sorrows. She is still "respectable"; she never tires of repeating that she is not one of "those girls," but "a married woman living far up-town," and that she "never runs about with men."

It is not the failure of marriage; it is the failure of men to recognize what marriage was ordained to be. By a singular paradox, it is the triumph of the bourgeois, who is the chief supporter of marriage, that has degraded marriage to the level of the bourgeois. Only the hero is capable of marriage as the church understands it; for the marriage oath is a compact of appalling solemnity, an alliance of two souls against the world and against fate, with invocation of the great aid of the Most High. Death is not the most beautiful of adventures, as Charles Frohman said, on the "Titanic" ere she plunged, for death is unavoidable; marriage is a voluntary heroism. That marriage has to-day become a matter of convenience is the last word of the commercial spirit. It is as if one should take a vow of knighthood to combat dragons — until the dragons appeared.

So this poor woman, because she did not understand that respectability is a lie, that it is love that makes marriage sacred and not the sanction of church or state, because she took marriage as an asylum instead of as a crusade, has failed in life, and now seeks alcohol under the same fatal error.

Wine is the ripe gladness which accompanies valor and rewards toil; it is the plume on a man's lance-head, a fluttering gallantry — not good to lean upon. Therefore her eyes are glassed with horror as she gazes uncomprehending upon her fate. That which she did all to avoid confronts her; she does not realize that, had she faced it, it would have fled with all the other phantoms. For the sole reality of this universe is God.

The Old Absinthe House is not a place; it is not bounded by four walls; it is headquarters of an army of philosophies. From this dim corner let me range, wafting thought through every air, salient against every problem of mankind; for it will always return like Noah's dove to this ark, this strange little sanctuary of the Green Goddess which has been set down not upon Ararat, but by the banks of the "Father of Waters."

VI.

Ah! the Green Goddess! What is the fascination that makes her so adorable and so terrible? Do you know that French sonnet "La légende de l'absinthe?" He must have loved it well, that poet. Here are his witnesses.

> Apollon, qui pleurait le trépas d'Hyacinthe,
> Ne voulait pas céder la victoire à la mort.
> Il fallait que son âme, adepte de l'essor,
> Trouvât pour la beauté une alchemie plus sainte.
> Donc, de sa main céleste il épuise, il éreinte
> Les dons les plus subtils de la divine Flore.
> Leurs corps brisés souspirent une exhalaison d'or
> Dont il nous recueillait la goutte de — l'Absinthe!
>
> Aux cavernes blotties, aux palais pétillants,
> Par un, par deux, buvez ce breuvage d'aimant!
> Car c'est un sortilège, un propos de dictame,
> Ce vin d'opale pale avortit la misère,
> Ouvre de la beauté l'intime sanctuaire
> — Ensorcelle mon coeur, extasie mon âme!

What is there in absinthe that makes it a separate cult? The effects of its abuse are totally distinct from those of other stimulants. Even in ruin and in degradation it remains a thing apart; its victims wear a ghastly aureole all their own, and in their peculiar hell yet gloat with a sinister perversion of pride that they are not as other men.

But we are not to reckon up the uses of a thing by contemplating the wreckage of its abuse. We do not curse the sea because of occasional disasters to our mariners, or refuse axes to our woodsmen because we sympathize with Charles the First or Louis the Sixteenth. So therefore as special vices and dangers appertain to absinthe, so also do graces and virtues that adorn no other liquor.

The word is from the Greek apsinthion; it means "undrinkable" or, according to some authorities, "undelightful". In either case, strange paradox? No; for the wormwood draught itself were bitter beyond human endurance; it must be aromatized and mellowed with other herbs.

Chief among these is the gracious Melissa, of which the great Paracelsus thought so highly that he incorporated it as the chief ingredient in the preparation of his Ens Melissa Vitae, which he expected to be an elixir of life and a cure for all diseases, but which in his hands never came to perfection.

Then also there are added mint, anise, fennel and hyssop, all holy herbs familiar to all from the Treasury of Hebrew Scripture. And there is even the sacred marjoram which renders man both chaste and passionate; the tender green angelica stalks also infused in this most mystic of concoctions; for like the artemisia absinthium itself it is a plant of Diana, and gives the purity and lucidity, with a touch of the madness, of the Moon; and above all there is the Dittany of Crete of which the eastern Sages say that one flower hath more puissance in high magic than all the other gifts of all the gardens of the world. It is as if the first diviner of absinthe had been indeed a magician intent upon a combination of sacred drugs which should cleanse, fortify and perfume the human soul.

And it is no doubt that in the due employment of this liquor such effects are easy to obtain. A single glass seems to render the breathing freer, the spirit lighter, the heart more ardent, soul and mind alike more capable of executing the great task of doing that particular work in the world which the Father may have sent them to perform. Food itself loses its gross qualities in the presence of absinthe, and becomes even as manna, operating the sacrament of nutrition without bodily disturbance.

Let then the pilgrim enter reverently the shrine, and drink his absinthe as a stirrup-cup; for in the right conception of this life as an ordeal of chivalry lies the foundation of every perfection

of philosophy. “Whatsoever ye do, whether ye eat or drink, do all to the glory of God!” applies with singular force to the absintheur. So may he come victorious from the battle of life to be received with tender kisses by some green-robed archangel, and crowned with mystic vervain in the Emerald Gateway of the Opal City of God.

VII.

And now the café is beginning to fill up. This little room with its dark green woodwork, its boarded ceiling, its sanded floor, its old pictures, its whole air of sympathy with time, is beginning to exert its magic spell. Here comes a curious child, short and sturdy, with a long blonde pigtail, her slave sly and sidelong on a jolly little old man who looks as if he had stepped straight out of the pages of Balzac.

Handsome and diminutive, with a fierce moustache almost as big as the rest of him, like a regular little Spanish fighting cock, Frank, the waiter, in his long white apron, struts to them with the glasses of ice-cold pleasure, green as the glaciers themselves. He will stand up bravely with the musicians by and by, and sing us a jolly song of old Catalonia.

The door swings open again; a tall dark girl, exquisitely slim and snaky, with masses of black hair knotted about her head, comes in; on her arm is a plump woman with hungry eyes, and a mass of Titian red hair. They seem distracted from the outer world, absorbed in some subject of enthralling interest; and they drink their apéritif as if in a dream. I ask the mulatto boy who waits at my table (the sleek and lithe black panther!) who they are; but he knows only that one is a cabaret dancer, the other the owner of a cotton plantation up river. At a round table in the middle of the room sits one of the proprietors with a group of friends; he is burly, rubicund, and jolly, the very type of the Shakespearian “Mine host.” Now a party of a dozen merry boys and girls comes in; the old pianist begins to play a dance, and in a moment the whole café is caught up in the music of harmonious motion. Yet still the invisible line is drawn about each soul; the dance does not conflict with the absorption of the two strange women, or with my own mood of detachment.

Then there is a “little laughing lewd gamine” dressed all in black save for a square white collar; her smile is broad and free as the sun, and her gaze as clean and wholesome and inspiring. There is the big jolly blonde Irish girl in the black velvet béret and coat, and the white boots, chatting with two boys in khaki from the border; and there is the Creole girl in pure white cap-à-pie, with her small piquant face and its round button of a nose, and its curious deep rose flush, and its red little mouth, impudently smiling. Around these islands seems to flow as a general tide the more stable life of the quarter. Here are honest goodwives seriously discussing their affairs, and heaven only knows if it be love or the price of sugar which engages them so wholly. There are but a few commonplace and uninteresting elements in the café; and these are without exception men. The giant Big Business is a great tyrant; he seizes all the men for slaves, and leaves the women to make shift as best they can for — all that makes life worth living. Candies and American Beauty Roses are of no use in an emergency! So, even in this most favored corner, there is dearth of the kind of men that women need.

At the table next me sits an old, old man. He has done great things in his day, they tell me, an engineer, who first found it possible to dig Artesian wells in the Sahara desert. The Legion of Honor glows red in his shabby surtout. He comes here, one of the many wrecks of the Panama Canal, a piece of jetsam cast up by that tidal wave of speculation and corruption. He is of the old type, the thrifty peasantry; and he has his little income from the Rente. He says that he is too old to cross the ocean — and why should he, with the atmosphere of old France to be had a stone’s throw from his little apartment in Bourbon Street? It is a curious type of house that one finds in this quarter in New Orleans; meagre without, within one comes unexpectedly upon great spaces, carved wooden balconies on which the rooms open. So he dreams away his honored days in the Old Absinthe House. His rusty black, with its worn red button, is a noble wear.

Black, by the way, seems almost universal among the women; is it instinctive good taste? At least, it serves to bring up the general level of good looks. Most American women spoil what little beauty they may have by overdressing. Here there is nothing extravagant, nothing vulgar, none of the near-Paris-gown and the just-off-Bond-Street hat. Nor is there a single dress to which a Quaker could object. There is neither the mediocrity nor the immodesty of the New York woman, who is tailored or millinered on a garish pattern, with the Eternal Chorus Girl as the Ideal — an ideal which she always attains, though (Heaven knows!) in “society” there are few “front-row” types.

On the other side of me a splendid stalwart maid, modern in muscle, old only in the subtle and modest fascination of her manner, her face proud, cruel and amorous, shakes her wild tresses of gold in pagan laughter. Her mood is universal as the wind. What can her cavalier be doing to keep her waiting? It is a little mystery which I will not solve for the reader; on the contrary ——

VIII.

Yes, it was my own sweetheart (no! not all the magazines can vulgarize that loveliest of words) who was waiting for me to be done with my musings. She comes in silently and stealthily, preening and purring like a great cat, and sits down, and begins to Enjoy. She knows I must never be disturbed until I close my pen. We shall go together to dine at a little Italian restaurant kept by an old navy man, who makes the best ravioli this side of Genoa; then we shall walk the wet and windy streets, rejoicing to feel the warm subtropical rain upon our faces; we shall go down to the Mississippi, and watch the lights of the ships, and listen to the tales of travel and adventure of the mariners. There is one that moves me greatly; it is like the story of the sentinel of Herculaneum. A cruiser of the U. S. Navy was detailed to Rio de Janeiro. (This was before the days of wireless telegraphy.) The port was in quarantine; the ship had to stand ten miles out to sea. Nevertheless Yellow Jack managed to come aboard. The men died one by one. There was no way of getting word to Washington; and, as it turned out later, the Navy Department had completely forgotten the existence of the ship. No orders came; the captain stuck to his post for three months. Three months of solitude and death! At last a passing ship was signalled, and the cruiser was moved to happier waters. No doubt the story is a lie; but did that make it less splendid in the telling, as the old scoundrel sat and spat and chewed tobacco? No, we will certainly go down, and ruffle it on the wharves. There is really better fun in life than can be got by going to the movies, when you know how to make terms with Reality.

There is beauty in every incident of life; the true and the false, the wise and the foolish, are all one in the eye that beholds all without passion or prejudice; and the secret appears to lie not in the retirement from the world, but in keeping a part of oneself Vestal, sacred, impact, aloof from that self which makes contact with the external universe; in other words, in a separation of that which is and perceives from that which acts and suffers. And the art of doing this is really the art of being an artist. As a rule, it is a birthright; it may perhaps be attained by prayer and fasting; most surely, it can never be bought.

But if you have it not, this will be the best way to get it — or something like it. Give up your life completely to the task; sit daily for six hours in the Old Absinthe House, and sip the icy opal; endure till all things change insensibly before your eyes, you changing with them; till you become as gods, knowing good and evil, and this also — that they are not two but one.

It may be a long time before the veil lifts; but a moment's experience of the point of view of the artist is worth a myriad martyrdoms. It solves every problem of life and of death — which two also are one.

It translates this universe into intelligible terms, relating truly the ego with the non-ego, and recasting the prose of reason in the poetry of soul. Even as the eye of the sculptor beholds his masterpiece already existing in the shapeless mass of marble, needing only the loving-kindness of the chisel to cut away the veils of Isis, so you may (perhaps) learn to behold the sum and summit of all grace and glory from this great observatory, the Old Absinthe House of New Orleans.

V'la, p'tite chatte; c'est fini, le travail. Foutons le camp!

AT THE FEET OF OUR LADY OF DARKNESS

Translated by Aleister Crowley from the French of Izeh Kranil

Sullen and peevish, the weather steals their form from my desires! I turn over the leaves of my Verlaine; for "in my heart are tears as, in the city, rain." Devoutly I read him once more, and I burn incense to appease the mystic longing of my soul. And now, after a little, my spirit takes wing.

Deserted, my eyes follow the coral verses; my fingers unconsciously turn the pages, while poems, other than these, engrave themselves upon my brain. Poems sacred or poems accurst? Does it matter so long as they are beautiful, so long as they make me quiver?

It rains!

The raindrops strum their melody upon the casements. Upon my heart, upon my skull they seem rhythmically to drive furrows whence my sensibility, and my thought, may germinate. "For weary heart, o the song of the rain."

I have closed my Verlaine.

I will go and wake softly the silent psaltery, with its sorrowful and sacred voice. It sings to me the pious poems of long since. They are yet more poignant when heard in a place unconsecrated. For this Temple of mine is the Temple of my own Goddess, Our Lady of Darkness, kind to initiates. This Temple of mine is concentrated. It is robed in old silks of China; rich rugs from the East; skins torn from the tawny terrors of the jungle; cushions soft as the marrow of a baby's bones. Sage is the smile of my gilded idols, and the ever-burning lamp which is cooking the essence destined to evoke my dreams, starred all over with strange butterflies, which lattice its lucidity, makes itself the tireless accomplice of my vice.

The web of rushes, so hard, and yet so kind, lures me beyond resistance. My blood runs slow and cold within my veins. My eyes are overcast. My temples drone.

"Quick, Nam, a pipe! Opium is so kindly when the heart is dying." And with his spindle fingers of amber, the boy cooks the drug. Eagerly I fill my lungs.

"Now sing to me."

Softly, with the very voice of prayer, her psalms the ancient airs of over-yonder. It seems as if a breeze laden with the enervating fragrance of the plains of Annam entered with it.

He sings. I smoke.

Little by little reality slips away.

Now it is blue of twilight amid the rustle of leaves. The birds, weary of flying, send their complaints leaping to heaven, before they put their heads beneath their wings, and the sea, the great savage, with long groans, crushes against the rocks her lofty-prancing waves.

The sun has hidden himself, staining the horizon with bloody weft. It is the hour of the mirage!

Melancholy and slow, wrapped in a thousand sombre veils, I pass to and fro upon the bank, and listen to the eternal moan of the waters, and the light song of the breeze. The full fledged grass of the little wood near by, washed by the dew (and o so softly green!), asks me to trample it with my bare feet.

Briskly I take off my sandals, and so, upright in the wet greensward, wrapped closely in my veils, I think myself a great black lily, born from a magic wand.

And now I sway like the flowers on their stalks. I sway because the breeze is soft; because the sea and the leaves make music together. I sway because the dance is in myself, and because the rhythm of the waters cries to me, "Dance!"

Slowly, in cadence, I open my arms, because the branches do the same; my eyes half closed; my head keeps time with the Universe; my legs shudder; my feet irresistibly tear themselves from the ground to dance. I am going to dance until I lose breath; to dance for myself; to dance for the stars. Drunk with the fragrance of damp earth, and pine, I twist and wheel till my veils fall; until the dew covers my naked body with its dissolving kiss, until my hair falls free, and lends a lovelier veil to my dance.

I dance like one hypnotized. I clasp my hair in my hands. I bound and writhe in one immense desire for pleasure.

Now the breeze, light and warm, flits by as if the captive of my madness. The stars glint like the eyes of perverts. The sea herself has ceased its moan. It seems as if nature herself was dumb in order to admire me, and now, tiptoe, with all my body soaring, I feel myself deliciously seduced by pride.

Shining like emerald, and as green, a beautiful serpent stands

before me. His little fascinating eyes fix me, and his body, still more shining in the moonlight, sways, as subtle and as strong as myself.

I dance again. I dance continually because his eyes have told me, "It is not harm that I would do you."

Slowly he sinks to the ground. He curls in upon himself, but his gaze never leaves mine — and I dance; I dance continually —— .

From the abyss of the deep awaken squids. They cling to each other with their tentacles. Joyfully and lightly they run towards me, with little leaps upon the small white waves. O beautiful dancers!

Here they are; they surround me; they dance with me ——

Strange lights afloat that blind me!

With my eyes closed I wheel upon myself; and, as I bend, my hair kisses the grass, and seems to wish to melt in it. Lively I leap up to break the spell; to feel running over my whole body the electric shudder that they unleash.

Strange floating perfumes intoxicate me. Strange floating sounds tear me away, and deafen me. I dance; I dance, but I no longer know it, and my hair is now so heavy that it drags me down. Now I relax beyond reaction, for in the earth my hair is rooted like the grass. O dread!

Now I am rivetted to the earth. My heart bounds in my breast, that sobs so strongly that I think it will kill me; and of all that surrounds me I know no more.

Slowly the serpent crawls over my body. Softly he presses me with his rings, as a timid lover might have done. Then still more softly his teeth nibble at my breast. And now he has gone away as if afraid of his own boldness.

And now, mastering me, they only, the squids, dance a mad saraband around my body, whose impotent leaps revolt the vain.

Strange sneering laughter floats around me. O to be able to tear myself from the damp soil! O to be able to cut off this hair that has betrayed me!

What would be the good? I am weary, weary. And now the squids, bended over me, fix me with their vast phosphorescent eyes, with eyes such as I never knew, and a long shudder of terror ripples my skin.

Now they resume their maniac gallop. . . . . But whence prowl these sinister sneers of laughter?

O if I could only fly!

One of them leaves the dance, reaches towards me his horrible arms. I shut my eyes in the hope of losing consciousness, and I suffer the rape of his thousand mouths, which one after the other kiss me, and leave me, like fingers playing on a piano.

Now another advances; now another, and yet a third. Now every one of them plays upon my body, living keyboard, the most maddening sonata of sensuality.

I gasp and writhe, I shriek, I faint away; so sweet, so dangerous is the drunkenness which devours me!

Pity! my breath fails. Pity, one moment!

But what is this sneering laughter, and what frightful burning gnaws my whole being?

Little by little I feel my limbs weaken. My blood runs forth like a mountain torrent. It is they; it is they who so greedily drink it: so greedily, that I shall not have time to taste the flavor of this death!

They have taken all my bodily life; but they have spared my brain in lust of torture; to leave me conscious of the universe, to leave me the right to agonize!

If they only knew!

But they know not. Now that they are fed full, now that they have done their murder, they move gorged away, crawling heavily, hideous to behold. And in the bosom of the deep they go to slumber.

Rivetted to this wounded, lifeless body, I still think. I think intensely, for no longer does anything of matter touch me with its foil. I hover in the highest spheres, where never human may attain; there I am at my ease. Now nothing is any longer too beautiful, or too great, or too pure. I am a freed spirit, a brain redeemed. I am Thought itself, robed and throned among its hand-maidens of understanding.

And suddenly a great pity encompasses me, a pity for that poor body, worn and inert, which is no longer I; which I look upon as a tedious disease conquered at last.

And that is how, thinking to leave me only the right of martyrdom, they leave the right to beatitude; the right to Godhead! . . .

* * * * *

A warm and familiar perfume of dry leaves that shrivel, and of smoking chocolate, comes to tribadize my nostrils. The soft chanting of a beloved voice dissolves the dream. It flies. I find myself once more still stretched on the accustomed web of rushes amid the little Indian gods with their riddling smiles.

It is Nam, the faithful Nam, the epicene boy; himself the image of an idol that softly psalms the antique airs of his forsaken fatherland.

His sure instinct warns him of the end of the dream, and like a jeweller with a pearl beyond price, with his long limpid fingers he kneads the cone of miracle that makes man equal to the gods.

———

THE PRIESTESS OF THE GRAAL

The scarlet velvet clasped with star sapphires
Hangs like the sunset from the virgin throat
Upon the golden armor. Melilote
Upon the waters mad with phallic fires
Of day, the strong exultant face aspires
The spiritual breath. The firm hands dote
Upon the cloven chalice — see! there smote
Therein The Substance, sum of God's desires.

Chalcedony and coral and chrysoprase!
Quintessence of the life of moon and sun
Ablaze, abloom, ablush, Hilarion,
Within the compass of thy crimson Vase!
Lo! on my knees I crave the Sacrament. . . .
Lo! in my being buds the World's Event!

THE THIRD LIBERTY LOAN

A Roman Philosopher once remarked in a lucid moment: If you wish peace, prepare for war.

The United States of America are not really at war with Germany at all, in anything like the usual sense of the world. This is only a prophylactic war, a vaccine against war. We are fighting for international integrity and righteousness, which are the only safeguards against war. We fight merely in order that we may not have to fight again. We want peace.

It is of no use to prepare this peace by any other method than a most vigorous prosecution of the war. Were it possible for the Third Liberty Loan to fail, the result would be merely to prolong the war, to the utter exhaustion and ruin of Europe, which would in its turn destroy this country by destroying its markets abroad.

The entrance of America into the war has already done marvels to move men toward peace, not because Germany was frightened, but because all men could recognize that the participation of a new continent must render the extremist positions — on both sides — untenable.

Every month now shows statesmen on both sides better disposed to the idea of peace by negotiation and concession, a peace like that after a lover's quarrel, not like that imposed by a murder on his victim, the root of a vendetta.

America's failure to prove her power and determination could only mean that England would return to her ideas of a fight to a finish. A triumphant success for the New Liberty Loan would put such heart into all lovers of peace that an honorable settlement would follow almost instantly. For man's sake, let us stop the renewal of active warfare with the spring, if it be possible. A cent per cent. oversubscription of the Third Liberty Loan is the practical way to make this not only possible, but certain.

It is conceivable that there may be, among the readers of this article, some "enemy alien," or some sympathizer with the German cause. May I ask him if he is more 'pro-German' than myself?

From the very beginning I have tried to see this war from without, as if I were an inhabitant of some other planet. I have refused to take sides. I have exonerated Germany from all blame of starting the war; I proclaimed the Irish Republic on July 3, 1915, nine months before the riots in Dublin; I have excused the sinking of the Lusitania; I have defended the execution of Edith Cavell; I have denied that German atrocities were other than sporadic, or worse than those committed by the Russians in East Prussia; I have advocated "unrestricted" warfare of all kinds — gas and flame attacks, Zeppelin raids, and submarine blockades; I have done this in the name of Humanity, believing that, since war means ruin and death, we should use its most dreadful engines at first, as well as at last, not hiding its essential horror by a mask of academic rules. I believe that it would be better yet to kill all wounded and prisoners in cold blood. I do not see that it is more humane or chivalrous to drill a hole in a man with a bullet or a bayonet than to suffocate him with chlorine, blast him with flame, or drown him by torpedoing his ship.

For these things I have been called "pro-German," though in truth I have always had the best interest of England at heart, at least as much as Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and Mr. Lloyd George, when they denounced the Boer war and the atrocities of the concentration camps. I have been forsaken by many of my dearest friends; I have been branded as a traitor to my country, England; I have been deprived of my fortune; my associates in matters utterly apart from politics have been arrested on false charges. I have suffered ostracism, slander, and poverty; and I am still serving my guns. I want Ireland to have the freedom of Canada and Australia, and I want an honorable peace, with respect to the enemy as to a gallant foe, who shall become a loyal friend.

It is on that record that I appeal to every man and woman of like sentiments to subscribe their last dollar to the Third Liberty Loan, to pinch and save in every possible way so as to invest in this great issue, which I would rather have named the Loan of Peace with Honor.

Are you still irreconcilable, my friend, in spirit and opinion? Do you think that perhaps Aleister Crowley has been bullied or bought? I stand by every word that I have written in these three years past, in the Fatherland and elsewhere, in defence of Germany, and in favor of Irish independence. I have not been "scared," after a life spent in exploration and big-game-shooting, and watching the Secret Service watching me blow my nose! There is not enough money on this planet to buy a Poet. If I had my pleasure, I would rather end my life in some great desert or among high mountains, an hermit devoted to passionate contemplation of Truth and Beauty. I care nothing for money, or the fool things money can buy. I remain among men solely for my great love of them, that I may help to bring forth universal amity and brotherhood.

I love Germany, and, therefore, I say to you: Sell the shirt off your back, if you must, to buy the Bonds of this new Loan.

Must I descend to earthier argument, appeal to you as to an enemy, ask you only to consider your own interest? Are you so simple in your malice as to suppose that the government will in any wise be incommoded by your refusal to co-operate? The Loan will go through triumphantly, despite you. All that will happen is that you will be left with inferior security, with wealth in a less safe and less remunerative form.

The Liberty Loans are a first mortgage on your property, on your chattels or on the value of your labor. That is so, whether you like it or not. If the United States is so severe a creditor as you say, is it not wiser to get on the credit side yourself?

Is it not your own argument against the Loan that its issue will lower the value of other securities, that they must fall since they will be thrown on the market by their holders to pay for the bonds? Then hadn't you better sell yours now, before the bottom drops out of them?

Are you a friend of Germany? Indeed. Then still you should put every dollar into this Loan, and yet more so! Is it not better that the friends of Germany and not her enemies, should hold this First Mortgage on the wealth of the United States? You put yourself thereby into a position to influence public policy; in discussing terms of peace, you as a financial supporter of the war buy yourself the charter to be heard. Those who pay the piper have the right to call the tune.

Consider for a moment — friend or enemy — what would happen if the loan did actually fail?

It would not deter the administration from the pursuit of its present plan. The money would immediately be raised by taxation, or even conscription of wealth — your wealth — and collected, if necessary, at the point of the bayonet. You would not get good interest or the safest security in the world on that proposition, would you?

Could you resist, unorganized, unarmed as you are, just at the moment when, for the first time in its history, the United States has an army in seven figures? Let us suppose (it might make von Hindenburg, or the Shade of Leonidas, jealous!) that you could throw the country into civil war or revolution! Would that help Germany? Not a scrap. It would not interfere with Britain's control of the seas, or with her armies, which are now self-supporting in the matter of munitions. But it would interfere very much with the temper of people like Lord Lansdowne, who has done more for a peace which Germany could honorably accept than any other man has yet done or could do. He would immediately withdraw from his position; he would say, "I was wrong. Civilization or no civilization, we must go on till Germany and Germans are wiped from the face of the map."

"Ah, but Germany, on the contrary, would, in that case, annihilate her enemies." Do you make that your answer? If she did, it would hardly be next month, would it? Hardly without the sacrifice of millions more of her brave men? Would not a peace this year on President's Wilson's terms be better for Germany than a peace next year on the Chancellor's terms?

If you should succeed in killing the loan, you infallibly ruin yourself, for the government would certainly first seize the property of any man who could not show Liberty Bonds of value proportionate to his total wealth, as evidence of his loyalty and good faith.

If you should succeed in causing disturbance to public order, you take a long chance on your liberty and life; Liberty Bonds would be a safe-conduct in the event of riot or revolution.

We are all agreed that there will be trouble and danger when the casualty lists begin to arrive on a large scale. Friend, let me tell you this in your private ear: If this loan goes through with a bang, there won't be any casualty lists on a large scale. There will be an armistice, and peace to follow; the American troops will never go into action.

I hope that not one of the readers of this article will have read the above section, with its appeal to selfishness and even to malignancy, with any personal interest. I hope with all my heart that every reader of mine has eagerly indorsed my efforts in "The International" and elsewhere to put Humanity First; to compel recognition of the enemy as a sincere and noble people, loyal and united, fighting with incredible gallantry and skill against odds that might have daunted Caesar, believing in the justice of their cause, and in the righteousness of the means adopted to make it to prevail; to silence the voice of hatred; to bring about a Peace which shall do no wrong or cause humiliation to any nation concerned, and leave no seed of animosity, envy, or discontent to grow into the Upas-tree of yet another war.

My friends, my brothers, British, French, German, Austrian, Turk, Russ, I love you with an equal love. It is but accident of birth that divides us. Within one century each nation on that list has been at war with most of the remaining five! This enmity is not rooted in national antipathy; it is a hazard of time, place, political and economic conditions. Let us transcend it in the name of Man, one and indivisible, heir of the ages! Let no man turn his heart against his brother, even though for a time he turn his sword!

That time is near its end. Despite the venom of the snakes of hate, this war is teaching men daily to understand and to love their enemies. The men who stand for the view that the Allies (or the Central Powers, as the accident of birth determines) are monsters to be exterminated are men already half discredited; the day of the moderate man is at hand.

We want Peace. We do not want "Peace at any price"; we want "Peace with Honor"; and this is the thought in the heart of every man on either side who is not crazed with the contagion of War-madness. And so, my friends, let us make all speed to Peace!

You, too, you most especially, my pro-German friends! You know how impossible it is to get true news of the war, do you not? What with the "jackals of the kept press" and the censor, and the rest of it?

But there is just one man who has a private wire, one man who does know what you and I do not. That man is President Wilson.

We may not like it, but he is the duly elected representative of the American people, and we have got to trust him, if only because there is nobody else to trust. We cannot trust the German or Austrian Chancellors, however much we may wish to do so, because (as you say yourself) the Allies are such liars that, for all we know, their speeches may have been forged in Fleet Street or Times Square!

We must trust President Wilson or nobody. And why should we not trust him, the man who knows the truth, the man who fought for years to keep this country out of the war, and did so when any other man would have stumbled into it on the invasion of Belgium, or the sinking of the Lusitania?

Can you not read his psychology? He is no swashbuckler. He is not a soldier. He is not even a professional politician. He is a man who has spent his whole life as a student of history and philosophy, in the atmosphere of the lecture room and the library. Can you think for a moment that such a man would run amuck, a man of his age and with his record? It is absurd; it is against all nature and all reason. Psychology assures us beyond doubt that such a man could only declare war as a last resort, when he saw that by none other means could he bring about a new political stability, an unassailable settlement, a permanent, an impregnable Peace. I say "could," advisedly, not "would." It is a mental impossibility for a man of President Wilson's habit and character to wish for war. It would be as great a miracle as for a horse to fly. The apparatus is not there.

What does he say himself? He says that he wants Peace as much as you and I do, but that he knows how to get it, and we do not.

As he gets his information first hand from authentic sources, while we get ours (as we complain) third hand, through censors who select, and journalists who falsify and fabricate, he is not improbably right.

And is he not, in the ultimate, the Friend of the German People? (He will, when he thinks it over, understand, and acquiesce in, their loyalty and devotion to the Great Man, as they see him, who foresaw the war, and by due preparation made it possible for them to make head against a world in arms, when he was forced to fight, after maintaining peace in Europe forty

years.)

Is a man who has risen without selfish ambition or base intrigue to be the Executive of this great People, a man whose life has been given to the study of history and of political economy, likely to be so ignorant or imbecile as to suppose that the ruin of a good customer can benefit a shopkeeper, or the death of his baker make it easier for him to buy bread?

President Wilson knows, none better, that the prosperity of Germany is essential to the welfare of America. If he became suddenly and miraculously omnipotent, he could do no other than the square thing by all. "Ye are all members of One Body" — the Body of Mankind.

Let us trust the President's knowledge, his ability, his justice, his good sense, and his good will, to work toward that lasting Peace, that health and strength for every nation that rejoices in the Sun, and breathes the air of this fair world of ours, and let us be proud if we can help him!

We are near that Peace already; his speech of January 7 is enough proof of that. Now is the time, then, for all good men to come to the aid of their country! Whatever your country, whatever your sympathies, there is one course of action, and one only, at this particular juncture. It is to line up solidly and sturdily behind the President with our Irish wit and dash and courage and resourcefulness, or our British coolness and doggedness and diplomatic skill, or our German honesty and forethought and steadiness and capacity for hard work and team work, or our American ingenuity and adaptability and practicality, as the case may be, according to the accident of birth, and, confident in him with our minds, trusting him with our hearts do what he asks us alike with mind and heart and hand. Let us each do our damnedest! What is the task, then? What is the Way to Peace? We have all got to get to work Now. We want our peace At Once; we want to stop the Spring Campaign, and have an armistice declared before the American troops in any large numbers go into action. The way to do this is to do what the President says, to see to it that the Third Liberty Loan is oversubscribed again and again and again, in the very first week of the issue.

We must each one subscribe to the limit of our own ability.

We must see to it personally that every one in our circle subscribes to the limit of his ability. We must extend the limit of our ability by denying ourselves every luxury. We must wear old clothes and hats, we must eat only what is good for us (oh, what an epidemic of good health, clean eyes, quick minds, keen enjoyment of simple pleasures, the end of the tradition of American "nerves and indigestion"!) and we must do our work ourselves wherever possible, instead of relying on others.

We must buy only those things which are absolutely essential to life and health, so that every worker may be used in the industries of this war for Peace.

It is quite easy to do this. I have found it so, these three years that I have been starving because I am what they miscall "pro-German."

We must do our most, not our least, to aid the Food Control. If Mr. Hoover demands one wheatless day, let us give him three. And we must obey in spirit, not only in letter.

We must redouble our energies and produce more; we must analyze and limit our desires (we shall find them for the most part foolish and hurtful), and consume less.

We must not visualize the power, ambition, cruelty and arrogance of the enemy, or paint fancy pictures of our own righteousness, and the heroism and self-sacrifice of our defenders. We must regard the enemy as a dear friend who is acting foolishly, and determine to knock sense into him with a club, so that he may live to thank us. We must walk humbly with the Lord, as Lincoln wished, remembering that after all we may be wrong. Yet, as we can only rely on our own judgement, let us act on it like men, and fight the good fight with all our might!

With every breath we must do all in our power, at no matter what cost to ourselves, to fight, or, if we cannot fight, to back up the fighters. We must go into the war with a whole heart, with cool brain, clear sight, good temper, a sense of humor, and a realization that the enemy thinks his cause the cause of Liberty and Justice as much as we do ours.

And we must save every cent, and put it into the Third Liberty Loan, that the enemy may realize that we are in this war to the last man and the last grain of wheat, and pay heed to the President, as he asks, with a chuckle, on the success of the Loan, "*Now* will you be good?"

ALEISTER CROWLEY.

———

LOVE AND LAUGHTER

My love is like a mountain stream
  Alive and sparkling in the sun —
The tossing spray, the foam and gleam,
  A rainbow ray, Hilarion!
  But in its deeps the currents run
So strong and pure, so cool and sweet —
  The honied hearts of snows unwon
By oread art of faery feet!

All grace, all gaiety, all gladness,
  The laughing face and opal fire!
Mockery mingling mirth and madness
  Teasing or tingling to desire!
  And all the while to love's own lyre
Her heart sings, tremulous and tender;
  Purity, passion, that respire
Firmly to fashion subtler splendour!

Now love shall wet the lips of laughter,
  And laughter brim the bowl of love.
Music of mirth before and after;
  Envy of earth about, above!
  Let all the world be drunken of
The vatted vintage of the Sun!
  Our Word, in Art, wing forth, the Dove
For God's own heart, Hilarion!

WITH THE ARMIES OF MITTEL-EUROPA

By various authors, translated by Helen Woljeska.

ON THE MARCH

By Reinhard Koester.

Heavily laden we march through the damp gray morning mists, through the timidly trembling rays of the pale morning sun.

We march — And the road stretches endlessly before us. And the knapsacks weigh us down. We bend the shoulders, round the back, support the load with our one free hand, throw it high convulsively for half a second's relief — but back it plumps clumsy, irksome, inexorable. Our steady tread is machine-like in its regularity, carries us along almost without our cognition. And the little piper in the next row pipes indefatigably, as though in all eternity he could not lose his breath. He pipes us marches, folksongs, sometimes a dance in hard measure. A few of the men awkwardly attempt to caper, a few hoarse voices join the chorus. But soon everybody returns to the even, dull, heavy tread of the column. And the rhythm of that tread is the only song of our burdened, grieving, composite soul.

March — march — march — We lose our individuality in the dull and painful drowsiness of this everlasting step-by-step. And losing one's individuality is the only salvation. We must not think. We must forget. Forget the heavy knapsack, forget the helmet that encircles our brow with distressing pressure, forget the endlessness of the road, forget what we left behind, and most of all forget what awaits us at the goal! A merciful numbness places its staring mask upon our faces. Forget! Forget! March — march — march ——

A house and a tree. A meadow and a brook. We do not notice it. We carry and march, and march and carry. We change the gun to the other shoulder. We always imagine the other shoulder will carry it more easily. Always again we imagine this. And the little pipe shrills on, gay, crazily alive. One waits for it to stop. But when it stops one does not notice it. . . .

A few yellow flowers blossom at the front edge. Shall I pick one? I might hold it in my free hand, twirl it a bit, look at it, play with it, then throw it away —— But I would have to bend down to pick it, bend down under my heavy burden — then rise again, rise under my heavy burden. The man before me does not pick a yellow flower. None of the men before me have picked yellow flowers. I do not pick any either. . . . My throat is parched. But I do not drink. What is the use? I cannot drink as often as I want to, anyway. And the other men are not drinking either. . . .

Without individuality, part of the masses, dull, ponderous, weary — I march and carry, and carry and march. The tread of my feet joins in the sad hymn of our composite soul. . . . And forever the little piper pipes, gaily, shrilly, crazily, as though in all eternity he could not lose his breath.

———

HOME COMING

By Edgar Von Schmidt-Pauli.

How often one dreamed of it! Galloping through icy nights, passing spectre-like villages that glare at one with hollow, disconsolate, light-less eyes — or in the snows of some lonely mountain camp, with the silhouette of the Tatra outlined against a star strewn midnight sky — or during the horrors of battle, when one has to lie motionless, and the heavy shells burst nearer, ever nearer —— Yes, again and again one dreamed of it. And suddenly it became reality . . . but so different from one's dream.

Alas, it was not the Angel of Peace who fulfilled the often dreamed dream. A shell splinter — disconnected days and nights in a field hospital — and finally the trip home on furlough — this is how it was brought about.

The trip home began with a long drowsy ride in some Galician peasant's wagon, and was continued in an auto which at times had to be drawn by six horses, across plowed fields and emergency bridges, through rivers and ice and snow, until one night an old, ghost-like city was reached, whose medieval walls and gates brooded menacingly, whose narrow streets showed dark houses of massive walls and grated windows lit by flaring candles: Krakau. From there the trip was made by train. And before long German words greeted the ear, German conductors passed through the cars, and one thrilled as one heard the station names . . . Oppeln . . . Breslau . . . Glogau . . . Berlin!

And now one is home! One sits in a richly furnished, beautifully heated apartment between gentle ladies in soft dresses and men in faultless evening clothes, servants glide in and out, bringing improbably delicious food — and the glistening table linen, the women's shining eyes and jewels, the flowers and music and low voiced conversation — all seem to belong into a fairy tale. One's self no longer fits into this once accustomed milieu. One feels like some uncouth, primeval giant among so much daintiness, and luxury and refinement. One is surprised that the rococo clock still strikes the hours so regularly — so peacefully, as though there were no war. One is surprised that people sit in velvet chairs and gravely discuss matters — matters — which once seemed important and essential, but since have shown themselves so puny, so futile, so remote! One is surprised, and listens, and wonders. . . .

It is impossible to find the way back to one's former self, one's former interests. Too much lies between! Blazing villages and screams of the wounded — flashing steel and the panting hand to hand struggle — comrades shot off their horses — the collapse of houses and bridges — the awful voice of the flying shells — and the eyes, the wide staring eyes of the dead — all that lies between. One cannot return. One feels as though an impenetrable armor had been forged around one's soul, forged in many dreadful hours when fate trembled between life and death. Poetry as delicate as moonlight on white roses — words as powerful as Michael Kramer's death lament — they alike rebound, impotently, from that armor. For the destiny of the individual no longer matters, when the life of nations is at stake.

And a poignant longing seizes one for the wide Russian snow fields, for galloping horses and low, sharp words of command, for the grating of arms against leather straps and the savage roar of the flying shells, for danger and for death! Because suddenly one knows beyond a doubt: this was not a home coming at all. As long as one man still rides and fights and bleeds out there for his nation's sake — so long one's true and only home is the battle field.

THE SUN AT THE BARRACKS' WINDOW
By Reinhard Koester.

The sun that looks in at the barracks window is not the same sun that smiles down on the shady, perfumed gardens, and caresses the light-colored frocks of girls and women, and paints circles of gold across the breakfast table in our grape arbor. That beautiful, lovely sun no longer shines for me! It only shines for the happy men whose country is at peace. . . . To me the sun means white roads, and parched throats, and hopeless, joyless, endless days, and perhaps — death.

I bend out of the barracks window into the glaring, pitiless sunshine. And a stony smile shapes itself on my face. I want to cry out: "Mother, give me the sun!" — cry it with cutting, piercing agony. But no mother stands behind me. Only a comrade who says: "Damn, it's hot!" or: "To-morrow we'll have to march in all this heat!" or: "Let's play cards!"

And I come back from the window, sullen-eyed, and I say "yes" or "no," and blot the sun out of my existence. I play cards, smoke a cigarette, clean my gun, or lie on the mattress and put a newspaper over my face, so I won't see it any more, the harsh, cruel sun outside . . . but may dream of that other sun which shines for the happy men whose country is at peace.

———

SLEEP IN THE BARRACKS
By Reinhard Koester.

We reach the barracks dusty and tired, bowed down under our burdens, with sharply drawn, red faces. Halt! Once more we stand rigidly at attention. One short word of dismissal and the column falls apart, all order breaks asunder, is extinguished, annihilated. . . .

Like clumsy bugs the knapsacks tumble upon table and bench, guns rattle, heavy boots stamp the floor and are noisily thrown aside. We are tired — tired —— But once more energy flares up. Everybody crowds the doors, rushes to the kitchen. In and out they go with platters and plates. Knives and forks gnash against tin. There are jumbled sounds of eating, talking, laughing — smells of food and tobacco and sweat. Finally the clamor ceases. Relieved sighs are heaved. Our stomachs are filled — the beds await! One after the other disappear in the high wooden structures that hold the straw stuffed mattresses in tiers. The planks groan and squeak. Already deep breathing resounds. . . . Sleep has entered the barracks.

Like dead men the soldiers lie — stretched at full length, curled upon one side, rolled over on the stomach, clutching their hard resting place. Open mouths show yellowish teeth. Under straggly beards reverberate sucking snores. Sometimes a twitch, a groan, a murmured name — then all is still again, in death-like immobility.

Heavy and dismal is sleep in the barracks. Hard as service and duty. And a rehearsal for death.

———

TROMMELFEUER
By Arthur Bagemuehl.

The young lieutenant carefully raises himself out of the trench. He wants to make a few observations before it grows too light. Keenly he looks about him. But in the heavy dusk of the cloudy October dawn nothing seems visible but gray clouds of ground as far as the eye can travel. The whole plain appears plowed up by shells, and the neighboring trenches have completely disappeared. The lieutenant leaps from funnel to funnel. A sweetish unmistakable odor arises from the soil which is soft as that of a swamp. . . . The lieutenant steps lightly, not to disturb the hard won rest of those who lie below, scantily covered with ground by the shell which was both executioner and grave digger.

While the lieutenant jots down a few notes the first morning greetings from the French batteries arrive. Ffft-ratch! Ffft-ratch! In quick succession the little missiles follow each other. Cautiously he winds his way back to his trench. He has scarcely reached it when a big shell, with unearthly roar, cuts its way through the heavy clouds in grandiose curve — then slowly begins its descent — slowly comes, nearer, nearer — its horrible shriek increasing from moment to moment. . . . And the lieutenant in his mudhole feels his blood freeze. Where — where is it going to strike? A terrific detonation — his every nerve reels, crumples up like the suddenly torn strings of a harp . . . then, with superhuman effort he once more has regained control of the quivering things, once more is himself.

The first shell marked but the beginning. All around the trench pandemonium soon rages. And every man realizes "Trommelfeuer!" The most harrowing of all experiences must once again be gone through. How long will it last? Perhaps for days, without interruption! With set faces they accept the inevitable. The seconds crawl along, slowly, slowly — the watches seem to hold back their thin hands, not to betray the insane fear that wishes to race madly, deliriously. Still the men's nerves hold out. Still the hand, though trembling, manages to raise the whiskey flask to the pale lips. Still the cigarettes are gleaming. . . . As each man awaits "his" shell. For it must come. With cool certainty the enemy artillery fires shot after shot. There is no escape.

And finally the lieutenant's shell comes. It plows up the sod close to his hole and an avalanche of mud buries him and three of the men under its terrific weight. Desperately they struggle against the blind force that is crushing, suffocating them. It seems vain. At last the foremost man succeeds in burrowing a little hole. As fresh air reaches him his strength revives. He calls for help, although he knows that no one can hear, no one can help. He himself is his only hope. Frantically he digs with half numb fingers. And he succeeds in freeing himself. The man next to him follows almost easily. But the lieutenant! He is tightly wedged, and half suffocated. Only his head and one arm are visible. They try to extricate him by that one arm. They pull with all their might. The joints crack — they seem to snap. But the arm holds out. The lieutenant is saved. Now for the fourth man. Six trembling hands dig and burrow. And finally he is brought to light — dead. "Leave him!" "Away — away!"

Everywhere about them are the dead and dying. With their last strength the three creep toward the machine gun pit. At its entrance lies the shattered form of an officer. The pit is empty. They crowd in. And then they collapse. Open-eyed they sleep the dreadful sleep of utter exhaustion.

And when later artillery draws up and the enemy guns are silenced — they are too broken to rejoice.

COLORS OF THE JAPANESE HOUSES OF SLEEP

By YONE NOGUCHI

I.
SHIBA PARK.

It has became my habit on way to college once a week, where my weakness betrays itself under the quite respectable name of interpreter of English poets, ancient or modern, to invite my own soul even for awhile where the shadows of pine-trees thicken along the path of breezes in Shiba Park; it makes my wandering in the holy houses of sleep of the great feudal princes the most natural thing. I clearly remember how afraid I was in my boyhood days, whenever I happened to pass by them, of being hailed by the dark, undiscerning voice of Death. Oh, my friends and philosophers in all lands, is it a matter of thankfulness as to-day even to fall in love with its sweetness, and to reflect on its golden-hearted generosity and accidentally to despise Life? I say here at either the sacred house of the Sixth Prince or that of the Second Prince that one cannot help loving Death when he sees right before himself such an inspiring house of sleep of green, red, yellow, of the gold and lacquer, of the colors unmixed and simple, soaring out of this and that wealth of life, the colors that have reached the final essence, and power of Nature. Although it might be a modern fashion to speak of symbolism, I flatly refuse to see it in these old temples, there is the most clear simplicity, the beauty of the last judgement. Indeed, I wish to know if there is any better fitting for sleep and rest than the temples in my beloved Shiba Park. Our old artists had a strength in their jealous guarding of beauty for beauty's sake; they felt but not theorized; therefore, in such a beauty of confusion as I look through its looking-glass of confused quality on the phoenixes, paradise-birds, lotuses, peonies, lions, and ocean waves which decorate the inside of the temple, where the years of incense and prayer have darkened and mystified the general atmosphere.

The beauty of Death is in its utter rejection of profusion; it is the desire of intensity itself which only belongs to the steadfastness and silence of a star; oh, what a determination it declares! It is perfect; its epical perfection arises from the point that it will never return towards Life; its grandeur is in the pride that it shall never associate itself with life's clatter. Oh, Death is triumph! It is the great aspect of Japanese romance of the fighting age to make the moment of death as beautiful as possible; I can count a hundred names of heroes and fighters whom we remember only from the account of their beautiful death, not of their beautiful lives, on whom stories and dramas have been gorgeously written. And it was the civilization of the Tokugawa feudalism, the age of peace, to make us look upon Death with artistic adoration and poetical respect. We read so much in our Japanese history of the powers and works of that Tokugawa family, which lasted with untired energy until only forty years ago; oh, where to-day can the strong proof of its existence be traced? Is it not, I wonder, only a "name written on water"? But the great reverence towards Death that is encouraged will be still observed like the sun or moon in the holy temples at Nikko or Shiba Park, the creations of art it realized during the long three hundred years. True to say, art lives longer than life and the world.

I often think how poor our Japanese life might have been if we had not developed, by accident or wisdom, this great reverence towards Death, without whose auspices many beautiful shapes of art, I am sure, would never have existed; the stone lantern for instance to mention a thing particularly near my mind when I loiter alone in the sacred ground of the Second Shogun in the wide open yard perfectly covered by pebbles in the first entrance-gate, where hundreds of large stone lanterns stand most respectfully in rows; quite proper for the feudal age those lone sentinels. When the toro or stone lantern leaves the holy place of spirit for the garden, matter-of-fact and plebeian, it soon assumes the front of pure art; but how can it forget the place where it was born? We at once read its religious aloofness under the democratic mask. To see it squatting solemn and sad with the pine-tree makes me imagine an ancient monk in meditation, cross-legged, not yet awakened to the holy understanding of truth and light; is there not the attitude of a prophet crying in the wilderness in its straight, tall shape upon the large moss-carpeted lawn? I myself have never been able to take it merely as a creation of art since my tender age when my boy's imagination took its flicker of light under the depth of darkness to be a guiding lamp for my sister's dead soul hastening towards Hades in her little steps; it was a rainy night when she died in her ninth year. I cannot separate my memory of her from the stone lantern; again, I cannot disassociate the stone lantern with the black night and autumnal rain under whose silence the lantern sadly burned, indeed, like a spirit eternal and divine.

In the first place, whenever I think of the general effect of the reverence of Death upon our national life I deem the love of cleanliness the greatest of it; when I say that it really grew in the Tokugawa age, I have in my mind the thought that the reverence towards Death reached its full development then. When the custom of keeping the household shrine came strictly to be observed, the love of cleanliness soon promulgated itself as an important duty; and the thought of sharing the same roof with the spirit or ghost makes you, as the next thing, wiser, not to act foolishly or talk scandalously. The appreciation of grayness and silence is born from that reverence of Death; as you live with the dead souls in one house, Death ceases to be fearful and menacing, and becomes beautiful and suggestive like the whisper of a breeze or the stir of incense. Death is then more real than life, like that incense or breeze; again so is silence more real than voice.

II.
NIKKO.

It is difficult to take a neutral attitude towards the temples at Nikko, although indifference is said to be the "highest" of Japanese attitudes; I mean there are only two ways — like or dislike — for their barbarous splendor in gold and red lacquer deprived of the inspiration of the imagination and melancholy, definite to the limit. And it altogether depends on one's mood; if a man's large stomach is well filled (also his purse), their despotic wealth would not be too overwhelming, and he might even be disposed to sing their eternal beauty as the ultimate

achievement of human endeavor. I believe I have been sometimes in such a state myself. But the pessimistic mind, critical even where criticism is not called for, skipping all the physical expression for the spiritual communication, will find Nikko a sad dilettantism of art, at the best a mere apology of a squandering mind; there is nothing more unhappy than wastefulness in the world of art. It is not the real Japanese mind, I think, to build a house for the dead, as I know that it goes straight towards associating the dead with trees, mountains, water, winds, shadows, deer, ravens, foxes, wolves, and bears, and uses to leave them to the care of the sun and moon; indeed it was the unlettered samurai mind to build such temples as I see at this Nikko, afraid to return to the gray elements and wishing to find a shelter even after death in materialism. Or it might be more true to say that it originated in the complete surrender to Buddhism; and it may not be too much to say that India begins right here from Nikko, in the same sense that Tokyo of the present age is spiritually a part of London or New York. We have only a few pages in the whole Japanese history where we are perfectly independent.

Whether it is fortunate or not, my recent evolution of mind is that I have ceased to see the fact itself, and what I am glad to indulge in is the reflection of its psychological relation with other facts; how thankful I am for the gate tower carved with phoenixes and peonies, the large pagoda in red and gold, now loitering round the holy precincts of the Nikko temples, since the very fact of their existence makes through the virtue of contrast, the cryptomerias and mountains greener, the waters and skies bluer, and besides, the human soul intenser. I am happy in my coming to Nikko in the month of May when the beauty of Nature quickens itself from the pain of passing Spring, and with the sunlight that overflows from the bosom of hope; your appreciation of Nikko would not be perfect till you see the wealth and grandeur of Nature's greenness; it is the beauty of cryptomerias and waters rather than that of the temples. And you will feel encouraged when you observe the real fact, how even the barbarity of human work can calm down before Nature, and happier still how they can form a good friendship with one another for creating the one perfect art known as Nikko. I am glad to see the proof of power of a Japanese landscape artist who could use his art on a large scale as I see it here, not merely in a small city garden; my mind, which was slightly upset from the artistic confusion of the temples belonging to Iyeyasu the Great, soon recovered its original serenity in seeing the most beautiful arrangement of temples of Iyemitsu, the Third Shogun of Tokugawa family, with the hills and trees, quite apart from his grandfather's; what a gentle feeling of solemnity, as old as that of a star, what a quiet and golden splendor here! The arrangement might be compared with the feminine beauty of gems most carefully set. When I looked upon the temples from the Mitarashiya, or the "House where you wash your Honorable Hands," below, they impressed my mind as if a house of dream built by the Dragon Kings underneath the seas, that I and you often see on the Japanese fan; I looked down, when I stood by the gate tower of the Niwo gods, over that water-fountain below, where the spirits of poesy were soon floating on the sunlight; it was natural to become a passionate adorer of the Nature of May here like Basho, who wrote in his seventeen syllable hokku:

Ah, how sublime —
The green leaves, the young leaves,
In the light of the sun!

I very well understand how Iyeyasu, the Supreme Highness, Lord of the East, that Great Incarnation, escaped the temple of gold and red lacquer, and wished to sleep in a hill behind, in silence, and shadow; now I am climbing up the long and high steps to make him my obeisance where a hundred large cryptomerias stand reverently as sentinels. What peace! What broke the silence was the sudden voice of water and the sutra-reading of priests; a moment ago the crows in threes, twos, and fours flew away and dropped into the unseen just like the human mortals who have only to stay here for a little while. Under my feet I found a small hairy caterpillar also climbing up the stone steps like myself. Oh! tell me who art thou? And what difference is there between us human beings and the caterpillar? Are we not caterpillars who may live little longer? But I tell you that is a difference of no particular value. I met with a group of Western tourists in the middle of the steps, who hurried down; they set my mind thinking on the anti-Christian terrorism of Iyeyasu and other princes, the Japanese Neroes, awful and glorious. It is not strange that they are shaking hands in sleep with the Westerners whom they hated with all their hearts?

The words of my friend when I bade farewell to him in New York suddenly returned to me when now the weather has changed, and even rain has begun to fall; my friend artist who had stayed and sketched here long ago said to me: "There were many idols of the Jizo god, the guardian deity of children, standing by the Daiyagawa River of Nikko; I loved them, particularly one called the Father or Mother, from its large size, whom I sketched most humbly. You see that Nantai Mountain appears and disappears as if mist or mirage, right behind these idols; the place is poetical. But they seemed to be having a disagreeable time of it, all overgrown as they were with moss, and even with the dirty pieces of paper stuck by all sorts of pilgrims as a sign of their call. Once when I hurried down from Chuzenji and passed by them, I caught rain and wind; alas! those kind deities were terribly wet, like myself. I pitied them; I cannot forget their sad sight even to-day; however, the Jizi idol under the rain is a good subject of art. There are few countries where rain falls as in Japan. The dear idols must be wet under the rain even now while you and I talk right here."

When I reached my hotel and sat myself on the cushion, and after a while began to smoke, my mind roamed leisurely from the idols under the rains to the man wet through by the rains of failure; and now it reflected on this and that, and then it recalled that and this. Oh, how can I forget the very words of that reporter of one Francisco paper who mystified, startled, and shocked me, well, by his ignorance or wisdom seven years ago? I said to him on being asked why I returned home that I was going to hunt after the Nirvana; he looked up with a half-humorous smile and said, "That's so! But let me ask you with pardon, are you not rather too late in the season for that?"

It seems that it is too late now even in Japan to get the Nirvana, as that San Francisco reporter said. How can I get to it, the capital-lettered Nirvana, even at Nikko, when I could not find it in London and New York? I laughed on my silliness of thought that I might be able, if place were changed, to discover it. Oh, my soul, I wonder when it will wiser grow?

ADAM AND EVE

By GEORGE SYLVESTER VIERECK

(This article is as true to-day as when it was written eight years ago. Times do not change, or we with them; we are the same yesterday and to-day and for ever.)

We exaggerate racial distinctions. Save for skin and clothes we are not, any of us, far removed from the ape. Primal instincts in men and women are the same throughout the world, and the lure of the flesh is the same. The American college boy and the young Eskimo in his sealskin are stirred by the same primitive impulse. The fundamental facts of sex are identical in Kalamazoo and in Pekin. But our attitudes toward sex undergo various transformations, with changes of climate. We all have the same appetites, but our modes of gratification vary with our refinement. The table manners at Sherry's are not those of Childs'. The desire of Lucullus for whipped oysters, and the ravin of the Parisians, who stood in line for bread during the great revolution, were fundamentally one and the same hunger; but the mastication of the Roman was art, while the French mob chewed, munched and bolted hideously. Similarly, it may be safely affirmed, that the ways of the love-famished lad are not those of the *gourmet*.

Europeans are *gourmets* in love. They relish it as they relish their oysters. We are a trifle ashamed of it. But, being human, we cannot starve ourselves. We steal to love's banquet stealthily, with an uncomfortable feeling of doing wrong. We sin, but we sin *against* our principles. The continental youth sins *on* principle. We make the flesh indecent, a thing we despise, but from which, being human, we cannot divorce ourselves. The refined European spiritualizes the flesh; he makes it beautiful; he turns its frailty into strength. Consequently, his love-life is healthier than our own. Even when hectic desire entices him into devious gardens of passion, vulgarity will not bespatter his roses. We cannot be wicked without being coarse. The consciousness of sin dwells in our hearts like a worm. Spiritually there is nothing of the Greek in us.

We may, however, speak of a renascence of the Greek spirit abroad. Euphorion has not yet sprung into life. He is about to be born. Germany is in travail. She is laboring, painfully, slowly. Her, at times, morbid caprices in the immediate past were those of a woman *enceinte*. The trip of the Greek dance is heard again in Berlin. The subtleties of Greek sophists are echoed in German letters. Poets hark back to the Hellenic themes — Hofmannsthal's Œdipus confronts the Sphinx. Electra wails in the music of Strauss. Nudity, the weapon of Phryne, is raised to an art by Olga Desmond. The voice of Dionysos is heard in Nietzsche. Germany's joy in the body is not yet purely Hellenic. Poisonous vapors cloud the sun. But sunrise is nigh. Already we hear the little laugh of Aspasia. Germany has beheld the glorified *hetaera* re-encased in the flesh. Beautiful and cerebral, and free, she is the inspiration of sages and poets. Not hers the penalty of mortality. She is the mother of spirit-children; and Charmides is her kinsman. He is more purely spiritual. Docile and enthusiastic, pupil and friend, his lovely presence comforts and stays in those high altitudes of the mind where the garlands of passion shrivel to dust.

We are not yet prepared for Hellenic ideals. Charmides amongst us would be a dandified "high-brow," and Aspasia, "off-color." We would mar and crush and pervert her. And we would certainly "cut" her. We understand physiological passion, and we understand spiritual passion, but we are intensely suspicious where one partakes of the elements of the other. It is curious that the greatest singer of spiritualized passion should have been an American. *Leaves of Grass*, not *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, is "the Golden Book of Spirit and Sense." Perhaps Whitman was given to us because we most needed him.

We need him more than ever for the emancipation of man and the emancipation of passion. Every country, they say, has the government it deserves. We are governed by Woman. We cringe before her as slaves before the master. And, like slaves, we talk evil of her behind her back. And we adore her in false and hysterical fashion. The reason usually ascribed by foreigners for the truly anomalous position of woman in the United States is the scarcity of females among our early settlers. They haven't been scarce, however, for a good many years. There have been plenty of them as long as *I* can remember. I would blame the Pilgrim Fathers. The essential indecency of the Puritan mind is clearly exposed in the attitude of the American Adam toward the American Eve.

We deify woman because we bestialize passion. We place her on a pedestal, we forget she has a body, so as not to despise her. We worship her as a goddess, because we fear to degrade her as a mate. We protect her by preposterous laws, because we distrust ourselves and her. We have not yet learned to love the body purely. We fail to discriminate between passion and vice. So distorted is our vision, that sex in itself seems debasing. But the instinct of sex is ineradicable. The goddess topples from the altar, if she does not descend voluntarily.

Man is divine because he is human. We are ashamed of that divinity. Out of that shame is born the sham of our Puritan morals and a morbidity of which we are hardly aware. We yield to temptation surreptitiously, like bad monks. We dare not make sin beautiful. We make it ugly and coarse. And every time we react against our own vulgar trespasses we prostrate ourselves before the Good Woman who doesn't exist, and doesn't want to exist. We glory in groveling in the dust at her feet. We give expression to the unhealthy sentiment that no man is good enough for a woman. When a prostitute slays one of her lovers, she is beatified in the press. We refuse to admit that a woman can be really bad.

I always thought it ungallant, if truthful, of Adam, to blame it all on the woman. But why go to the opposite extreme, and blame everything on the male? There is a strongly masochistic element in the American attitude toward woman. The man who wheels a baby carriage for his sick wife deserves laudation — he is a hero; but the man who assumes the domestic functions of the female unnecessarily is a specimen from Krafft-Ebing.

Elinor Glyn says that American men are like brothers or elderly aunts. Elinor has her flashes. The maleness of the average American is certainly not so insistently felt as that of his cousin abroad. Externally, at least, there is frequently a certain feminine strain in the American man. He is handsomer, more graceful, less strongly sexed. Abroad, where men dictate theatrical

fashion, the Chorus Girl monopolizes the musical comedy stage. In an Amazon kingdom there would be only Chorus Boys. We have not reached that phase as yet, but undoubtedly the Chorus Boy is already in the ascendant.

Our women are more self-possessed, more athletic, and, if it must be said, more mannish than the Laura of Petrarch and the Gretchen of Faust. Such modifications must already affect in some subtle manner the relations between the sexes. They give rise to cycles of problems novel in the present stage of civilization. Perhaps the balance of power is shifting. We have placed woman in the saddle: beware lest she take the reins! Some day we may be officially what we are already in essence, a matriarchy, swayed by the "mother right" of primitive races. Unless a radical readjustment takes place, the world may see the spectacle of an American Amazon Queen ruling a henpecked nation.

One hope, however, remains to the Mere Male: the Eternal Woman. Yes, woman herself. For we are mistaken if we imagine that she looks up to the man who humiliates himself before her. She is much too near the earth, too human, to find pleasure in the exalted position we force upon her. Nietzsche put the case rather strongly; too strongly, I think. It is not the whip she craves, but the master. When an American woman has the opportunity of meeting a foreigner, she usually marries him. His masterful masculinity, not his title, compels her attention. International marriages are often unfortunate, because the American woman, nursed in selfishness, lacks the worldly wisdom and graceful resignation of her less imperious sister. Nevertheless she is glad to slip from her pedestal unnoticed, when she travels abroad. Accustomed to epicene adoration, she not infrequently falls an easy victim to aggressive maleness abroad.

The American Girl in Europe reminds one of a young queen traveling incognito. But that is perilous, little girl, if you don't know the rules of the game! The young German girl is wiser than you in some things. She is less self-possessed, but more self-reliant. She doesn't expect a man to carry all her bundles. And she is not afraid to go home unaccompanied, if need be. And when she goes out with a man, she will not permit him to pay for her as a rule. It isn't reasonable that the male should support the female before they are married. The young American is expected to pay for the mere privilege of dining with a woman. Dear ladies, who read this, do not think that I would not gladly invite you to dinner. I object to the principle, not to the custom. The young German woman generally accepts no such favors as a matter of course. She knows that "give and take" is the basis of every bargain. An unfair bargain demoralizes the gainer. She also knows that the law of the man is not the law of the maid. What's sauce for the gander isn't always sauce for the goose.

Eve abroad knows that Adam is polygamistic; and that, if we wish to preserve the institution of matrimony we must provide safety valves for the man. One half of the world, we know, believes in polygamy. The other half practices it. The Koran sanctions, economy vetoes, a plurality of wives. Occidental nations are monogamic in theory, not in fact.

The continental woman, as a rule, overlooks the extra-marital exploits of the husband. The necessity for this precaution is recognized officially only in the *Code Napoleon*. But if you talk to the wives confidentially, they will make startling admissions. I know a charming couple, somewhat advanced in years, whose married life is an idyl. With tender solicitude they read each other's wishes from their eyes. I was astonished, because I had been told that for many years the husband had spent half his income on a mistress. And the wife knew it, always. We had a heart-to-heart talk.

"Where is she now?" I inquired.

"She is dead," the old lady answered. There was a trace of relief in her voice.

"And she has had no successor?"

"None. You see, he is getting older, and even before her death he had come back to me. He loved me all the time; the other woman merely appealed to his senses. I am very happy now. I only regret the money he squandered on that — that woman."

"Hush," I said, "she is dead. It is only just that men should be more lavish with their mistresses than with their wives. The Scarlet Woman is disinherited. Legally, socially, she is defenseless. The wife is privileged, fortified by the world. Surely the guerdon of sin is scant in comparison."

"Probably you are right," she replied. "I begin to see life more steadily every year. We never speak of her, save as one speaks of a friend. He tries hard to make me forget, as well as forgive. I let him exert himself. I accept his little favors," she added, wistfully. "I tried hard enough to make him forget in the past, and — failed. I did not let him kiss me for many years."

"And now?"

At this moment the husband came home from a late constitutional, bringing her flowers like some ancient Philemon to his Baucis, and tenderly kissed her behind the ear. If she had been an American woman, she would have dragged him to the divorce court years and years ago. And the late afternoon of their lives would have been sunless and loveless.

We often make a mess of marriage because we marry too young. We are in indecorous haste to perpetuate the species. Marriage invariably rubs the first bloom from the rose of romance. But sometimes, between sincere men and women, the flower of perfect understanding blooms more lovely in the place of the first impetuous passion. But the soil must be prepared for its growth. The inexperienced boy-husband and his girl-wife are too impatient. They will not wait for the soft tendrils to sprout. Leaf by leaf they pick the rose to pieces, and then, in petulant anger, desert the garden.

Europe provides, for the husband, at least, an amorous education antedating his marriage. He needs lessons in sentiment, not in sensation. Kisses, bought and loveless, are insufficient. The young German generally has what is called "a minor affair," *Ein kleines Verhaltniss*. One might call it a miniature marriage. The girl, usually some shopgirl, sincerely loves him. She does not expect him to marry her. And some day, she knows, she will lose him. He brings culture beyond her station into her life. She teaches him the lesson of loving kindness. But for her, he would learn from the gutter the lesson of vice. She is the steward of his affection. She keeps it pure for the woman who will take her place. When he marries there will be tears, and not a little heartache. And then she, too, will marry, and will bring a trace of the refinement of her lover into the humbler home of the husband. The miniature marriage is at an end. None the worse for their experience, the youth and his inamorata will each enter the major life.

Do not misunderstand me. The standard of *bourgeois* morality is the same the world over. But we are all of us sinners. Only abroad, men trespass artistically. We are bunglers in sin. In

Europe, however, the moral code is not indiscriminately applied. Genius is not compelled to wear the cloak of ready-made morals. There is a certain poet abroad; he is very famous. I will not mention his name. Everybody knew that he was equally in love with his wife and with an actress of great reputation. Society respected his peculiar temperament, and invariably asked either the wife or the mistress when he was invited. The mistress lived with him in town; the wife shared his country seat. It happened some years ago that both women about the same time whispered the tenderest secret into his ear. That, I believe, is the way they put it in novels. When at last the fatal day had dawned, the poet is said to have traveled hither and thither between his two abodes, to comfort both women in their hour of need. Berlin laughed, and forgave.

Margarete Beutler, a woman of distinguished poetical gifts, frankly announced in an autobiographical sketch that she was temperamentally unfitted for permanent wedlock; and Gabriele Reuter, a Hypatia of letters, boldly advertised the birth of her extra-marital child. Both women command the respect of even respectability abroad. Europe has accepted still stranger erotic vagaries from genius. Not because she approves of sexual irregularity, but because she attaches no exaggerated importance to purely personal physiological functions. Brain counts for more than conventional morals. Aphrodite's reputation in Greece was deplorable, but she nevertheless remained a goddess. Mercury was a thief, but divine honors were not therefore withheld. Those in whom the divine spark glows and burns, must be forgiven many frailties that would be unpardonable in mortals not so inspired. Their genius, in turn, casts the glamour of romance over the squalid facts of existence.

FOUR POEMS

By ALEISTER CROWLEY

Sekhet.

Eatest thou me, O Sekhet, cat of the Sun?
  O thou that hast eaten up the Apep-snake!
O thou that hath passed the pylons one by one
  Till the nineteenth God came wallowing in thy wake!
Thou hast whispered me the wonder unknown of them
That I am Amoun, that I am Mentu, that I am Khem!

Thou hast eaten the snake, O Sekhet, cat of the Sun!
  Thou hast led me about the earth in a wizard walk;
Thou hast loved me at every pylon, one by one,
  Thou hast — hast thou armed me, Sekhet, against the hawk?
I am winged and erect and naked for thee, my Lord.
Have I any shield, have I any helm, have I any sword?

Thou hast eaten the snake, O Sekhet, cat of the Sun!
  Shall I be strong to strike at the black hawk's throat?
Shall we tread on the Sebek-crocodiles, one by one?
  On the Nile, the Nile of the Gods, shall we sail in our boat?
Yea, we are strong, we are strong, we shall conquer them!
For I am Amoun, for I am Mentu, for I am Khem!

———

Triumph.

I have walked warily warily long enough
  In the valley of the Shadow of Life,
Distrusting the false moons of Love,
  Many a mistress — never a wife!
I have gone armed with spear and shield
  Horsed on the stallion of the sun;
I slew false knights on many a field
  — Crown me at last, Hilarion!

I have walked masterfully enough
  In the valley of the Shadow of Death;
Now on mine eyes the sun of Love
  — True Love — breathes once the Kiss of Breath.
I am come through the gate of God
  Clothed in the mantle of the Sun;
In thine abyss, in thine abode
  Hold me at last, Hilarion!

Lent.

Thou pulse of purple in God's heart
  Monotonous and musical,
Hilarion, to live apart
  Is not to live at all.

Together we may work and play,
  Always thy mood a match for mine;
Apart, ghoul-night haunts phantom-day;
  We only pule and pine.

Love twists his tendrils on our limbs.
  Now Carnival is turned to Lent,
We that harped holy and happy hymns
  Awake the lute's lament.

O love, endure the iron hours.
  "Love under Will" shall bear us on
To Easter, and the world of flowers —
  Our world, Hilarion.

———

A Vision of the Eucharist.

I stood upon the mountain at the dawn;
The snows were iridescent at my feet;
My soul leapt forth immaculate to greet
The sunrise; thence all life and sense were drawn
Into the vision. Limpid on the dawn
The fount of Godhead flowed — how subtly sweet
That distillation of the Paraclete!
I drank; the angel flowered in the faun.

Transfigured from the struggle to success,
I was abolished in mine happiness.
I find no word — in all my words! — but one.
Supreme arcanum of the Rose and Rood,
Sublime acceptance of the Greatest Good,
Only one word — thy name — Hilarion!

A GLIMPSE INTO THE THEATRES

MUSINGS ABOUT MUMMERS.

I do not remember any happier night since I was about 16 years old than that I spent with the Washington Square Players. The reading committee, appalled by what I said about them in the January number, hastily picked out the plays which they liked least and gave us a corking good bill.

The opening sketch, "Neighbors," was not particularly great. There was very little plot. I have a peculiar dislike for clever nothingness. But the second offering, "The Critic's Comedy," by Samuel Kaplan, is quite the best and funniest sketch that I can remember; it had a real tang of true comedy, which consists (by definition) in making somebody sexually ridiculous. A comedy without that is not a comedy at all. It was played most racily and with admirable delicacy and strength by Helen Westley. It is the first time that I have seen her in a first-rate part; and she more than justified the extremely high anticipations that I had formed of her from seeing her in roles less suited to the display of supreme histrionic genius.

"The Girl in the Coffin" was my first acquaintance with the work of Theodore Dreiser. I had always been inclined to discount what had been said of him as the only genius in America. I had a feeling that he might be a little heavy and take life too seriously. I was amazed to find in this sketch every quality of the very greatest dramatists in pure perfection, natural and harmonious, without the slightest touch of forcing. The restrained strength and vitality of the sketch are beyond all praise. He gives us heroism without bombast and pathos without slush. The play was excellently acted, and it is really invidious to make any selection for special praise, but I cannot help mentioning Kate Morgan. Hers was the most finished performance, both in appearance and manner, that I remember in this sort of part.

The pantomime, "Yum Chapab," was excellent of its kind, and I may say that it was a better kind than most pantomimes. The Broadway showman would have spoilt the whole thing by exaggerating each of the effects until instead of a rhythmical performance one had a set of vaudeville turns. It was short and seemed shorter than it was, by reason of the excellence of the taste displayed by the people responsible for its presentation. The play ran from start to finish just a little quicker than life, as a play should do; as the Russian Ballet always does; the opposite (as in grand opera) always produces a wearisome feeling that the action drags.

"LORD AND LADY ALGY"

THERE is something very charming about "Lord and Lady Algy." The play is an old one, written more than a quarter of a century ago by that well mannered Englishman, C. S. Carton. There is absolutely nothing original in it. No single situation in the play is unique. There are no smashing scenes. Yet both Lord and Lady Algy enchant one. The curtains are singularly effective. The end of the second act, for instance, is closed with the figure of Lady Algy standing in the doorway. As she utters the word "pickles" the curtain comes down. The effect is powerful. Maxine Elliott invests the exclamation with a grandeur and dignity which reminds one of Charlotte Cushman as Lady Macbeth. William Faversham, however, captures the greater glory of the performance. No actor on the American stage to-day has developed so amazingly as he. Originally a swashbuckling matinee idol, he has become a finished artist, capable of playing the most subtle and delicate parts. It is rumored that he intends soon to play in a cycle of Bernard Shaw comedies. He would be magnificent in "Candida" as the windy preacher. And he is the ideal Caesar for "Caesar and Cleopatra," not to mention his fitness for such parts as "Arms and the Man," "The Doctor's Dilemma," "The Devil's Disciple," etc., provide him. As Lord Algy he authenticates a role which is essentially thin, breathing warm life into banal words and outworn situations. The entire cast is excellent. Macklyn Arbuckle is "ripping" as ever.

"THE GYPSY TRAIL"

THE American theatre entered into a new phase on the day that "Good Gracious Annabelle" was produced. Here was something new at last, something fine and unusual. It was not because of the plot, for that was not original, nor because of the setting, but because of the strange atmosphere which Clare Kummer cast like a beautiful veil over her play. Clare Kummer proved that her characters could talk the slang of the street and still be well mannered and well bred. Since that time she has written three other plays and I note only progression from the first to the last. Of course it was a foregone conclusion that she would presently create a school. Her most successful disciple is Mr. Robert Housum, whose comedy, "The Gypsy Trail," has made a hit in New York and is likely to run at the Plymouth for months yet. His play possesses a freshness of spirit and a Kummer-like atmosphere which even the triteness of the plot cannot dissipate. For there is nothing new in the story which once more relates a young girl's desire for romance and a young man's fondness for the same thing. But Mr. Housum has a decided talent for comedy situations and from beginning to end "The Gypsy Trail" amuses.

TO A SPARROW.

By SASAKI SHIGETZ.

Better not try
To escape,
My sparrow.

Do we not become
The same ground
When we die?
White-cheeked one,

Japanese sparrow,
Is not
Our native land
The same?

My sparrow,
Please show your face
Just a moment.

EMPTY NESTS.

By SASAKI SHIGETZ.

Empty nests,
Hung upon the treetops,
Swaying with the autumn wind
Against the blue sky —
Oh, empty nests!

MUSIC OF THE MONTH

My Dear Yvonne — The debut of Max Rosen with the Philharmonic caused something of a disappointment, for we had been led to believe from the press, for several weeks before his arrival, that he was by far the greatest of all the violinists from the studio of Leopold Auer. Granting that idea for our expecting too much, Max Rosen's position was a very difficult one, for we have all been thrilled so recently by the magnificent playing of Jascha Heifetz, his brilliant contemporary, and one couldn't refrain from comparing these two youths. In the case of Heifetz, one thinks of him as amongst the few great violinists; whereas Max Rosen strikes one as an extraordinarily clever violinist in view of his seventeen summers, and that doubtless within the next four or five years he will develop into a very fine artist. The boy is undoubtedly very gifted, but his intonation is faulty at times and his bowing, in several instances, showed roughness. Like most of the Auer stars, his tone is beautiful, small but of a very lovely quality, and his left hand is facile. But one feels that it would have been wiser to postpone his debut for another year. He possesses a quiet, simple dignity of bearing — and as the son of an East Side barber, a small boy in rags when his talent was first discovered, sent to Europe by the late Mr. De Coppet to study, he cuts a romantic figure — and his career will be followed with much interest.

Ossip Gabrilowitsch gave a delightful program of Schuman and Chopin at the Aeolian on Saturday, and never has this delightful Russian pianist been in better form. His magnetism even extended to the vestibule of the 43d street entrance where women simply jostled each other about in an alarming fashion in their anxiety to obtain tickets. The result not being unlike Petticoat lane, London, on a Sunday morning; or Paddy's market, Sydney, on Saturday. "Oh, do let's hurry," remarked a blonde of very uncertain age to her brunette friend, "I want to be as near him as possible. He's the only pianist who ever gives me a real thrill. Oh! mon Dieu! such shivers down my spine when he plays Chopin; I don't know whether to laugh or cry, my dear, I can't hold my knitting needles when he plays. And then he looks so much like a character from Dickens — can't think which one, my dear — but I've decided to read Dickens again and find out. Oh, isn't it just the greatest shame I can't ask his father-in-law, Mark Twain, I'm sure he'd have known." And one felt sorry, indeed, that the worthy Mark Twain were not in the office; for he certainly would have been ready with some of his best repartee.

Hats off to Walter Damrosch! His name should go down in history not only for his musical work; he has stopped women from knitting at the Symphony concerts, and we one and all go on our hands and knees in gratitude to him. Your

HAUTBOY.

THE HISTORY OF THE BELGIAN PEOPLE.

(The International Historical Society, 171 Madison avenue, New York.)

In the last two volumes of this admirable historical study is covered the period from the unification of the low countries under Burgundy to modern times. It seems possible that the rule of Burgundy might have afforded the political stability necessary to the country had it not been for the jealousies excited in the neighboring states.

In the fifteenth century, the principle of free cities had really become unworkable. It was necessary for any country which wished to resist the encroachments of less prosperous neighbors to equip itself with proper military defence. The low countries were the head and front of the economic movements of Europe, but the economic movement can never flourish unless there is a reasonable guarantee of peace. When, however, the power of Burgundy was broken at the death of Duke Charles the Rash, it was quite necessary to continue the main political effect of the Burgundian rule by a reliance upon Austria. Yet this dependence was itself unnatural. Under the immense spiritual force of the intellectual movement and the renaissance culminating in the reformation, such vital internal changes took place that nothing short of complete political unity and independence could really have satisfied the needs of the provinces. They, however, found themselves confronted by the relics of the old system of domination and passed into the possession of Spain. Here was a totally unnatural arrangement which was therefore bound to result immediately in every kind of unrest. The situation was rather as if a university were to pass under the arbitrary rule of a totally unenlightened foreigner. After a short time, as might have been expected, the unrest became open revolt and the real struggle for independence began. Discontent and revolt developed into open revolution under William of Orange, and the unstable equilibrium continued until the collapse of the power of Napoleon. By this time Europe had reached the stage which made the political independence of a purely industrial state possible at least in theory. But until human nature becomes altogether different from what it always has been it will evidently be dangerous for small, rich states without natural frontiers of extraordinary strength. The low countries had in fact only retained any semblance of military independence owing to their power of flooding the country in case of invasion, which is, after all, a somewhat suicidal means of defence. It was, therefore, not to be expected that the new found independence of Belgium would last long in the event of economic distress elsewhere. It was impossible for Germany to feel herself at ease while hemmed in by such trivial obstacles as Denmark, Holland and Belgium. Her method was, however, peaceful penetration. In Holland and Denmark she had comparatively free hand, but in Belgium the French influence was bound to act as a powerful counterpoise. There was consequently a division in Belgium itself between those who favored a close alliance with France and those who preferred Germany. In view of the additional importance conferred upon Belgium by the reign of coal and iron, it is not surprising that Germany should make a point of striking at her who was once the weakest and most wealthy of her neighbors. It is important for the reader to gain the point of view so admirably brought out in these excellent volumes that the catastrophe which has overwhelmed Belgium in the last three years is the natural result of geographical and economical conditions. We may or may not attach blame to any given set of people for their action, but we shall go hopelessly wrong in political judgement if we ever lose sight of the fact that aggressions are as a rule determined by the facts of nature, not merely by the ambitions of monarchs.

— A. C.